



Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
16 February 2023

ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

Key Decision [Yes/No]

Ward(s) Affected:

**Annual update on progress with delivering the Climate Change Agenda**

**Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources**

**Executive Summary**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1. To update JOSOC on the progress made and delivery of the important Climate and Nature agenda.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 This report is for information. The Committee is asked to note the progress made in relation to the climate agenda

**3. Context**

- 3.1. The Councils developed and adopted their sustainability framework, Sustainable AW, in 2018. This was revised in 2019 and again in 2021 to showcase the important climate and nature-related work going on across Adur and Worthing.

- 3.2. SustainableAW provides a framework to address the crisis in natural ecosystems and the Climate Emergency declared by members at the Joint Strategic Committee on 9 July 2019.
- 3.3. The plan incorporates actions put forward by the community at the Zero 2030 Community Climate Conference. It also helps to address many of the eighteen recommendations which were put forward at the Adur & Worthing Climate Assembly in Autumn 2020.
- 3.4. The councils' Carbon Reduction Plan sets out an ambitious, challenging and yet achievable pathway for the councils to become carbon neutral by 2030 and we are on track to achieve this.
- 3.5. This report focuses on the Council's commitments and progress against those. Mechanisms for reporting progress across partner organisations will be developed over the coming year as we build on existing partnerships and joint working.

#### **4. Overview of progress to date**

- 4.1. Climate and nature are core themes running throughout the new corporate plan, Our Plan. This demonstrates the councils' continued commitment to this important agenda and detailed action plans will be developed in the first half of 2023.
- 4.2. Fifteen of the eighteen recommendations put forward by the A&W Climate Assembly, are being delivered or underway (7 green - being delivered; 8 amber underway/ partially delivered, stalled due to lack of capacity; 3 red - not started due to lack of capacity/ not our remit so better partnership working required – e.g. WSCC responsible for transport).
- 4.3. Significant progress has been made in delivering the actions within the Sustainable AW framework. This includes a range of new partnerships and projects established as a result of the plan.
- 4.4. The Worthing Local Plan, adopted in 2022, incorporates the UN Sustainable Development Goals and features 11 policies that are relevant to climate change and sustainability.

#### **5. Carbon reduction: progress, successes and challenges**

- 5.1. Progress on work to reduce carbon emissions was reported to the Joint Strategic Sub Committees of both councils in November 2022. These

reports detail the performance for 2021/22 and set out the progress made to date.

In summary some of the key achievements in this area to date include:

- securing in excess of £7m from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) through the Heat Network Delivery Unit/Heat Network Investment Project (HNDU/HNIP), the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) and Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) to help fund the decarbonisation of its buildings.
- Installation of multiple ground source heat pumps at two Sheltered Housing sites
- Installation of air source heat pumps and efficiency works at the Shoreham Centre
- Installation of 6 solar PV arrays on council-owned buildings which have already generated over 100,000kWh of renewable electricity
- Installation of multiple energy efficiency measures on Civic Quarter Buildings

5.2. We are nearing the completion of the procurement of the Worthing Heat Network which will be a key milestone in decarbonising the heat supply in Worthing, starting with our own buildings, and those of key partners including, Worthing Theatres and Museums, Worthing Hospital, the Library and the Courts. It is anticipated that the network will expand to include existing off takers, new developments and residential customers. In support of this work we have further PSDS funding bids pending, worth £2.9 million for low carbon enabling works to the Civic Quarter and have supported the NHS in submitting a bid for approximately £13m for adaptations to the main hospital building prior to a heat network connection.

5.3. The Council's fleet is responsible for over 40% of scope 1 emissions. We have started to replace a smaller fleet (vans and small trucks) with electric vehicles. Most of our large fleet (refuse and recycling collection vehicles) are due for replacement in 2026/27. Replacement options include electric or hydrogen powered vehicles, both of which are rapidly evolving technologies with different performance and operational requirements. We have commissioned consultants to produce a Green Fleet Strategy which will help us set a roadmap to

effectively decarbonise the fleet by 2030. The strategy will be completed in the summer of 2023.

