



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT COVER SHEET

Title of Report:	Climate Change and Nature Action Plan – Review of Progress 2022/23	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
Meeting of:	Corporate Management Team - 19 th July 2023	X
	Pre Cabinet - 27 th July 2023	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group - 3 rd & 9 th Aug 2023	X
	Cabinet – 21 st Aug 2023	
	Audit Committee [DATE] / Scrutiny Regeneration, Development and Market Hall Committee [DATE] / Scrutiny Health and Well Being Committee [DATE] / Scrutiny Climate Change and Environment Committee / Scrutiny Value for Money Council Committee [DATE]	



Is this an Executive Decision:	YES	Is this a Key Decision:	YES
Is this in the Forward Plan:	YES	Is the Report Confidential:	NO
If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:	[NA]		

Essential Signatories:

ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE

Monitoring Officer: **John Teasdale**

Date Signature

Interim Chief Finance Officer: **Lisa Turner**

Date Signature

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Cabinet

Date: 21st Aug 2023

REPORT TITLE: Climate Change and Nature Action Plan – Review of Progress 2022/23

PORTFOLIO: Cllr Fletcher – Environment and Climate Change

HEAD OF SERVICE: John Teasdale

CONTACT OFFICER: Mark Jeffcote Ext. No. x1134

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All Wards

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present progress on the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan at the end of the 2022/23 financial year.
- 1.2. The report also contains the latest CO₂ emissions for the Borough and the Council.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. East Staffordshire Borough Council declared a 'Climate Emergency' in August 2020 and has pledged to make the Council's operations and activities carbon neutral by 2040 and aspires to make the Borough carbon neutral by 2050.
- 2.2. The latest CO₂ emissions for the Borough show a reduction of 39.1% between 2005 and 2021 from 1075.2 kilotonnes CO₂ to 655.3 kilotonnes CO₂. However, there was an increase of 8.8% between 2020 and 2021 (see Figure 1) largely due to COVID-19 restrictions easing and colder temperatures increasing the use of heating in buildings^{1,2}.

¹ [UK local authority greenhouse gas emissions estimates 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

² The increase in emissions in 2021 was a national trend across local authority areas and not specific to East Staffordshire.

- 2.3. The latest CO₂ emissions for the Council show a reduction of 40.26% between 2009/10 and 2022/23 from 3547 tonnes of CO₂e to 2119 tonnes³. In addition, there was a small decrease from 2122 tonnes in 2021/22. This continues the year-on-year downward trend (see Figure 2).
- 2.4. The Climate Change and Nature Action Plan contains 64 current actions (Appendix 1). The progress of each individual action has been assessed and given a RAG rating (RED, AMBER, GREEN). Actions shaded in GREY have not yet started. Newly added actions have not been rated. Progress can be summarised as follows:
- GREEN – 40 actions
 - AMBER – 0 actions
 - RED – 4 actions
 - GREY – 10 actions
 - Newly added – 10 actions
- 2.5. The 15 completed actions are listed in Appendix 2.
- 2.6. The Action Plan has also been restructured to reflect the four aims of the Climate Change and Nature Strategy published in October 2022. Additional sections have been added for cross-cutting actions that contribute to several aims. The six main sections of the revised Action Plan are:
1. Aim 1 – Protect climate from man-made climate change
 2. Aim 2 – Adapt to the consequences of climate change
 3. Aim 3 – Protect and enhance nature
 4. Aim 4 – Use resources wisely, and minimise waste and pollution
 5. Cross-cutting actions
 6. Communication and Engagement

3. **Background**

- 3.1. East Staffordshire Borough Council declared a ‘Climate Emergency’ in August 2020 and has pledged to make the Council’s operations and activities carbon neutral by 2040 and aspires to make the Borough carbon neutral by 2050.
- 3.2. In February 2022, Cabinet agreed to extend the ‘Climate Emergency’ declaration to a ‘Climate & Ecological Emergency’ declaration to acknowledge the global, national and local loss of biodiversity. In March 2022, Council approved a Nature Recovery motion presented by the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

