

Three Rivers District Council

**Climate Change, Leisure and Community
Committee Report
Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan**

Date: 06/02/2024

Report Originator:	Head of Service sponsor:	Date Originated:	
Elen Dolder & Joanna Hewitson	Emma Sheridan	29/01/2024	
Lead Member Name: Jon Tankard	Area of Responsibility:		
CMT Date:	06/02/2024		
JLT Date (if applicable):	19/02/2024		
REASON FOR REPORT			
Reason	JLT/CMT Feedback for Officer and further instructions		Recommendation to JLT/CMT:
This report is being brought to CMT and JLT to consider the draft Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan for 2024 - 2027	Finance Yes/No Date:	Legal Yes/No Date:	Head of Service/Other Yes/No Date:
Consultees to be consulted following CMT before report publication. Other officers and heads of service relevant to the action plan have been consulted.	Chief Executive	Shared Director of Finance	
PROPOSED ROUTE FOR FURTHER APPROVAL			
			Date
Committee: CCLC: Climate Change, Leisure, and Community			13/03/2024
Council (if required)			N/A

CLIMATE CHANGE, LEISURE, AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE – 13/03/2024

PART I

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2024 – 2027 ADSPH

1 Summary

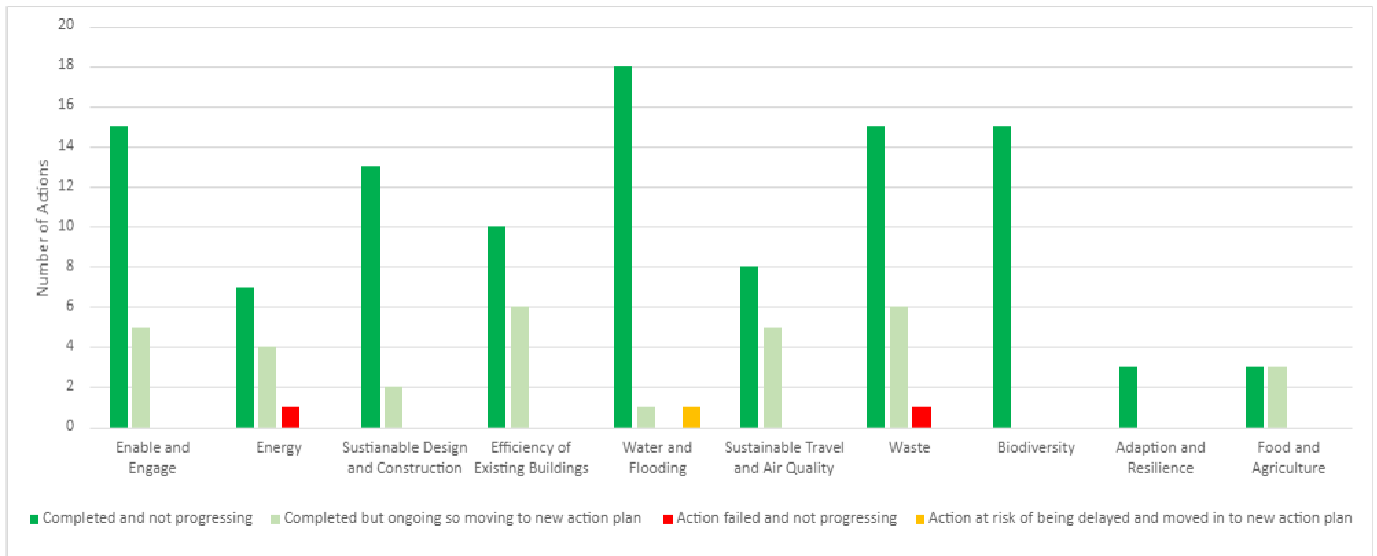
- 1.1 This report provides the final update on the council's performance against the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy and associated Action Plan 2021-2023 detailed at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 A revised Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy (Appendix 2) 2023 - 2027 (Appendix 1) was adopted by the Council on December 12th, 2023. This report presents the new Action Plan (Appendix 3) for delivery of the new strategy.

2 Details

2.1 Following a declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019, recognising the crucial role that Local Authorities play in delivering on national and international climate mitigation (and adaptation) policies and targets, a Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy and associated Action Plan was produced in 2021. Since 2021, the Council has been working on the action plan, carrying out a wide range of projects and initiatives to lead the Council to net-zero carbon by 2030, and support the district in being net-zero carbon by 2045.

