

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Community Scrutiny Committee 3rd June 2021

Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Finance Report

This matter is the responsibility of: Cllr Dixie Darch Lead Member for Climate Change.

Report Author: Chris Hall – Assistant Director Climate Change, Regulatory Services and Asset Management

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report has been provided at the request of Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 Since approval of the Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience (CNCR) plan in October 2020, 24 actions were completed during 2020/21 at a cost of £73,939. See Appendix 1.
- 1.3 Many of the initial actions in the CNCR plan had little or no cost attached to them; budget expenditure is therefore not a direct measure of success in progressing climate achievements. This report focuses on expenditure rather than response activity for 2020/21. Funds allocated to Climate Change are ring fenced to that activity and have been carried forward across budget years.
- 1.4 The CNCR budget for 2021/22 is fully allocated against the activities already approve within the Directorate plan.

2. Risk Assessment

- 2.1 The CNCR plan is an extensive list of potential activities. It contains a number of cross cutting actions and open-ended commitments. To support delivery the team, led by the Portfolio Holder (PH), review the actions to form a prioritised list which features in the service plan for the External Operations and Climate Change Directorate. Without a prioritised list of activity, the team could become conflicted in trying to deliver in an unfocussed or uncoordinated way.
- 2.2 The commitments list within the service plan is challenging, there is a considerable amount of work on this list. Any draw on the team outside the agreed business plan will impact delivery performance.

3. Background and Full details of the Report

- 3.1 Somerset West and Taunton Council allocated £500,000 for the delivery of the CNCR plan in October 2020 with the following delegations for expenditure:

“A supplementary “Climate Change Fund” budget of £500,000 is approved within the General Fund 2020/21 Revenue Budget, funded from General Reserves, for the delivery of Somerset West and

Taunton priority actions with delegated authority to the Director External Operations and Climate Change / Assistant Director Climate Change, Regulatory Services and Asset Management to agree those priority actions in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change. Council also be asked to approve the principle that any unspent balance of this Fund at the end of 2020/21 be carried forward to 2021/22 financial year.”

- 3.2 Expenditure and allocations are tracked by the Assistant Director and Portfolio Holder (PH) in their standing fortnightly meetings. This meeting records any financial decisions.
- 3.3 Purchase orders, payments, and internal transfers are managed within the Council’s finance system. Table 1 shows the actual expenditure for the year 2020/21 and the underspend that was carried forward to 2021/22.

TABLE 1

Climate Change	2020/21	2020/21	Comments
2020/21 Budget - approved Full Council October 2020	£500,000		Approved in full Council 26/10/2020.
Less: 2020/21 Budget transfer to Revenue Contributions to Capital budget for land purchase (phosphates mitigation)	-£51,184		Budget approved by Cllr Pilkington and supported by Executive.
Final Budget	£448,816		
Expenditure:			
SLNP Coordinator contribution		£5,000	Somerset Local Nature Partnership Co-ordinator.
Electric Vehicle survey prize		£25	Survey prize offer for contributing to EV survey.
GTH Supply of landownership master plan		£2,500	Greenslade Taylor Hunt
Somerset Electric Vehicle charging strategy SWT contribution		£4,956	1st September 2020
Climate Change Summit		£249	Conference attendance.

E-scooter Stickers - Zipp		£250	Voluntary contribution to the "Number plate" stickers following public requests.
Photos for E-scooter Media Launch		£45	
Contribution to SCC Programme Manager		£9,730	SWT's contribution
Subtotal Expenditure in 2020/21		£22,755	
Income:			
ENPA contribution to Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy		-£1,000	Agreed contribution from Exmoor National Park (ENPA)
Subtotal income in 2020/21		-£1,000	
Net Expenditure	£21,755		
Carry Forward requested	£427,601		

3.4 Table 2 is a combination of allocations and actual expenditure for 2021/22. The allocations are further divided into those where specific PH approvals are in place and those where the PH has agreed in principle.