4. **Contribution to Corporate Priorities**

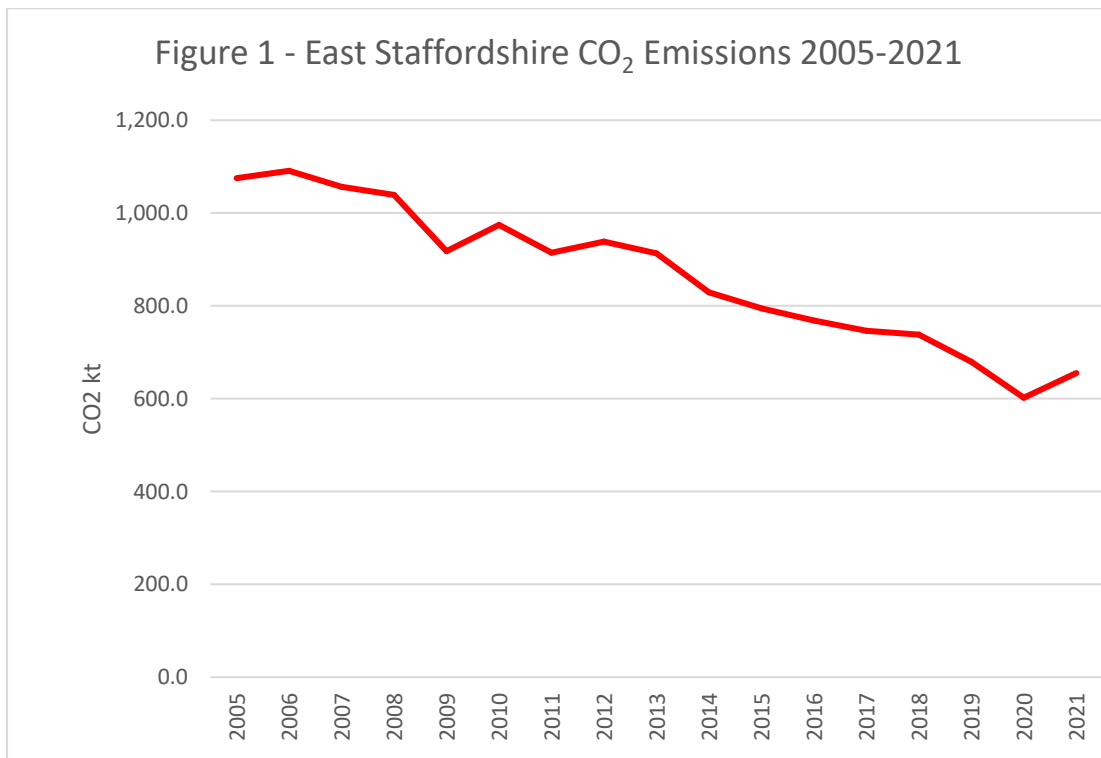
³ The emissions data for the Borough and the emissions data for the council’s own operations and estate have different base years because the data for the Borough is provided by the Government whereas the council data is calculated internally

- 4.1. Protecting the climate, adapting to the future consequences of climate change and supporting nature's recovery will contribute to work in the Environment and Climate Change portfolio and towards developing a Green New Deal for East Staffordshire.
- 4.2. This report meets the requirement of the Corporate Plan 2023/24 target ECC01 to deliver a third year review of the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan.

5. CO₂ Emissions

5.1. CO₂ emissions for East Staffordshire

5.1.1. In 2021, data provided by BEIS⁴ showed that the total CO₂ emissions for the Borough were 655.3 kilotonnes. This represents a 39.1% reduction from 1075.2 kilotonnes in 2005. However, there was an increase of 8.8% from 602.2 kilotonnes in 2020 (see Figure 1) largely due to COVID-19 restrictions easing and colder temperatures increasing the use of heating in buildings^{5,6}.



⁴ [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

⁵ [UK local authority greenhouse gas emissions estimates 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁶ The increase in emissions in 2021 was a national trend across local authority areas and not specific to East Staffordshire.

5.1.2. Table 1 shows the CO₂ emissions by sector for 2021. Transport, domestic energy use and industry & commerce are all responsible for similar proportions and together they account for over 95% of emissions.

5.1.3. There are actions in the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan (Appendix 1) to address the various sources of emissions. They include actions to address emissions from residential buildings and road transport, and across several sectors through the Local Plan and regeneration projects.

