

PRE-SCRUTINY: NET ZERO STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Summary:

North Norfolk District Council's (NNDC) Corporate Plan commits to the delivery, and adoption, of an Environmental Charter and Action Plan.

In May 2021 The Council adopted an Environmental Charter and, subsequently, began developing the 'Action Plan' element of this commitment.

This report presents the Draft Action Plan for achieving Net-Zero Carbon emissions by 2030 in the format of a Draft Net-Zero Strategy and Action Plan (referred to from here on in as the NZSAP).

The NZSAP also documents NNDC's existing pathway by providing carbon emission figures for the years 2018/2019, 2019/2020, and 2021/2022.

Options considered:

Option One: To recommend adoption the Draft NZSAP. This option fulfils the Corporate Plan commitment to develop an Action Plan and provides a route map from which the Council will continue to address the Climate Emergency.

Option Two: To recommend not adopting the Draft NZSAP. This option however contradicts the Council's Corporate Plan objectives and commitments to addressing the Climate Emergency.

Option three: to recommend adopting an amended version of the Draft NZSAP. This could risk not achieving the carbon reduction outcomes and will necessitate alternative actions by which these might be achieved.

Conclusions:

The NZSAP is a fundamental step in the Council's approach to dealing with the Climate Change Emergency declared in April 2019 and the subsequent net-zero 2030 target. Its significance stems from the fact that it outlines how a net-zero 2030 target can be achieved as well as reporting on The Council's existing emissions pathway for the years 2018/2019 through to 2020/2022.

The NZSAP is also an important internal, and external, document which clearly communicates The Council's commitment to environmental excellence and a net-zero carbon emissions future.

It is therefore recommended that the Council should

adopt the NZSAP and in doing so commit to delivering the actions made within the NZSAP.

Recommendations: To recommend the adoption of the Draft Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan.

Reasons for Recommendations: The NZSAP is a hugely important document as it outlines how a net-zero 2030 target can be achieved as well as reporting on NNDC's existing emissions pathway for the years 2018/2019 through to 2020/2022.

NNDC's Corporate Plan commits to delivering an Action Plan. Once approved the NZSAP will become an adopted Council document which will set the framework for achieving the Environmental Charter's Net Zero objective whilst simultaneously reinforcing NNDC's commitment to addressing the climate change emergency, which it declared in April 2019.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

N/A

Cabinet Member:	Ward(s) affected:
Cllr Nigel Lloyd	District Wide

Contact Officer:
annie.sommazzi@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In April 2019 North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) declared a climate change emergency and committed to the development of an Environmental Charter and Action Plan with the view that these documents would outline a pathway for achieving environmental excellence and a net-zero carbon emission position by 2030.
- 1.2 In May 2021 an Environmental Charter was adopted. This paper provides an overview of the next phase of work that has been undertaken; a Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan (NZSAP).
- 1.3 The NZSAP deals with the first phase of the Environmental Charter, which focuses upon the Council's own estates and operations and route to net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

- 1.2 The Council engaged consultants, Net-Zero East, in the preparation of the Draft NZSAP which includes:
- NNDC's carbon emission data for the years 2018-2019, 2020/2021 and 2021/2022
 - The contextual analysis of emissions in North Norfolk; and
 - A framework of actions (up to 2024) which are necessary for the Council to deliver in order to enable a net-zero emission position by 2030
- 1.3 The Draft NZSAP is therefore a key corporate strategic document which sets the course for consequent decisions throughout the Council regarding policy, projects and other activities.
- 1.4 In addition to providing an overview of the net-zero target, the NZSAP also identifies a series of recommendations regarding forthcoming capital 'decarbonisation' projects which will need to be delivered over the coming years if the Council is to meet its ambitious net-zero 2030 target.