Figure 1:

Graph of Action Plan 2021 – 2023 action status.



2.2 Since the last Action Plan update at CCLC (Climate Change, Leisure, and Community) in October '23 the following further achievements have been made:

- Officers organised and supported a Youth Council event with a focus on Sustainability.
- Close to 140 homes have been retrofitted to be warmer, healthier, and greener.
- Three Rivers was represented by Officers and local stakeholders at the annual HCCSP (Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership) conference.
- Improvements have been made to the Grand Union Canal Towpath.
- Clothes Swap carried out at the Watersmeet Christmas Market.
- 'Nappy Natters' took place in libraries across the district.

2.2 The new Action Plan covering the period 2023-27 details a range of major initiatives and actions TRDC will implement to tackle the climate emergency, biodiversity loss and several other key environmental problems locally.

These initiatives include:

- Produce building action plans to decarbonise the core council buildings

- Investigate and determine the feasibility of renewable energy projects on car parks owned by the Council including consideration of community energy financing.
- Prepare and implement an EV (electric vehicle) strategy to guide the growth of EV infrastructure in the district.
- Investigate and implement EV charging in selected Council owned car parks.
- Establish a route to zero for the council fleet as part of the new 5-year fleet procurement plan.
- Include actions arising from the risk register for adaptation and resilience against the impacts of climate change into council service plans
- Review staff benefits package connected to sustainability and publicise.
- Encourage and support the 'able to pay sector' to retrofit their home, through projects such as 'One Stop Shop'.
- Continue to manage and deliver grant-funded domestic retrofit schemes and take relevant grant-funded retrofit opportunities as they arise.
- Identification and implementation of cycling infrastructure (routes and equipment) on our own land.
- Encourage upcycling, use of second-hand goods, and reduction in buying new goods to reduce consumption.
- Plot spaces managed for nature across Three Rivers to identify the best opportunities to encourage and connect nature through natural corridors.
- Support the ColneCAN Smarter Water Catchment funding bid to improve water quality and river restoration.
- Deliver the Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Pilot a Transition Streets project in the district to explore the impact and effectiveness of community-led approaches to sustainable behavioural change.
- Encourage uptake of the Council's sustainability grants by community groups in the district, with emphasis on community gardens and other community led initiatives.
- Encourage residents to prepare their homes and adapt behaviours to lessen the impact of severe weather.
- Address sustainability issues impacting on the wider determinants of health and reduce disparity in impacts of climate change on various parts of the community.

