



**Resources and Public Realm
Scrutiny Committee**
10 November 2021

**Report from the Assistant Chief
Executive**

**Information Report: Brent Climate & Ecological Emergency
Strategy Update – Year one delivery plan (2021-2022)**

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt:	Open
No. of Appendices:	One Appendix A – Brent Climate Festival 2021 Programme
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer:	Tom Welsh Climate Emergency Strategy Manager tom.welsh@brent.gov.uk 0208 937 6607

1.0 Purpose of the Information Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this information report is provide an update to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee on the progress being made on the first year (2021-2022) delivery plan set out within Brent’s Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy, which was adopted by Cabinet and formally put into action at the Cabinet meeting in April 2021.
- 1.2 The report also attaches the current iteration of the Brent Climate Festival programme for the Committee’s information.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee note the information provided in this report and is assured of progress being made on the first year (2021-2022) Brent Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy delivery plan and other associated relevant actions.
- 2.2 That the Committee note the Brent Climate Festival 2021 programme attached as Appendix A, and also note that events, times and locations are subject to

change and being updated accordingly in real-time via the council's website (www.brent.gov.uk/brentclimatefestival).

3.0 Context

- 3.1 Brent's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy consists of five key themes and priorities which were developed following extensive engagement with Brent residents, and through aligning ourselves to similar London-wide goals – positioning Brent in the best position possible to do all that we can to respond the climate and ecological crisis. These five themes and their long-term objectives are listed in section four below.
- 3.2 It is important to re-iterate, as was outlined on page 35 of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy, that taking action on the climate emergency as soon as possible this year is not limited to the delivery of the 23 actions contained within this year one delivery plan. This is a fast-moving and salient agenda, and the strategy document made clear that should external funding or other opportunities become available during the course of the 2021-2022 financial year that these would be taken forward where possible. This has proved to be the case, and there are relevant updates on pieces of work provided below which were not initially listed within the 2021-2022 delivery plan.
- 3.3 A full year's progress report and adoption of a new delivery plan for 2022-2023 will be provided to council's Cabinet in spring 2022.

4.0 Progress to date during 2021-2022

Theme 1: Consumption, Resources and Waste

- 4.1 The long-term objective of this theme is: *'By 2030, our communities will be living more sustainably: consuming less of the products and materials that accelerate climate change, whilst also wasting less of the world's natural resources. This behaviour shift will have helped to cut Brent's consumption emissions by two-thirds, and drive a substantive reduction in the amount of household waste produced within the borough'.*

Table 1

<u>Delivered so far in 2021</u>	<u>In progress – expected to complete in 21-22</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Council Procurement Sustainability Policy delivered and live • Circa 500 new internal food waste caddies delivered to Brent Housing Management blocks • At least 299 brand new recycling bins delivered to sites on Brent Council Estates this year • Placement of first sustainability apprentice via council's Apprenticeship scheme to a local low carbon circular economy company • Second Brent Environmental Network Webinar: A Beginner's Guide to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofitting / Electric Vehicle charge point installations skills embedded into courses at United Colleges this academic year • Local Green Skills Centre development and feasibility, expected location: Willesden Green • Two-day virtual Green Skills Summit on 18-19th November to be delivered as part of Brent Climate Festival 2021 • West London bid, including Brent, submitted to the Mayor's Green Skills Academy • Brent Community Cookbook – containing plant-based, or food-waste saving recipes from 20 Brent residents to promote

<p>Climate Emergency: Food and its Impact! delivered for Brent residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Food Waste Campaign - increase 117% over the course of the campaign (compared to the same dates in the previous year) from 332 to 719 caddies ordered 	<p>environmental sustainability in cooking – to be launched on 9th November 2021 as part of Brent Climate Festival 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional phases of food waste caddy roll-out – including to registered providers and private flats
--	---

Theme 2: Transport

4.2 The long-term objective of this theme is: *‘By 2030, petrol and diesel road journeys will have at least halved in the borough, being driven as close as possible to zero, with an accompanying increase in journeys made by residents through cycling, walking or public transport’.*