- 5.4. A new Sustainable Transport Group has been established. Officers from Adur & Worthing Councils and West Sussex County Council come together every 6 weeks to progress active travel plans and other key transport issues.

## **6. Nature: progress, successes and challenges**

- 6.1. The Parks team have been working hard over the last three years to explore opportunities where we can renature (also known as rewilding) within our parks and open spaces. The areas are all mapped and included on our website <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/renaturing/>
- 6.2. Feedback from local residents to the new approach to re-naturing is largely positive, although there have been some complaints which demonstrates the need for further communications, engagement and signage to inform and educate as to the importance of renaturing.
- 6.3. Parks and green spaces have also benefited from planting of thousands of bulbs, trees and wildflower areas to maximise and enhance biodiversity as well as changes in mowing regimes to aid recovery of these areas. Work has commenced on developing a community tree planting initiative. A report is planned for members in the coming weeks. The continued use of grey water saw nearly 100 '000 litres of grey water used by the parks team to water plants and trees.
- 6.4. Brooklands: the parks teams activity in the park has been building and this has seen the introduction of honey bees into the park and there is ambition to create a pollinator site nearby so as to provide a rich source for bees.
- 6.5. Over 400 trees have been planted across the site including 300 whips to establish hedgerow.
- 6.6. There are plans in place to improve the winter food source in the park by introducing areas of prairie planting in the autumn / winter of 2023. Once the construction works in the park is completed and the park is opened, work to establish a habitat and species baseline will begin in order that we can gain a greater understanding of what already exists in the park. Work to transform the once manicured amenity grass into meadow grass has also begun and this work will continue throughout the coming year.

- 6.7. Foreshore: Following the fishing trawler ban the foreshore is already showing signs of ecological recovery and continued work with a wide range of stakeholders including the local fishing community. There is continued collaboration with the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project, Blue Marine Foundation and the Sussex Wildlife Trust to continue the progress being made.
- 6.8. The Coastal Office have developed and introduced new educational initiatives including the introduction Rockpool Reef and Marine Warrior and are also continuing to support initiatives such as The Big Seaweed Search.
- 6.9. Cissbury Fields is a 100 acre site in the South Downs National Park owned by Worthing Borough Council. A project team has been exploring the potential to restore species-rich chalk grassland there, working in partnership with the SDNPA and Findon Valley Residents Association to achieve this vision. Taking a participatory approach the council and SDNPA have been building relationships with the community, dog walkers, ecologists and farmers. A co-developed management plan for the site has been produced which hopefully will lead to greater buy-in from the community when the grazing animals arrive on site in the future.
- 6.10. Options to restore intertidal habitat (saltmarsh and mudflat) at Pad Farm (45 acre site owned by Adur District Council) are progressing, albeit slowly due to recent staff changes. Funding is available from multiple sources, including the Environment Agency and Highways England and this is being progressed via the Pad Farm project team.
- 6.11. Working with the Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust as lead applicant, we submitted a funding bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for “Adur Community Wetlands” at New Salts Farm. This followed significant community engagement which helped shape the vision and plans reflected in the funding bid for habitat restoration alongside community food growing space and an extensive range of activities and opportunities for the local community, particularly focussing on young people 16-25 yr olds.
- 6.12. We have secured multiple funding bids to progress nature recovery at a landscape scale, including:
  - 6.12.1. DEFRA Test & Trials funding (£76k, Dec 2021): to understand the funding and partnerships needed to restore intertidal habitats locally. This project has now been delivered and

progress and information presented back to DEFRA which helps shape and inform national policy.