Current position

- 2.1 A Draft NZSAP has been prepared and is appended to this report. See Appendix One.
- 2.2 The proposed adoption route for the NZSAP is outlined below:

Action	Deadline
Net Zero East issues complete draft report	1 st December 2021
CLT consider DRAFT NZSAP	14 th December 2021
Cabinet Business Planning consider DRAFT NZSAP	22 nd December
Climate Change and Environment Team and Net Zero East training sessions for Assistant Directors and Operational Managers (x7)	1 January – 15 th February 2022
Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider Draft NZSAP	12 January 2022
Cabinet consider Draft NZSAP (officer recommendation: to delegate minor changes required to the final document to the Assistant Director for Sustainable Growth in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, Climate Change and The Environment)	31 January 2022
Full Council consider Draft NZSAP (officer recommendation: to delegate minor changes required to the final document to the	23 February 2022

Assistant Director for Sustainable Growth in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, Climate Change and The Environment)	
Final report published	1 March 2022

2. Corporate Plan Objectives

- 2.1 The development of the NZSAP meets a range of key corporate priorities as contained within the current Corporate Plan, but specifically addresses 3.1:

Undertake a baseline carbon audit and formulate an action plan to set out:

- *The actions that can be implemented in the short-term to reduce carbon emissions from Council's activities*
- *The trajectory needed to reduce emissions to zero by 2030*
- *The longer-term activities and investments necessary to maintain the identified course.*

4. Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.1 The budget for the preparation of the draft NZSAP has already been approved and there are nominal financial and resource implications associated with the adoption of strategy.
- 4.2 Despite this, the financial implications of the specific actions which will deliver the recommendations contained within the strategy will have a significant associated cost for the Council. These costs have yet to be fully identified and will need to be considered in a separate piece of work at a later stage.
- 4.3 Whilst decarbonisation projects identified through the NZSAP will have an initial cost the projects should, overtime, realise significant savings as they will increase the efficiency of Council owned assets which will, not only decrease expenditure on utility bills, but will increase the market value of the assets in their own right.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications, whilst the Government have set a national 2050 target for achieving net-zero carbon emission, the development of a NZSAP is not a statutory requirement, and is therefore not legally binding

6. Communication Implications

- 6.1 The NZSAP is a public facing document which will clearly set out the commitments that the Council will uphold in order to address the climate change emergency and deliver a net-zero carbon emission position by 2030. It will itself be a key means of communicating the Council's environment and climate change commitments but further publicity will be necessary in order to ensure stakeholders are aware of the Council's intent. It is hoped that

publicising the document will also help encourage other organisations to take similar steps. We will develop novel means of publicising the adoption of the NSZAP, in ways similar to that which was done for the Environmental Charter.

7. Risks

- 7.1 The Council is obliged to act upon its declaration of the Climate Emergency and net-zero 2030 target; the NZSAP is a consequence of the declaration and subsequent commitments. The Council will be expected to proactively deliver the recommendations within the NZSAP and it is anticipated that this will be scrutinised by external organisations.
- 7.2 Failure to take action on the points raised within the NZSAP may expose the Council to reputational damage.
- 7.3 Failure to deliver a timely and well considered NZSAP may also expose the Council to reputational damage.

8 Equality and Diversity

No matters relating to equality and diversity arise from the contents of this report.

9 Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

This report raises no matters of concern in relation to crime and disorder.

10 Sustainability implications

The report identifies the ways in which the Council can make a positive impact on sustainability.

11 Conclusions

The NZSAP is a fundamental step in the Council's approach to dealing with the Climate Change Emergency declared in April 2019 and the subsequent net-zero 2030 target. Its significance stems from the fact that it outlines how a net-zero 2030 target can be achieved as well as reporting on The Council's existing emissions pathway for the years 2018/2019 through to 2020/2022.

The NZSAP is also an important internal, and external, document which clearly communicates The Council's commitment to environmental excellence and a net-zero carbon emissions future.

It is therefore recommended that the Council should adopt the NZSAP and in doing so commit to delivering the actions made within the NZSAP.