Table 2

<u>Delivered so far in 2021</u>	<u>In progress – expected to complete in 21-22</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed consultation on Brent’s 33 School Street Schemes • Implementation of new 1.5km temporary cycle lane on Harrow Road between the triangle and A406 North Circular Road • 3 cargo bike trials and case studies delivered in Harlesden – Sparks, Crazy Baker and Harlesden Mutual Aid • School Travel Plans via TfL STARS travel plan programme - 24 gold accreditation, 2 silver accreditation, 5 bronze accreditation • First Brent Environmental Network Webinar delivered - A Beginner’s Guide to the Climate Emergency: ‘How Travel is Changing to Beat Climate Change’ • Facilitated and promoted local community events on cycling for Bike Week in May • Ran an anti-idling campaign which continues to educate motorists about the harmful effect on local air pollution of idling in a car • Introduced new engine idling guidelines for staff and contractors and took the #EnginesOff pledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for further five trial Healthy Neighbourhoods following in-depth consultation with residents which is currently being undertaken by Living Streets • Purchase of council’s own cargo bike, and development of engagement/loan scheme for interested businesses • Awarded £700k funding award from Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to make Willesden a designated Clean Air Village • Developing a new Corporate Travel Plan for Brent Council staff – which will have sustainability at its heart • 390 new Electric Vehicle charge points • 50 new bike hangars • Open consultation on review of Long Term Transport Strategy • Open consultation on creation of a new Air Quality Action Plan for Brent

Theme 3: Homes, Buildings and the Built Environment

4.3 The long-term objective of this theme is: *‘By 2030, as many homes and buildings in the borough as possible will be more energy efficient, be powered by renewable sources, and be resilient to future adverse weather events caused by climate change - and we will do all in our gift to achieve an average Energy Performance Certificate rating of ‘B’ in directly owned council stock’.*

Table 3

<u>Delivered so far in 2021</u>	<u>In progress – expected to complete in 21-22</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.1% on year reduction in council's own emissions from our corporate estate, streetlights and fleet • 68 proposed installations in Brent on properties for phase 4 of the Solar Together programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured £3.2m of funding to improve the energy efficiency of 16 council-owned buildings across our estate in 2021-2, plus an additional £500k from the council's Strategic Priorities Fund for LED lighting upgrades as part of this work. A contractor has been appointed and is on site undertaking surveys, with work due to start following completion of this process • Part of a West London consortium which has secured £4.7m for the region to retrofit homes for those on low incomes in fuel poverty, plus an additional £1m for Brent specifically in the second phase of the project • We are on site for our first home energy retrofit pilots in the council's own stock – due to complete this calendar year • £200k obtained from Strategic Priorities Fund for Zero Carbon Schools Project (energy efficiency surveys and 5-7 deep dive pilots alongside young people engagement) • Planning work for retrofitting as part of Tower Block works (Kilburn Square, Manor etc) due on site in December/January as part of wider refurbishment work • Draft Supplementary Planning Document – Sustainability in design and construction, in development • Comprehensive Net Zero Council Estate Plan being developed

Planning and New Build Developments

4.4 In preparation of this report, it is understood that Members' requested further information on the role of planning and new build developments within the context of the council's plan to reach net zero on a borough-wide basis by 2030. This reflects similar comments made during the consultation phase of the draft Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy, whereby an additional page 'Delving Deeper: Planning, construction and new homes' was provided on page 24 of the final strategy document.

4.5 The council's draft Local Plan sets out a significant level of development to be brought forward across the borough. Brent is expected to provide 29,150 new homes up to 2029 along with the necessary supporting infrastructure. It is important that future development is balanced alongside ecological well-being, responding to the climate emergency and meeting objectives to improve health and well-being. Policies within the draft Local Plan together with the London Plan form part of the Council's approach to ensuring new developments have

high standards of environmental performance, responding to future needs and requirements.