- 6.12.2. DEFRA Natural Environment Readiness Fund (£79k, Sept 2021) to develop the UK's first kelp carbon code
- 6.12.3. Coast to Capital LEP (£74k, Dec 2021) for core development of Sussex Bay. This is progressing well with the development of branding and a website, further funding bid development, engagement with coastal authorities and other stakeholders and plans for the constitution of Sussex Bay as a charity will continue in 2023.
- 6.12.4. DEFRA Landscape Scale Recovery Funding (£500k over two years) led by Knepp Wildland Foundation, ADC is one of 27 landowners engaged in the project to restore the Adur River; we also sit on the Project Steering Group.
- 6.12.5. Instigated a new Research Network, the Solent to Sussex Bay Seascape Restoration Network, which has now secured £173k NERC funding and £23k Environment Agency (3Cs) funding which will enable Portsmouth, Brighton, Sussex and Surrey University members to work together to develop an integrated seascape restoration strategy
- 6.13. Natural England has committed funding for the production of two or three interpretation panels about the Adur Estuary SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and they are soon to carry out a full condition assessment of the SSSI as they are concerned about its continued decline.
- 6.14. There is a new email newsletter established to share information with the wider community from the Adur Estuary Sub-Group of the Catchment Partnership. This follows a meeting with concerned citizens. To receive the e-newsletter updates people can email [adurestuary@oart.org.uk](mailto:adurestuary@oart.org.uk) and ask to be added to the mailing list.

## **7. Circular economy: progress, successes and challenges**

- 7.1. Work on the circular economy has so far largely focussed on our residential and commercial waste collection services. In October 2022 we introduced a kerbside collection service for small electrical items

which has proven very popular, and we estimate we will collect approximately one tonne of material per week.

- 7.2. We formally launched our commercial food waste collection service in January 2022 and we have been gradually growing our customer base. We now have 27 customers including restaurants, cafe's, hotels and canteens. In the coming year we will continue to promote recycling and food waste collection to our commercial customers.
- 7.3. Funded by WRAP, we have completed a feasibility study on food waste collection in Adur and Worthing. The study modelled different collection options in terms of cost, performance and ease of use. We are awaiting announcements from the government regarding capital and new burdens funding to support the roll out of food waste collections across Adur and Worthing. In the meantime officers are scoping a trial of the service for a small scale roll out, subject to resources and engaging with West Sussex County Council (the waste disposal authority) on the end to end process.
- 7.4. We have significantly stepped up communications around waste minimisation and recycling, including Blogs by our Waste Project Officer and seasonal campaigns (eg around Christmas, and linking to national campaigns).
- 7.5. There is a significant amount of community led circular economy work in both Adur and Worthing delivered by a diverse range of re-use, repair and recycling organisations with a significant amount of knowledge and expertise. These include community led composting, scrap stores, repair cafes, and re-use organisations. These organisations as well as the business sector play a significant role in creating a circular economy. As part of Our Plan, we will start to build on existing networks to help define our shared priorities and actions to improve our resource efficiency and jointly work towards a circular economy.

## **8. Work planned for 2023**

- 8.1. Within the framework of Our Plan, we will develop a roadmap and action plans to address carbon reduction, nature restoration and building a circular economy. These road maps will build on the existing work underway.

- 8.2. We will continue to deliver the recommendations from the A&W Climate Assembly, working together with the wider community to pick up on the recommendations that have stalled and prioritising these for action.

## **9. Engagement and Communication**

- 9.1. Revising the Sustainable AW climate and nature plan involved an extensive period of engagement with council officers and the wider community (over 200 organisations involved in the process). This engagement has continued with many new partnerships and projects being developed to ensure the work is delivered.
- 9.2. We continue to share our climate and nature related work through blogs, webinars, website updates and press releases. Due to other priorities we no longer have the capacity to produce the Sustainable AW online magazine at present.
- 9.3. Officers attended the Green Dreams Festival 2022 (Worthing) with a programme of activities to share with the local community, including talks and information from Park Rangers, Highdown Gardens, Waste and Sustainability teams. Over 3000 people attended the festival and feedback on the stand was very positive.
- 9.4. Progress of the A&W Climate Assembly has been shared through Officer presentations at conferences/webinars with the local community, local businesses (e.g. Adur & Worthing Business Partnership and Worthing & Adur Chamber of Commerce breakfast meetings); local and regional organisations (e.g. Shoreham Port's Sustainability Week; South Downs National Park Authority Member's Workshop; SouthEast Climate Alliance conference 2022) and national organisations (Defra policy workshop; Involve conference).
- 9.5. Officers have also shared details around the development, delivery and progress made since the A&W Climate Assembly with over 15 Local Authorities nationally seeking an understanding around the process, this includes advice given to the Welsh Assembly, and governments across Europe. This demonstrates the Council's Leadership in taking this approach.
- 9.6. In November 2021, we held the Climate Action AW fortnight, with webinars for local residents and for AWC employees to share progress since the A&W Climate Assembly. We also created and shared community-led video case studies to inspire people & businesses to



take action themselves. Extensive information collated around climate action is available on our website