Table 1 – East Staffordshire CO₂ Emissions for 2021 by Sector

Sector	ktCO₂	%
Transport	228.3	34.8%
Industry	201.6	30.1%
Domestic	170.9	26.1%
Commercial	34.9	5.3%
Agriculture	25.8	3.9%
Public sector	20.1	3.1%
Waste management	0.1	0%
Land use, land use change and forestry	-26.3	-4%
Total	655.3	100%

5.2. CO₂ emissions for the Council (including leisure facilities and idverde vehicle fleet)

5.2.1. In 2009/10, the council produced a total of 3547 tonnes of CO₂e. In 2022/23, that amount had reduced to 2119 tonnes of CO₂e. This represents a welcome 40.26% reduction (Figure 2). In addition, there has been a small decrease from 2122 tonnes in 2021/22.

5.2.2. The council's emissions are broken down in Figure 3. The council's vehicle fleet accounted for 38% of the emissions and energy use in corporate buildings (gas and electric) approximately 18%. The council's outsourced services accounted for the majority of emissions, another 43%. The outsourced services included are the leisure facilities at Meadowside,

Uttoxeter and Shobnall and the fuel used by the landscape contractor's (idverde) vehicle fleet.

5.2.3. The leisure facilities alone accounted for 38% of the total emissions. Measures such as LED lighting have already been installed to reduce emissions. Going forward the Council has set up a quarterly meeting with Everyone Active to investigate ways to reduce emissions even further. Everyone Active has appointed specialist consultants to support the work.

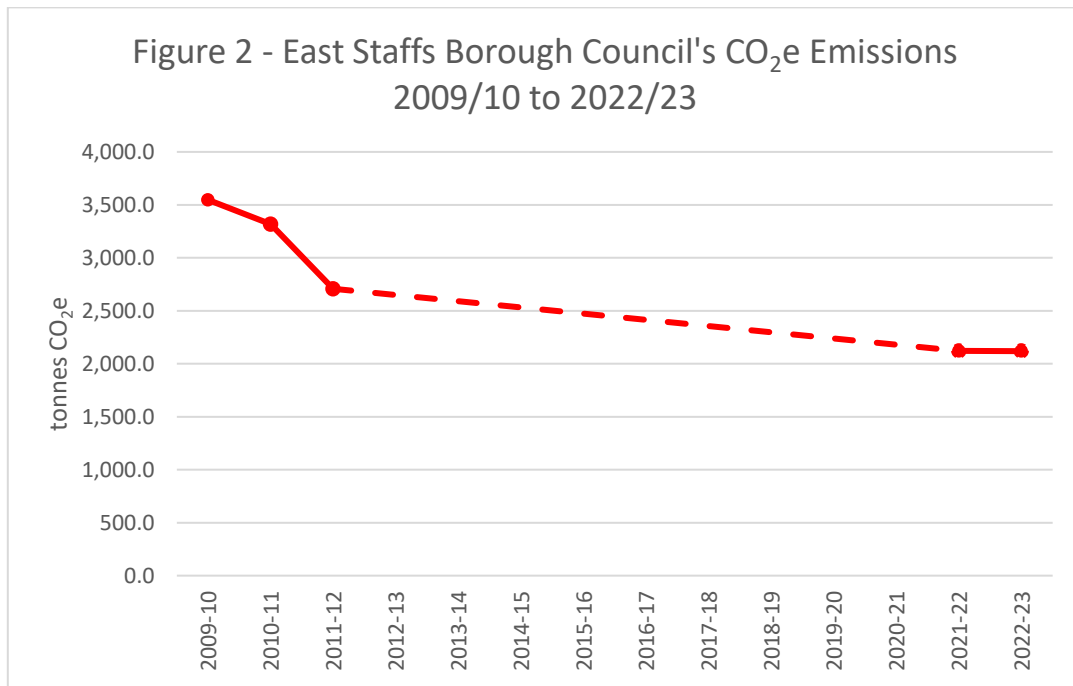
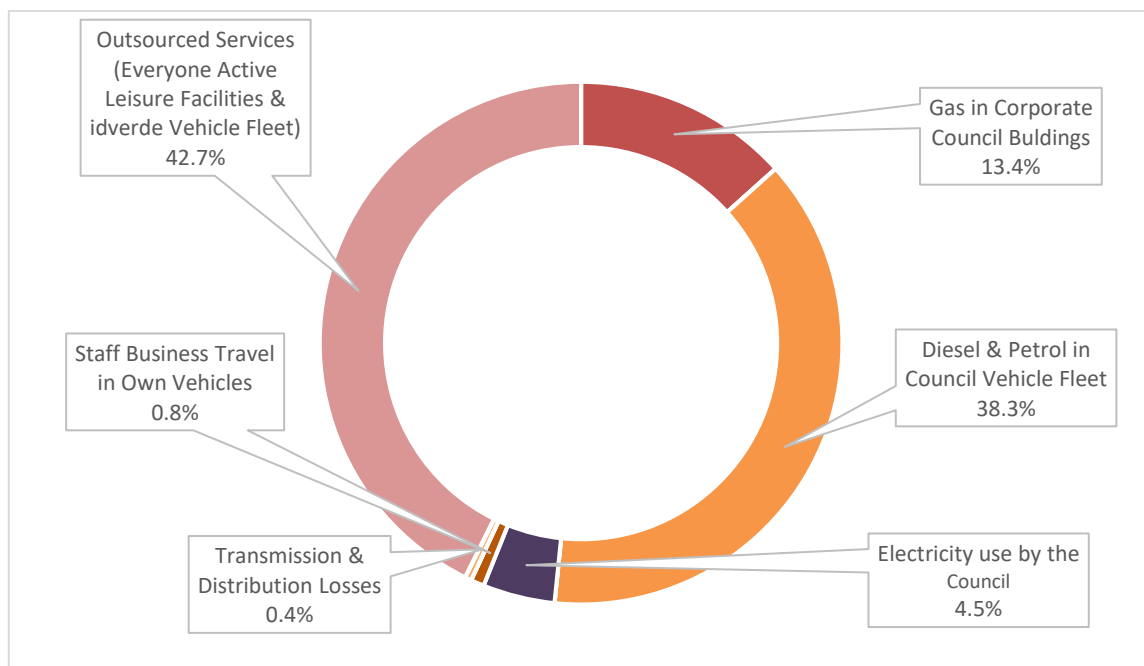