2.3 Status of Council Emissions Action Plan 2024 – 2027 Dashboard

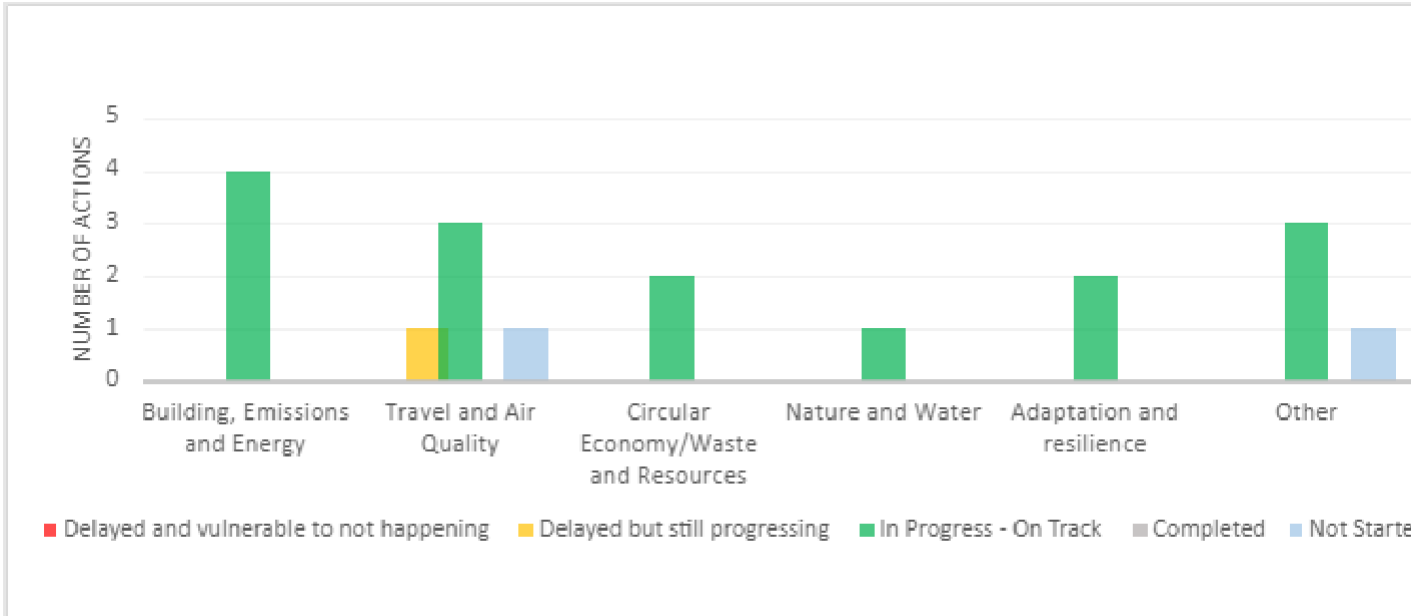
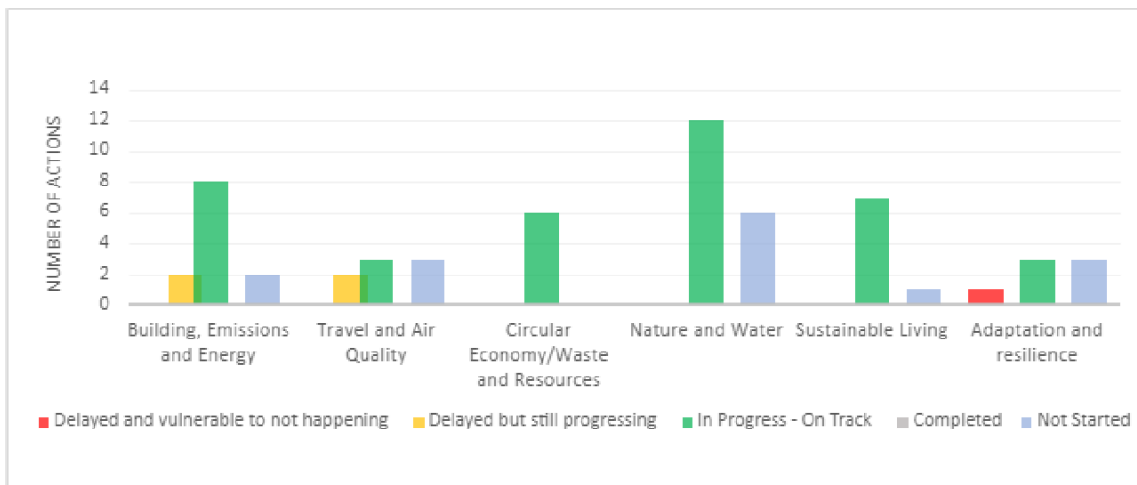


Figure 3:

Status of District Emissions Action Plan 2024 – 2027 Dashboard



2.4 The action plan has been divided into two sections; one for the council's own emissions to work towards the 2030 net-zero carbon target, and a second to enable and inspire the district level ambition to achieve net-zero carbon by 2045. This reflects the structure of the new strategy, to differentiate the actions relating to the two separate targets and timelines. This is in line with feedback from the consultation which requested a clearer structure to the strategy.

2.5 The action plan relating to the council's own emissions covers the following key areas: Housing, Buildings, Energy and Emissions, Travel and Air Quality, Circular Economy/Waste and Resources, Nature and Water and Adaptation and Resilience.

- 2.6 The action plan relating to the district's emissions cover the following key areas: Housing, Buildings, Energy and Emissions, Travel and Air Quality, Circular Economy/Waste and Resources, Nature and Water, Sustainable Living and Adaptation and Resilience
- 2.7 The Action Plan is a live document to enable it to be responsive to legislative, scientific, technical developments, emerging grant funding opportunities and pace of delivery. Progress on the Action Plan will be shared via dashboards on the Council's website, updated every 6 months.
- 2.8 The Climate Change, Leisure, and Community Committee will continue to receive biannual updates.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council declared a climate emergency and has agreed a strategy as noted above. Approval of the new action plan will enable officers and partners to work together to deliver the aims and objectives of the strategy.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1 The budgets associated with the actions are identified within the report at Appendix 3. Most actions are achievable within existing budgets; however, some will need require additional funding. If the outcomes of the actions where further research and work is required to develop projects, future reports to Policy and Resources will be developed or external grants may be sought.
- 4.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators.
- CP50 District carbon emissions reported as tCO_{2e} equivalent.
 - CP52 Council Operations Carbon emissions reported as tCO_{2e} equivalent.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 All actions are either covered within existing budgets or will be managed by separate reports to committee, growth bids or external grants subject to additional research and development.
- 5.2 The Net Zero Living programme for Fast Followers managed by Innovate UK will allow this council to explore innovative finance options, establish what is and what is not possible to achieve net-zero – and try to overcome the limited options available under existing council budgets.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The recommendations in this report are fully in line with the expectations on local authorities to take local action on the climate issue contained in the Climate Change Act 2008.
- 6.2 Several projects involved in the delivery of the Action Plan will require contract preparation and approval.
- 6.3 All elements of the Action Plan will need to be considered alongside the Council's legal duties and powers.