TABLE 2

Climate Change	21/22	Actual Expenditure 21/22	Committed Expenditure 21/22	Comments
2021/22 Budget for delivery of CNCR	£500,000			Approved budget
Carry forward of 2020 21 underspends.	£427,601			Subject to formal carry forward approval
Internal refund of Phosphate land expenditure from 2020/21	£51,184			Initially funded from CNCR budget but repaid on creation of a phosphates budget.
Final 2021/22 Budget	£978,785			
Expenditure:				

Contribution to core staffing			£106,401	Core staffing costs of 3 x PM and support officer £181,401 minus the £75,000 climate budget
Ecological Strategist for 18months at (H)			£37,314	50% contribution over 18 months.
Ecological Strategist job advert Dillington		£50	£200	Dillington advertising costs
Ecological Strategist job advert Online (Indeed).		£140	£200	Indeed advertising costs
Ecological delivery budget			£10,000	It is anticipated that survey and other works will be required for the Council to deliver on its ecological aims.
Multi District PM for 36 months (SWT 25% cost) (H)			£37,314	Full 25% contribution from SWT for 3 years
Multi District PM job advert			£50	Dillington advertising costs
Contribution to multi district projects			£10,000	It is anticipated that survey and other works will be required for the Council to deliver on its ecological aims. (Not yet approved)
Funding bid writer (F) 12-month pilot			£37,523	12-month pilot
Funding bid writer job advert			£50	Dillington advertising costs
Contribution to the active travel officer resource			£19,000	Contribution to an officer working on active travel within Development and Place for 2021/22
Auto-Text Dialler system for Ruishton flood pump station			£1,827	PO for whole amount with a 50% contribution returned from the PC.
Wellington bike rack removal and reinstatement			£250	In relation to the 'Water Refill' project working with Wessex Water
Waterless urinals budget for public toilets			£5,000	Agreed with Cllr Peter Pilkington 20/01/21 - actual spend £4,359 Wiffaway and £100.80 Gentworks
Coal Orchard DC Share alterations			£781	Plant room door changes at Coal Orchard for DC Share project
Electric Vehicle Charge Point – North Taunton Wollaway Project contribution			£1,050	Contribution to charge points where properties have dedicated parking space (not communal)

Electric Vehicle Charge Point SWT Car Parks (Framework)		£155,000		Budget figure agreed 05/03/21 with Cllr Peter Pilkington contract awarded.
EVCP grant fund for 2021/22			£3,666	Top up of fund to £20,000 (EMR remaining balance is £16,334)
SWT funding support for Exmoor National Park tree planting			£8,000	Budget figure agreed with Cllr Peter Pilkington 05/02/21 - Likely to be paid Q3.
Threepointfive - All staff climate change training		£8,000		Budget figure agreed with Cllr Peter Pilkington 05/02/21 PO raised.
Further training climate change and carbon literacy			£8,000	To be considered against CNCR action (not yet approved by PH)
2 x electric pool cars			£6,750	Budget figure agreed with Cllr Peter Pilkington 05/02/21
Transition of pools cars			£45,300	Transition of the remainder of the pool fleet in anticipation of DC share go live (cost minus remaining budget) (not yet approved by PH)
Transition of liveried commercial fleet first 10 vehicles			£10,000	First 10 of the liveried fleet vehicles transition to EV, top up budget only and for year one only.
Expansion of the EScooter scheme			£1,000	To support the expansion of the trail into Minehead
Solar PV Feasibility study - Whole Building Decarbonisation			£15,000	Budget figure agreed with Cllr Pilkington 19/03/21
Market House ASHP 50% contribution			£14,250	Assets budget paying 50% (SG016G) with CNCR paying 50% for the enhanced system.
Actions linked to whole building decarbonisation feasibility study.			£100,000	Budget to deliver action as identified at Crematorium, Depot and Deane House (not yet approved by PH)
Trees/Hedgerow Saplings for Langford Budville PC			£400	£200 Q1 and £200 Q3 to support to the parish Council following the free trees giveaway.
Country Park planning application.			£280	Contribution to the planning application for. Approved by PH 13/04/2021
Goodland Gardens Solar lighting			£30,000	20 x lamp columns @£1500 (not yet approved by PH)