- 4.6 New developments can be typically be more energy efficient and provide more opportunities to incorporate sustainability measures at the design stage which will help to ensure they are able to respond to meet changing future needs and requirements and reduce carbon emissions. This includes for example how the design of the building/site can support mitigation and adaption measures, the incorporation of on-site renewable energy generation such as the use of solar technology, recycling the materials used for construction and by building users throughout the lifespan of the development.
- 4.7 In addition to the draft Local Plan the Council is also preparing a sustainability standards supplementary planning document which will provide further guidance and detail on how to implement policies in the Local Plan in relation to all aspects of climate change. It will look at ways in which we can, through new development, create a resilient and efficient Brent. The document will focus on a range of measures such as sustainable design and construction methods, opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation, ensuring design is climate resilient, promoting forms of sustainable movement and incorporating green infrastructure. Incorporating such measures into development proposals will not only help to tackle climate change within the borough but also improve air quality and bring a number of economic and social benefits.

Theme 4: Nature and Green Space

- 4.8 The long-term objective of this theme is: *‘By 2030, Brent will be one of the greenest, most biodiverse and climate-resilient boroughs in London with our residents better connected to nature’.*

Table 4

<u>Delivered so far in 2021</u>	<u>In progress – expected to complete in 21-22</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed internal business intelligence team mapping of Green Infrastructure in the borough • Delivery of a new beehive as part of the exciting regeneration plans for Carlton Vale Boulevard. Professional training was also provided to five residents on how to become a beekeeper • Sustainable dog waste stations are being trialled across Brent and sponsored by eco-green communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Green Infrastructure Vision 2030 for the borough • New Climate Resilience Plan for the borough – providing an initial risk register and action plan for adaptation to climate change in Brent • 520 new street trees due be planted this year – reporting due in Q3/Q4 • Improvement work towards a new Biodiversity Centre at Welsh Harp Reservoir • New rain garden at Silver Jubilee Park • New biodiversity information boards in parks • Pesticide reduction trial in Roe Green Village • Mini Forest Creation in one of Brent’s parks, in partnership with supportive local organisations and Brent residents • Development of a community verge management scheme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of new bee and bug hotels in the borough's parks
--	---

Theme 5: Supporting Communities

4.9 Underpinning all four themes above is the overarching theme of ensuring that our communities are supported in delivering the proposed climate objectives for the borough. The long-term objective of this theme is: *‘Everyone who lives, works or studies in Brent will have improved access to clear and understandable information on the need to tackle the Climate and Ecological Emergency, and as many people as possible will be actively engaged in taking action to help the borough become carbon neutral by 2030’.*

<u>Delivered so far in 2021</u>	<u>In progress – expected to complete in 21-22</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched the Brent Environmental Network which (as of late October 2021) has 1531 members across Brent • Launched ‘CO₂GO’ Brent’s first resident-led participatory budgeting exercise for the £500k Carbon Offset Fund • Development of new ‘Brent Together Towards Zero’ climate emergency branding to unify all aspects of the council’s work which are contributing to our net zero aspirations  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 core monthly e-newsletters sent – providing sustainability tips, signposting and highlighting local community initiatives • Established the Brent Environmental Network Advisory Group, a cross-sector grouping of local organisations which meets regularly to discuss how we effectively engage with all of Brent’s communities • Established the Brent School Climate Champions – a professional network of school teachers from Brent schools who come together regularly to discuss on tackling the climate and ecological emergency in school and early years settings • Launch of Veolia ‘4Rs’ e-learning lessons in Brent Primary Schools • Launch of Veolia School Eco-Leaders Programme in Brent Secondary Schools • Veolia Sustainable Schools Competition - £300 to address and environmental problem at school sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of full programme of events for Brent Climate Festival 2021 – to coincide with the COP26 Conference in Glasgow • Launch of ‘Together Towards Zero’ Small Grants Scheme – community grants of up to £1000 • At least 3 more sustainability webinars – the next will be on reducing carbon emissions in your home as part of the Brent Climate Festival 2021 • At least 4 more core monthly BEN newsletters • Development and launch of Green Toolkits for five key business sectors for Brent – to be launched as part of the Brent Climate Festival 2021 • Promotion and video release of Cllr Tatler visiting SEGRO – London’s first zero carbon warehouse in Park Royal • Launch of Restart project directory on council’s website – mapping businesses in Brent which repair and re-use electronic goods

