

Climate Local Colchester Borough Council

Our progress on 15 September 2017

Since signing up to Climate Local on 15th September 2015 the Council reports annually on its progress towards achieving the commitments and actions we pledged on the same day of the 15th September 2015.

Low Carbon Pathways

Commitment: Priority 1 – ‘Community Leadership’ by reducing our environmental impact of Council’s Buildings, Services and Operations

Progress: Phase 1 of the 5 year Local Authority Carbon Management (LACM) Plan has been completed. The programme of work aims to reduce the environmental impact from Council buildings, services and operations up to 2020. The latest Greenhouse gas report for 2016/17 shows that the Council has met a 55% carbon reduction which means the Council has exceeded its 40% carbon reduction target 3 years ahead of schedule. To ensure continued success other supporting projects have been put into place and these are outlined in detail within the Council’s [Environmental Sustainability Strategy](#) delivery plan. Strategic alignment with other policies and strategies, within our own organisation and with our partners, will ensure that working more efficiently becomes common practice and is embedded in to the way staff develop and manage new projects.

Action(s)	Progress	Lessons learnt
Meet targets in CO2 reduction by 2020.	<p>Phase 1 of the Local Authority Carbon Management (LACM) Plan has been completed.</p> <p>The latest Greenhouse Gas report for 2016/17 showed that the Council reduced its carbon emissions by a further 16% from the previous year, making most significant savings in reduced electricity use.</p> <p>This means that the Council exceeded its carbon reduction target 3 years ahead of schedule and makes Colchester Borough Council a Leading Carbon Cutting Council in the UK.</p>	Carbon and financial savings need to be monitored to ensure the LACM Plan is on track to deliver the predicted savings.

Going forward it will be important to understand the challenges of retaining the carbon reduction achievement as Colchester’s population grows, demand for services increase, and viable carbon saving projects reduce.

Action(s)	Progress	Lessons learnt
Show community leadership by making further commitments to reduce carbon emissions.	<p>The Council has shown community leadership by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing Regional and Countywide 'Environmental Awareness' Awards. • Working with other UK Councils to support them in the development of strategies and carbon management plans. • Delivering presentations to groups and at meetings of other Council Officers. • Liaising with UK organisations such as Carbon Trust, Fit for Future Network and Low Carbon Britain who are leading on delivering awareness raising events. • Providing information on projects and achievements by way of a case study for other organisations to use as example of good practice. • Working with ECC to identify opportunities to grow green services and projects. • Working with community partners to develop new projects and secure funding. • Participating in events and workshops with the Suffolk Climate Change team to share best practice and look at more collaborative ways of working, in particular cutting down on duplication and identify ways of rolling out the same information to NE Essex and Suffolk residents. 	The Council's growing reputation as a leading Carbon Cutting Council, means there is more demand for CBC to participate in meetings, events and as a speaker across the UK.
Going forward There is increasing demand for CBC to take part in wider activities across the UK now it is a leading Carbon Cutting Council so we will have to look at how we address this need within the limited resources we have.		
Embed green procurement.	The Procurement Strategy has been reviewed, and templates are in place to provide a clearer process for staff on how to achieve sustainable purchases.	Improved guidance on working more sustainably is needed for suppliers and contractors.
Going forward There is an aspiration within CBC Procurement to look at how the Council could make information more accessible to staff and suppliers, this maybe by way of training and/or online accessible resources. We will be investigating the most effective and efficient way to deliver this in 2018/2019.		

