Climate change and Environment Emergency Strategy

2020 – 2030
Foreword

We recognise that climate change is a hugely important issue facing not just our residents, but also our environment, our wildlife and the planet.

It is clear that if action is taken now to address climate change and to halt damage to biodiversity, we can contribute significantly to reducing the impact of these issues locally and on a wider global level.

We care deeply about our environment and our wildlife and since the cross party motion at full council in July we have been working closely to develop this strategy and action plan.

We must take every action possible to prevent the further effects of climate change before it is too late, we believe that it is everyone’s responsibility to do whatever they can to reduce the effects of Climate Change and to help protect our precious planet, its environment and our wildlife for generations to come.

Any alternative is simply not an option.

Cllr Rupert Kyrle  
Liberal Democrat  
Cabinet member for Environment and Chair of the Climate change and Environmental Emergency Working Group

Cllr Gin Tidridge  
Independent Group member and Working Group Member

Cllr Margaret Atkinson  
Conservative Group Leader and Working Group Member
Introduction

The Borough Council has a long history of tackling Climate change including being awarded Beacon Status for its efforts in 2008. The Council’s 2011-2020 Climate Change Strategy expires at the end of December 2019; this new strategy builds upon the work over the last decade, taking into account new scientific information, policy developments and new technology to further respond to what has now become an emergency. On the 18 July 2019 the Council unanimously declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. The approved motion was as follows:

Eastleigh Borough Council has a long history of tackling climate change; throughout the life of its current Climate Change Strategy the Council has installed thousands of kWh of renewable energy, supported residents and community groups to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, lobbied Government and worked with partners to improve the resilience of the Borough.

Council reaffirmed its existing commitment by joining other local authorities and institutions in declaring a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agrees to:

a) put in place measures to ensure that the Council’s own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025,

b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030,

c) ensure that the Council’s procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of the primary considerations,

d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council,

e) establish a cross-party working group to develop a plan for how the Borough of Eastleigh could achieve carbon neutrality by 2030,

    i. to be Chaired by the Cabinet Lead for the Environment and to include representatives from within the local community and businesses,

    ii. to report to Council within six months with a new Climate Change Strategy alongside immediate actions the Council will take to address this emergency,

    iii. to be followed by a detailed Action Plan to be developed to include reporting requirements and assessment of the associated resource implications; and

f) include all of the recommendations above in a revised Climate Change Strategy to be completed and approved by Council in 2019/20.

This report sets out progress to date, baseline assessment and the strategy that the Council is taking to meet these targets.

Date updated 12 October 2019
Climate Emergency

Climate change is likely to have significant impacts on the borough, including:

- An increase in extent, depth and frequency of flooding from surface water, rivers and the sea due to sea level rise, storm surges and increasing intensity of rainfall. Although the trend is for drier summers, intense storms will also increase.
- Hotter summers will also lead to increased heat stress, particularly on vulnerable members of the community such as the elderly and on the environment as a whole. With particular reference to stress on our water supply, tree and wildlife survival.

The UK Climate Change Act 2008 sets a statutory target to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 1990 by 2050. In May 2019 the UK Committee on Climate Change recommended that the UK Government increase the statutory target to Net-Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Government has now adopted this target.

In parallel, the UK Climate Change Act established the National Adaptation Programme. The corresponding UK Climate Change Risk Assessment identifies 6 priority risk areas: flooding, high temperatures, water supply shortages, natural capital, food production; and pest and diseases.

Environmental Decline

Climate change and other human activity is having a significant impact on the nature and the environment. An October 2019 State of Nature Report starkly set out the need for urgency to deal with environmental decline in the UK. Including the following headline figures:

- 15 per cent of species under threat of extinction and 2 per cent of species have already gone for good
- Average abundance of wildlife has fallen by 13 per cent with the steepest losses in the last ten years
- 41 per cent of UK species studied have fallen and 133 species have already been lost from our shores
- Butterflies and moths, down 17 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. Numbers of high brown fritillary and grayling butterflies, have fallen by more than three quarters
- The average amount of mammals has fallen by 26 per cent and the wild cat and greater mouse-eared bat are almost extinct
Key Principles

The following are the core principles that set out the Council's approach to the climate change and Environmental Emergency, shaping actions to be taken forward.

**All Council decisions will take into account the potential impact on Climate Change and the environment to achieve congruence with this strategy.**

In order to appropriately respond to this emergency it is critical that all Council decisions take into account and respond to the potential impact that they will have on climate change and the environment. This will be embedded in decision making through updates to templates, policy, guidelines alongside a communications campaign and additional training. Through procurement and partnership this responsibility will be extended to suppliers and partners engaged in activities with the Council.