Open Spaces transition to Battery Powered tools			£10,000	Open Spaces are trialling battery powered tools for use in place of petrol power.
DC Share Marketing and support budget			£5,000	To support the coms and marketing
Instavolt marketing budget			£1,500	To support the implementation of EVCP through the Instavolt project
Deliver Car Park charge point project phase two			£175,000	Phase two of our car park from the EV strategy (not yet approved by PH)
Recycling On the Go			£30,000	To support the initial pilot and, subject to success, roll it out more widely (not yet approved by PH)
Corporate waste disposal procurement			£3,500	Our contribution to the SWP lead procurement.
Tree planting and hedgerow creation (led by Open Spaces plans)			£30,000	A contribution to the costs to be led by Open Spaces this is separate to the £100k approval (not yet approved by PH)
Free tree giveaway to Town and Parish Councils 21/22			£3,000	Rerun the scheme used last year.
Asset opportunities			£75,000	Various enhancement opportunities as capital improvements are delivered i.e., Market House scheme (not yet approved by PH)
Waterless urinals grant to ex Council toilet facilities.			£5,000	WSC transferred their public toilet to town and parish Councils, as well as community groups, this grant would support them with the one-off costs to install waterless urinals in suitable facilities.
Climate resilience for coastal communities			£15,000	Commission technical analysis of the sea level and flood event impacts on communities (not yet approved by PH)
Minehead sea defence works.			£40,000	Work with the EA to establish the current integrity of the sea defences owned by SWT and make repairs and improvements to deal with rising sea levels (not yet approved by PH)
Rainwater Harvesting			£50,000	Delivery of rainwater harvesting schemes on Council properties (not yet approved by PH)

Exeter university refresh of the CNCR works.			£15,000	Use Exeter University to critique or progress on the CNCR plan and consider the carbon benefits delivered. (Not yet approved by PH)
Environment opportunities			£5,000	Opportunity to support projects throughout the year e.g., request to pay for wildflower meadow seed for Lyngford Park.
Watchet town Council parking permit			£195	To support the Watchet Town Council community car club with a 12-month permit - cost code provided to car parks 06/05/2021.
Risk Contingency			£6,166	
Sub-Total Expenditure 2021/22		£163,190	£978,968	
Income:				
Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) refunds on Electric Vehicle Charge Points			-£73,000	Estimated at this stage and subject to application success - new OZEV criteria from 01/04/21, therefore funding may be +/-
50% contribution of Ruishton pump station auto dialler from Parish Council			-£913	Purchase order for whole amount charged to SWT with a 50% contribution returned from the Parish Council.
Potential OZEV refund linked to phase two installations			-£90,000	Estimated at this stage and subject to application success (not yet approved by PH)
Sub-Total Income in 2021/22			-£163,913	
Net Expenditure			£976,744	
Balance to be requested to carry forward to 2022/23			£0	

3.5 The Council also holds funds in services, other than the Climate Change area, that contribute to the overall expenditure on climate change activity. These might be revenue or capital budgets outside of the control of the climate change team. For example, the Housing Service hold their own budgets for the Zero Carbon Homes Pilot. Another recent example might be the allocation

of £100,000 for trees which sits with the Open Spaces service. These funds are not a feature of the report and are monitored through the business unit budget monitoring process.

- 3.6 Budget is allocated to projects in accordance with the stated delegated authority. Officers and the portfolio holder consider where spend can provide the greatest inroad into delivering the CNCR plan. The CNCR plan was presented to Council as a living document and where new opportunities arise, they are added to the CNCR plan and given consideration for funding requirements and their relative priority against other actions.
- 3.7 All Council finances are monitored through monthly budget monitoring.
- 3.8 The Programme Manager and all Project Managers within the Climate Change Team are working to the Prince 2 Agile framework. This supports the wider Council approach to monitor projects and programmes through a centralised Programme Management Office (PMO) feeding through the Directorate Board and onwards to SMT.
- 3.9 Appendix 2 to this report sets out the approved commitments for the year 2021/22.

4. Links to Corporate Strategy

- 4.1 Environment and Economy:
- 4.2 Shape and protect our built and natural environment, supported by a refreshed Local Plan and develop our heritage, cultural and leisure offer including a clear vision and delivery plan for the Taunton Garden Town
- 4.3 Encourage wealth creation and economic growth throughout the district by attracting inward investment, enabling research and innovation, improving the skills of the local workforce and seeking to ensure the provision of adequate and affordable employment land to meet different business needs.

5. Finance / Resource Implications

- 5.1 The body of the report sets out the use of the funds in 2020/21 and the allocation for 2021/22.
- 5.2 There are a range of items that may become capital expenditure, these will be financed in the usual way with a budget transfer as Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO).
- 5.3 Values in the budget allocation for 2021/22 are estimated and in most instances are pre procurement values, these may change as specifications are established and the opportunities are put to market.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no identified implications from this report.