7 Staffing Implications

- 7.1 As the plan indicates all service areas across the Local Authority are and will be involved with the delivery of the Action Plan. The delivery may have impact on staffing requirements. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis as projects are scoped and implemented and any additional staffing will be agreed as part of project initiation.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 8.1 A Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment has been completed and can be found at Appendix 4. There are no negative impacts identified as arising from the proposals within the Action Plan. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for specific actions and proposals on a project-by-project basis.

9 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

- 9.1 The Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan proposed in this report will support the Council and District to reduce emissions to net-zero carbon and increase sustainability across a wide range of areas. Furthermore, the Action Plan will support the mitigation the impacts of the Climate Emergency.
- 9.2 A sustainability impact assessment has been undertaken resulting in a score of 3.8

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment, and energy	3.75
Travel	3.33
Goods and Consumption	4
Ecology	4
Adaptation	3.50
Engagement and Influence	3.8
Total Overall Average Score	3.8

10 Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 Achieving the actions in this Action Plan will improve community safety across the district through reducing the risks associated with the Climate Emergency, including wildfires, floods, and heatwaves.

11 Public Health implications

- 11.1 The Action Plan should contribute to a prevention of deterioration of health and well-being issues arising from the consequences of climate change such as overheating, skin cancers, decline in productivity, and respiratory illnesses. Improvements in Home Energy Efficiency through retrofit work will improve environmental quality within homes and reduce energy bills, thereby assisting in reduction of financial anxiety related to household bills and benefitting physical

health by improving the warmth and air quality within homes and preventing damp and mould.

12 Customer Services Centre Implications

- 12.1 The customer service centre will be expected to answer straightforward questions regarding projects as they progress for which they will either receive training or be able to find answers on the website.

13 Communications and Website Implications

- 13.1 The website is crucial to this strategy as the repository for the information about all relevant projects and initiatives.
- 13.2 The district emissions ambition demonstrates the need for sustained engagement with the district to encourage a switch to more sustainable behaviours. The climate team works closely with the communications team and will continue to do so.
- 13.3 Briefings are held with members as required to optimise the chances of success of the various initiatives.
- 13.4 Active engagement will continue to be essential with the Local Strategic Partnership, parish councils, schools, resident associations, housing associations, activist, and conservation groups.

14 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 14.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk> with the climate emergency listed as a strategic risk.
- 14.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Strategy and Partnerships service plan(s). Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

14.3

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response	Risk Rating
The Council fails to act to reduce its' CO2 emissions	The Council 2030 pledge is unlikely to be met unless a co-ordinated programme of activity is implemented. The Innovate UK Net Zero Living Programme should be fully supported to ensure the council benefits from external help whilst it is available and may lead to further funding opportunities. This will lead to reputational damage. And importantly the Council will not be addressing the Climate Emergency and thus will contribute further to the increase in global warming and its' consequences.	For the Committee to approve the Final Strategy and agree the action plan for delivery.	Treat	6

14.4 In the officers' opinion the risk that the Council fails to act to reduce its' emissions would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore presents a strategic risk.

Recommendation

14.5 That:

The Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee approve the updated Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action plan 2024 – 2027.

Report prepared by: Joanna Hewitson, Climate and Sustainability Strategy Officer, and Elen Roberts Climate, Sustainability and Recycling Officer

Background Papers

None

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: HISTORIC Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan 2021 – 2023

Appendix 2: TRDC Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy 2023 - 2027

Appendix 3: Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy Action Plan 2024 - 2027

Appendix 4: Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan 2024 - 2027 Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment

Appendix 5: Climate Emergency and Sustainability ACTION Plan 2024 - 2027 Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