<https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/climate-action/>

- 9.7. Local businesses, including Shoreham Port Authority, also feature within Low Carbon Business case study videos produced by WSCC.
- 9.8. Following on from the deliberative democracy approach trialled at the A&W Climate Assembly, the councils have showed continued commitment to taking a participatory approach, for example through extensive engagement we have co-developed site management plan at Cissbury Fields (Worthing), and co-created a National Lottery Heritage Fund bid for a climate & nature related project at New Salts Farm (Adur).
- 9.9. Work undertaken within the ongoing project in Lancing, Now and into the Future, has involved extensive engagement and participation with the local community. The environment is one of the core concerns of local residents which will be reflected in future funding bids for the area.
- 9.10. Engagement and communication will continue to be a key element of our work in this area, as successful delivery of this agenda requires joint working across communities, community sector, public sector and business organisations.

## **10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1 There are no unbudgeted implications associated with this report.

Finance Officer: Sarah Gobey

Date: 8/2/2023

## **11. Legal Implications**

- 11.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 came into force on 27th June 2019 and increased the UK's 2050 net greenhouse gas emissions reduction target under The Climate Change Act 2008 from 80% to 100%. The Climate Change Act requires the government to set legally-binding 'carbon budgets' to act as stepping stones towards the 2050 target. A carbon budget is a cap on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted in the UK over a five-year period.

- 11.2 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 11.3 s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation
- 11.4 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 11.5 The Council is to ensure that any grant funding received is used as required by the grant funding terms and conditions.

Legal Officer: Joanne Lee

Date: 07/02/2023

### **Background Papers**

- [Sustainable AW framework 2021-2023](#)
- <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/sustainable-aw/carbon-reduction/>
- [JSC paper \(July 2021\): SustainableAW update on progress and targets](#)
- [JSC paper \(Dec 2019\): SustainableAW Refresh - increasing ambition and deepening engagement](#)
- [Sustainable AW 2020-2023](#) (previous plan)
- [Sustainable AW 2019-2020](#) (original plan)
- [Adur & Worthing Carbon Neutral Plan 2019](#)
- [Adur & Worthing Climate Assembly Recommendations Report 2020](#)
- [A Carbon Neutral Study for Adur & Worthing 2019](#)
- [2021/22 Carbon Reduction Performance - JSC Report Adur](#)
- [2021/22 Carbon Reduction Performance - JSC Report Worthing](#)

### **Officer Contact Details:-**

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## **Sustainability & Risk Assessment**

- This report details progress being made in relation to the climate and nature agendas. The activities reported seek to reduce our carbon emissions, mitigate climate change and improve biodiversity.

### **1. Economic**

- Creating a more sustainable place to live and work contributes to creating a more prosperous place, attracting business and investment.

### **2. Social**

#### **2.1 Social Value**

- The collaborative approach benefits local community organisations and businesses. Action under the food, energy, transport and water strands will benefit local residents and those on low incomes providing cost savings from energy, water and transport.

#### **2.2 Equality Issues**

- Details of any equality issues, any equality impact assessment undertaken, or how the proposal impacts on access or participation.

#### **2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

- Issue considered - no implications

#### **2.4 Human Rights Issues**

Issue considered - no implications

### **3. Environmental**

- The report outlines progress made on key strategic work to protect and enhance our environment.

### **4. Governance**

- The work set out in this report aligns to the priorities in Our Plan, relating to Thriving Environment, Thriving People, Thriving Economy and Thriving Place.