7. Climate and Sustainability Implications

7.1 The report is a record of spend against the CNCR budget and as such there are no negative implications of this report.

8. Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications

8.1 There are no identified implications from this report.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

9.1 There are no identified implications of this report.

10. Social Value Implications

10.1 There are no identified implication of this report.

11. Partnership Implications

11.1 There are no identified implications from this report.

12. Health and Wellbeing Implications

12.1 There are no identified implications of this report.

13. Asset Management Implications

13.1 There are no identified implications from this report.

14. Data Protection Implications

14.1 There are no identified implications from this report.

15. Consultation Implications

15.1 There are no identified implications from this report.

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny – 3rd June 2021**

Reporting Frequency: One off

Contact Officers

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Appendix 1 Completed action in 2020/21

Action Description (CNCR)	Status
SLM to complete roll out of LED lighting, and identify and implement further carbon reduction measures in all Council-owned leisure centres.	Complete
Council air conditioning unit inspections are up-to-date, and regular checks of refrigerant leakages are undertaken.	Complete
Cleansing and maintenance of cycle routes	Complete
Support and promote SWP campaigns and initiatives to increase waste reduction, reuse and recycling including the 'Slim My Waste, Feed My Face' campaign.	Complete
Establish a Climate Service within the Council	Complete
Request budget approval for our CNCR plan	Complete
Monitor the Council's corporate GHG emissions and delivered actions on an annual basis.	Complete
Adoption of the Somerset wide EV charging Strategy	Complete
DFT E-Scooter trail launch	Complete
Free Tree giveaway for Town and Parish Councils	Complete
Promote the government launch of the Green Homes Grants to homeowners and landlords.	Complete
Replacement of the failing air conditioning units at leisure sites and procurement of the Air Handling Unit at Wellington leisure centre.	Complete
Deliver a funding scheme for community charge points available to Town and Parish Council's	Complete
Support Wellington Transition Town in their tree planting aspirations through the 2020 free tree giveaway.	Complete
Set a corporate policy to deliver a 3:1 tree replacement ratio on council managed land.	Complete
Fully support and play and active role at both officer and Member level in the SRA Partnership.	Complete
Committee report template updated to include Climate Change implications to enhance visibility for Members.	Complete
Other Achievements	Status
Achieved host Authority Status for "DC Share" as approved by Ofgen	Complete
Adoption of the Somerset wide Climate Strategy	Complete
Support the creation of an Ecology Emergency for SWT and appointing resources to deliver the associated action plan.	Complete
Agree a financial contribution to the delivery of EV charge points in new HRA developments.	Complete
Give financial support to an enhance notification system linked to the pump station at Ruishton	Complete
Ridden around the world in under 80 days. E-scooter usage achievement	Complete
Provided a funding contribution to the Somerset Local Nature Partnership	Complete

Undertake a trial / demo of EV Pool Cars	Complete
Review and reduce pool car numbers by 30%	Complete
Commission consultants to deliver whole building decarbonisation feasibility study inc. solar PV, battery storage and EV charge points at Deane House, Wellington Depot and the Crematorium.	Complete
Agreed commercial terms with an EV charge point operator for four locations with a revenue contribution to the council and no installation costs.	Complete

Appendix 2 External Operations Directorate Plan commitments 2021/22

Action	Status	Action Owner
Establish the approved Joint Climate Change Delivery Partnership	Current	Chris Hall
Recruit to the new roles as set out in the above Partnership.	Current	Sue Tomlinson
Commission investment-grade audits of the energy and carbon performance of the Council's offices and non-residential buildings including identifying opportunities for installation of heat pumps and other low carbon heat solutions.	Current	George Edwards
Develop evidence base to understand low carbon and renewable energy generation and energy storage potential within the district and on Council-owned assets and support publication of a local renewable energy target.	Current	Sue Tomlinson
Work with WPD to implement the DC Share project	Current	Sue Tomlinson
Deliver training on energy conservation and efficiency to all officers and Members.	Current	Barry Hawkins
Deliver 2 EV charge points at the Council's Deane House offices and Blackbrook Leisure Centre	Current	Chris Beswick
Business case for the options to implement charging points in phases across the Council's network of car parks.	Current	Chris Beswick
Apply to the OLEV Workplace Charging Scheme and deliver EV charge points at all Council sites to enable transition of Council fleets and staff vehicles to EV.	Current	Chris Beswick
Support and promote expansion of community EV car clubs such as Watchet Drives.	Current	Chris Beswick
Develop a staff incentive scheme to encourage transition of personal vehicles to EV.	Current	Chris Beswick
Establish a Carbon Management Board within the Council to deliver and monitor progress against our corporate carbon neutrality target. - Revised to take account of the Implementation Board at a county level and the Joint Climate Change Delivery Partnership.	Current	Chris Hall
Deliver mandatory training in climate change and carbon literacy to all Council officers and Members, with periodic updates.	Current	Barry Hawkins
Develop a regular internal communication to ensure all officers and Members are aware of this action plan, progress being made against it, and what their role is in delivering on it.	Current	Sue Tomlinson
Publicise community-based recycling projects such as the Compass Centre #cashnottrash community Terracycle project at least until Recycle More is rolled out in the district.	Current	Jane Healy