**Need to take a prudent, proportionate and replicable approach to setting the baseline and understanding the impact of activities.**

The Council has a good record of tracking its fleet and energy emissions (otherwise known as Scope 1 & 2) over several years and has been doing so as part of the previous climate change strategy and emission reduction targets. The emissions stands at 1.8 ktCO$_2$e (All Greenhouse Gas emissions converted into Kiloton equivalent of Carbon Dioxide) for 2017/18 (latest compiled data). Whilst this data is comprehensive it does not include the emissions from all areas of the Council’s activity and in particular the Council’s procurement activity. An analysis of procurement activity has suggested that there is approximately a further 1.1 ktCO$_2$e
of emissions although this calculation is not as reliable. In order to provide a baseline for the measurement of success it is proposed that the Council sets the operational target for 2025 to reduce or offset emissions by 2.9 ktCO2e.

The Government produce area based CO2 emissions data. These figures include a broad range of data with the notable exceptions of aviation, shipping, military transport and lifestyle emissions. To ensure that a prudent approach is taken, the Council has carried out an assessment of lifestyle and airport emissions and these are included within the area target. This assessment has found that in order to reach Net Zero emissions by 2030 there would need to be a borough wide reduction from 1046.1ktCO2e. This is based on 619.7ktCO2e Area, 378.4ktCO2e Lifestyle and 48ktCO2e Airport.

![Eastleigh Borough Carbon Emissions in ktCO2](image)

*Eastleigh Borough Carbon Emissions in ktCO2
Total CO2 Emissions = 1037.7 ktCO2*

**N.B Graph above, Solid segments are national data, hatched segments are estimated extrapolations from other national data sets.**

It is also critical that all forms of emissions are included and clearly communicated to residents and businesses leaders to ensure that they understand the various contributions and the required level of collective responsibility.

**Need to take the precautionary principle approach**

History is littered with examples of often well-meaning decisions made with environmentally damaging consequences, such as the rise in use of CFCs and the promotion of diesel vehicles increasing local air quality issues. Therefore it is critical
that decisions are made with a high degree of certainly over the full consequences. This approach is best defined as following the precautionary principle, which is enshrined in law.

**Where ever possible changes should be front loaded**

The earlier reductions are made the better that will be for the environment and the local community. Manchester University and the Tyndall Centre produced a tool allowing Local Authorities to understand the area wide CO2e reductions required to meet the Paris Accord CO2e limit. The model which utilises UK government area data to calculate a CO2e “Budget” for the area indicates that at current rate of emissions, the entire budget to 2100 would be used up by 2027.

An example of this approach could be for the Council to consider offsetting its operational emissions from year one, whilst activities are carried out to reduce emissions over time.

As a last resort there will need to be offsetting to reach Net Zero Emissions, local approaches which lead to local environmental improvements will be prioritised.

It will not be possible for Council and borough wide activities to be carried out without causing some CO2e emissions. The Council will follow the mitigation hierarchy, with activities that avoid, prioritised over mitigation, restoration and then offsetting. As a last resort offsetting will need to be included in the approach. Local borough based offsetting activities will be prioritised; this will increase the benefit to local residents and wildlife.
Adaptation Responses need to take a Natural solutions first approach

In order to respond to the Environmental Emergency, in particular species decline and local pollution nature must be a key part of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

The Council needs to take a stronger approach to communications

A key theme throughout the consultation of this strategy, is that the Council needs to prompt urgent responses by clearly setting out the brevity of the climate and environmental emergency. The Council will carefully consider language (such as using Climate Emergency/Breakdown as oppose to Climate Change). Alongside highlighting positive actions, the communication programme will need to support residents and businesses to fully understand that risks faced due to climate change.
In 2017 the Climate Change Committee reported that policies introduced internally by governments indicated that we are on a pathway to global temperature rise of between 3.3-3.9°C by the 2050’s. In 2019 the Environment Agency updated its advice that decision makers should plan for 4°C warming.

**Figure SR.4: Potential trajectories of long-term emissions and resulting global temperatures**

**Resources**

The upfront cost is higher than Business as Usual, but the longer term costs of adapting later are higher so it is cheaper to mitigate in the shorter term.

The 2008 Stern Review clearly set out the business case for urgent action on climate change both to mitigate and carry out activities to ensure physical adaptations are made to avoid much higher costs in the longer term. A whole life cost assessment will need to be made for decisions, particularly procurement to ensure that future savings are factored in.

Business cases will be developed for all activities within the action plan. These will be prioritised by the Working Group and funding sought, where necessary in order to deliver on the strategy within agreed timescales.

**Governance**

This strategy will be overseen by a Climate Change and Environment Working Group. This will act as the main Programme Board for activities across the organisation. The working group will meet quarterly to review the process of actions.