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ran a 'Green New Year' comms campaign at the start of the year which reached 218,716 people • Delivered five sustainability webinars, '<i>Going green to survive and thrive</i>', solely for businesses and the five key business sectors in the borough on practical ways for them to improve their carbon footprint • 3 days of stalls in Town Centres (Church End, Wembley, Willesden Green) talking to residents about the need for climate action in the borough for London Climate Action Week 2021 • Recruited of 20 group of cross directorate council staff Eco-Champions to help to drive the agenda internally and lead by example • Established a Brent School Climate Champions Network to develop a 'whole school' approach to tackling the climate emergency across all 87 of Brent's community schools, 15 Brent schools are currently signed up and are meeting every couple of months • All new council staff Job Descriptions amended to now include the wording: 'Employees should embed environmental sustainability into their work, actively contributing to Brent becoming a carbon-neutral borough in 2030.' • Worked with Veolia on the Launch of the Veolia Sustainability Fund 	
--	--

5.0 Alternative Options Considered

5.1 The alternative options to the adoption of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and associated year one delivery plan were set out in the Cabinet report where the Strategy was adopted in April 2021.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 The financial implications for each action within the 2021-2022 action plan were set out at the end of the strategy document when adopted by the Cabinet in April 2021. Overall, of the 23 actions proposed, five are already factored into existing budgets, 11 result in new additional activity where costs can be contained within existing departmental budgets, six have external funding secured and one requires further work where due to the early stage of project scoping, the financial implications are yet to be fully developed. This refers to implementing the council's plan to achieve net zero for the council's own estate and operations by 2030 (R&E13). These plans are likely to have both revenue and capital financial implications, which will be assessed as the detailed plans and recommendations are developed.

6.2 In addition, the 2021-22 budget agreed by the Council set out additional funding to support the delivery of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy.

7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 (the Act) is the statutory basis for the UK's approach to tackling and responding to climate change. The Act places a legal duty on central government to set legally binding targets to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050.

7.2 The data provided from those who sign up to the Brent Environmental Network will be managed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other relevant Data Protection legislation.

7.3 In delivering the Brent Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy, the Council continues to have regard to internal governance procedures and the Public Contract Regulations 2015 in respect of any procurement.

8.0 Equality Implications

8.1 The council, as a public authority exercising public functions, is subject to a general public sector equality duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (EqA). The PSED requires public authorities to have 'due regard' to:

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it. This involves having due regard to the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
 - Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
 - Encourage persons who share the relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

8.2 A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and is available on the climate emergency section of the council's website (www.brent.gov.uk/climateemergency). This strategy and action plan will support Brent Council to continue to meet its public sector equality duties.

9.0 Human Resources Implications

9.1 Budget was obtained for an additional Senior Sustainability Officer (Homes) post as part of the additional funding secured for the delivery of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy upon adoption of the Council's budget for this year, and this post has yet to be filled following several unsuccessful rounds of recruitment.

10.1 Property Implications

10.1 This council is working towards a decarbonisation strategy for Brent's estate as noted within the 2021-2022 delivery plan. Elements of the programme for the Brent Climate Festival 2021 will also take place across different locations of the council's corporate estate.

11.0 Environmental Sustainability Implications

11.1 Environmental sustainability considerations are integral to the purpose, content and recommendations in this report.

12.0 Proposed Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

12.1 Ward members are kept abreast of developments through, amongst other things, the councils' Members' Bulletin, from briefings via the Lead Member for Environment and through the Brent Environmental Network newsletter

Report sign off:

Shazia Hussain
Assistant Chief Executive