Improve data collection to establish the mass of each waste stream within the Council's corporate waste and how it is processed in order to better understand GHG emissions arising.	Current	Angela Hill
Deliver training to officers and members on the climate impacts of food consumption and the linked benefits of healthy and climate conscious eating and active lifestyles.	Current	Barry Hawkins
Investigate and deliver tree planting, hedgerow creation and other relevant projects on appropriate Council owned land holdings in line with the Nature Recovery Network and our own district Green Blue Infrastructure Strategy.	Current	Jonathan Stevens
Deliver the Maidenbrook Country Park, including tree planting and creation of active travel routes linking Monkton Heathfield and Nerrols. - Revised to acknowledge the task is now to establish a lease to the Parish Council and protections over the SWT land	Current	Chris Hall
Investigate and deliver major urban tree planting schemes on appropriate Council-owned land.	Current	
Develop communications campaign to explain the Council's new approach to managing open spaces.	Current	Jonathan Stevens
Deliver and monitor five Wildflower Meadow Pilots on Council-owned land at Grange Drive, Leycroft Grove and Moorfields (Taunton); Gay Street, (Wellington); and at Seaward Way, and Culvercliffe (Minehead).	Current	Jonathan Stevens
Promote external tree planting funding opportunities such as the Woodland Trust's "Free trees for schools and communities" project to our communities.	Current	Jonathan Stevens
Begin delivering on open space management plans prepared by Somerset Wildlife Trust for Council-owned open spaces at French Weir, Glasses Mead, Silk Mills P&R, Vivary, Blackbrook, Children's Wood, Hamilton Gault, Killams, Wedlands, Weirfield, Wellsprings, Galmington.	Current	Jonathan Stevens
Increase capacity of Council nurseries to grow our own trees, starting with a pilot growing 2,000 whips at our Stoke Road nursery.	Current	Stuart Noyce
Establish mechanism to monitor impacts of changing open space management, trees planted etc.	Current	Jonathan Stevens
Deliver immediate projects identified by the Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation Improvement Scheme.	Current	Steve Hughes
Work with partners to lobby Government to make the Somerset Rivers Authority a permanent body with a permanent annual Council Tax precept / other permanent funding.	Current	Chris Hall
Work with Wessex Water and Southwest Water to develop a communications campaign and signpost best practice guidance relating to water conservation and awareness.	Current	Jane Healy
Work with partners to review the North Devon and Somerset Shoreline Management Plan in line with latest climate projections.	Current	Steve Hughes
Deliver training to officers and members on projected climate impacts and specific local risks relating to flooding, sea level rise and coastal change.	Current	Barry Hawkins

Work to fully cost and carbon impact model the actions set out in this action plan (and others as they are developed).	Current	Chris Hall
Monitor and review progress on delivery against this Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Action Plan on an annual basis.	Current	Sue Tomlinson
Establish a local, multi-agency Climate Emergency Task Force including the Council and various stakeholders, community and interest groups to aid collaboration and delivery.	Current	Chris Hall
Set in place improved data collection for the Council vehicle fleet – procurement of a replacement vehicle tracking system during 21/22	Current	Stuart Noyce
Transition of pool car fleet to EV by December 2021	Current	Barry Hawkins
Installation of an initial number of hydration stations	Current	Jane Healy
Establish rainwater harvesting on appropriate corporate property.	Current	Jane Healy
Lead the Somerset wide “Recycling on the Go” pilot	Current	Jane Healy