Action(s)	Progress	Lessons learnt
Look at opportunities to reduce energy.	<p>There has been a wide range of action in this area in 2016/17, here are the highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing all viable projects within the LACM Plan to provide an estimated annual saving on future energy costs of £100k and 400 tonnes of CO2. • Achieving a 55% carbon reduction from our baseline year 2008, as recorded in the Greenhouse Gas Report 2016/17. • Supporting businesses to reduce their energy use in buildings by linking with partners such as Carbon Trust and LoCASE who work to review business energy use and cut energy consumption. • Securing funding through EU, BEIS & ECC to enable Heat Mapping work to take place across the North and East of the Borough. • Commissioned a new Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey to identify opportunities for retrofit to achieve more low carbon private sector homes. • Investigating opportunities to help council tenants to reduce their energy bills and find out more about the benefits of smart meters. 	Energy efficiency work is taking place across all CBC Services and with our Partners so communication is key to share best practice.
Going forward Viability work will be completed to enable the Council to deliver Heat Networks infrastructure to provide energy efficient homes in Northern Gateway.		
Support our staff to make greener choices.	Green Office Week took place in May 2017. Staff took part in a timetable of 25 activities across all CBC sites and a new SharePoint page was set up for staff working remotely.	To help all staff make greener choices a staff event should be inclusive of Teams and Services that work remotely.
Going forward Roll out regular refresher sessions to help staff think about environmental issues, such as reducing waste and working more efficiently.		

Action(s)	Progress	Lessons learnt
Improve our housing stock.	<p>The following actions took place in 2016/17:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All council housing suitable for solar panels has been identified and solar panels have been installed on 47% of the Council's housing stock. • 3,600 homes have had loft, cavity wall insulation and heating improvements carried out. • Improved the energy efficiency of sheltered accommodation through the installation of gas absorption heat pumps, solar panels, solar thermal and triple glazed windows and doors. • The Council have been working in partnership for a number of years delivering 'Green Open Homes' events and this is open to Colchester Borough Council (CBC) tenants so that they can share their experiences of energy saving technology that CBC has installed in their homes.. 	The Council recognises that working with tenants will improve how efficient new heating and lighting installations are in Council homes.
Going forward Further work is needed to educate tenants on how to use technologies in a smart way to get the best from them.		
Improve recycling performance.	A new Waste Strategy was adopted in 2017 to encourage more households to recycle. A new CBC Waste Task Force was formed to help promote the strategy and assist residents to make positive changes to the way they manage their waste.	Facing a big change in the way we manage our waste can be challenging, but direct contact with residents has helped to promote the benefits of changing the way households manage and reduce waste.
Going forward Further work is needed to support some residents to embrace the changes in the way we manage our waste, in particular those living in flats.		

Climate Resilience

Commitment: Priority 2 – ‘Building resilient communities’ by working with Colchester’s Residents, Businesses and the Third Sector.		
<p>Progress: Collaboration with our partners, residents, businesses and third sector helps the Council to deliver better services. To share good practice the Council delivers sustainability events to key sectors so they are supported to be more sustainable. Key sectors include those from Housing, Business, Education, Communities and other Councils. Colchester Borough Council has assisted with a number of external small grant funding applications for third sector led projects. These community projects have helped to raise awareness of the need to build up resilience and address neighbourhood issues connected to Climate Change.</p>		
Action(s)	Progress	Lessons learnt
Support local communities to help them become resilient to climate change.	In 2016/17 we delivered a large scale Building Resilient Communities Event www.colchester.gov.uk/brc , Green Open Homes with our partner Enform, Big Energy Week. CBC continues all year round to deliver volunteer project days in our parks and country parks.	Involving CBC staff in sustainability events from across the Services helped raise awareness within CBC of environmental issues, and helped realise an appetite for a staff event which has taken the form of “Green Office Week”
Alignment of Colchester Borough Council strategies to enable a collaborative approach with external partners to achieve environmental sustainability.	The Councils new Asset Management Strategy has been aligned with our Local Authority Carbon Management Plan so that carbon reduction work becomes a matter of good practice going forward.	The Council needs to draw on its partners to deliver joint strategic goals.

Action(s)	Progress	Lessons learnt
Develop, create and promote opportunities for developing environmental understanding which will help retain rural skills and grow the local green economy.	CBC provides an enabling, role to encourage more collaboration, so opportunities to improve rural skills are extended to more people in the borough. Linking up like-minded organisations that offer training and employability skills has resulted in improvements to referral routes for further education, volunteering and signposting.	Engaging with partners helps to develop better environmental understanding of local need, and enables partners to work together to support the development and improvement of local training provision and volunteering opportunities.
Identify sources of grant and match funding to support sustainability projects.	Funding opportunities are sent to community partners on a bi-monthly basis and support to develop bids is given where possible. Partners are securing grants to deliver projects that fill in gaps in provision, and a more collaborative approach is becoming more common practice in fundraising for local projects.	CBC needs to work with partners to develop sustainable, fundable projects that are third sector led so projects are robust and attractive to funding bodies.
Look at opportunities to reduce costs and save energy use in our communities.	The latest results and savings have just been published for the Spring/Summer 2017 Big Community Switch (BCS) auction. 338 households took part and the average saving was £198.70 per annum per household. The highest annual energy bill saving was £379.41. Customers that could make an annual saving but chose not to switch, may be using their BCS offer as an opportunity to renegotiate a better deal with an existing energy provider.	Key messages within the communications plan to potential customers need to include advice that while there is no obligation to switch, the offer they receive could help them to negotiate a better deal with their existing energy provider.

Action(s)	Progress	Lessons learnt
Identify opportunities to deliver sustainable transport.	The Council have developed a new Transport Strategy as part of the review of the Local Plan process. The new Local Plan is on track to be adopted in 2018. Work with the Highways and Transportation Authorities and transport operators has continued to secure investment into Colchester for sustainable transport.	The Council has had to take a long term view on how sustainable transport solutions will be part of the local infrastructure.
Support initiatives that deliver warmer, greener homes.	In 2016/17 CBC worked with a housing retrofit company to develop an offer for private sector homes so they could benefit from a range of low cost energy efficiency works with access to ECO funding. 17 households took up the offer to have an energy assessment, 3 properties had loft insulation installed and 1 property had cavity wall insulation installed. A stock condition survey has been commissioned to look at private sector housing in Colchester to assist in identifying properties that would benefit from retrofitting, and installation of energy efficiency measures.	In order to be able to develop a local 'Warm Homes' bid for homes in the private sector the Council needs an up to date evidence base that identifies housing most in need of energy efficiency works.
Provide a readily accessible online section on environmental sustainability for Colchester residents.	To share best practice and promote green projects being delivered across the borough, CBC's Sustainability webpage continues to develop and be updated. www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability	All Council services contribute to environmental sustainability so it is important that the webpages link across the services and show a joined up approach.

Action(s)	Progress	Lessons learnt
Work to reduce fuel poverty in Colchester.	<p>The Council's Big Community Switch continues to offer spring/summer, autumn and winter auctions to help residents switch to lower energy tariffs online.</p> <p>To support people who can't switch online funding has been applied for to deliver energy switching support for vulnerable households. The project is led by an environmental charity, and has been running for four years. The project works with a wide range of referring bodies, which include front line Officers, support groups and organisations, to reach the right target group.</p>	Not all residents can access online services, so by working with third sector and securing small external grants the Council can work in partnership to support its more vulnerable residents.
Engage with partner agencies that could support us in the delivery of sustainability projects.	<p>Reaching Communities is a new CBC project working with organisations from third, public and private sectors to develop a more collaborative way of working.</p> <p>The project is developing with a view to making a lottery fund application to help the groups work more collaboratively and share their knowledge and resources to improve local referrals, support more volunteers, and grow employment, training and volunteering opportunities.</p>	Encouraging more collaborative working with groups working on sustainability projects in the area will provide better local support and enable shared resources as well as contributing to the achievement of Colchester's strategic goals. .

Portfolio Holder for Sustainability

Date September 2017	Print name Cllr Jessica Scott-Boutell	Signature 
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Once completed, upload to [KHub](#) and/or send a copy to the LGA: lucy.breeze@local.gov.uk

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