Figure 3 - East Staffs Borough Council's CO₂e Emissions for 2022/23 by Source



6. Climate Change and Nature Action Plan

6.1. Progress with existing actions

6.1.1. The Climate Change and Nature Action Plan contains 64 current actions (Appendix 1).

6.1.2. The progress has been assessed and given a RAG rating (RED, AMBER, GREEN). Actions shaded in GREY have not yet started. Newly added actions have not been rated.

6.1.3. Progress can be summarised as follows:

- GREEN – 40 actions
- AMBER – 0 actions
- RED – 4 actions
- GREY – 10 actions
- Newly added - 10 actions

6.1.4. The 15 completed actions are listed in Appendix 2.

6.1.5. Notable progress since the last monitoring report includes:

Action 1.3.2 – Partnership working with Staffordshire Warmer Homes

The new funding regimes are LADS (Local Authority Delivery Scheme) and HUGS (Home Upgrade Grant Scheme). LADS has delivered energy efficiency measures to 45 properties in East Staffs with an EPC of E or below and an estimated spend of £9k per property (£412k in total to date). This includes the installation of solar PV in over 38 properties along with loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and solid wall insulation. Five properties are in the process of receiving funding through HUGS and properties have had measures installed, 3 of which have received solar PV along with loft insulation and 1 property has received an air source heat pump along with loft insulation. Spend to date is £48K.

An additional £1,660,000 in funding has been secured for ESBC through HUGS 2 which will be delivered from June 2023. It is estimated that this will improve 92 properties with a range of measures including solar PV, air source heat pumps, and a range of insulation and energy efficiency measures with an estimated £18K per household.

Action 1.3.3 – Partnership working with Beat the Cold

The advice service provided by Beat the Cold with funding from the Council resulted in advice being given to 468 vulnerable households during 2022/23. It has created £7000 worth of savings from Warmer Homes discount referrals and £44,500 worth of savings from referrals to water tariff support. 217 households have also been referred for heat grants up to £450 per household with potential savings totalling £76,150.

Action 1.4.1 – Electric vehicle charging points in Council car parks

Three floor mounted Electric Vehicle Charging Points have been installed in Coopers Square Car Park in Burton. These became operational on 19 July following the approval of an EDR to set the charging tariff at 79p per kWh for the rapid charger and 59p/kWh for the fast chargers. This is based on the current electricity rates which are set until September 2023. Tariffs will be subject to review before the 30 September 2023 (revised electricity tariff comes into force) and will take into account actual usage as well as the revised tariffs.

An additional four locations will be identified as part of the Corporate Plan which will be submitted for approval in November 2023.

Partnership working continues with Staffordshire County Council to support Electric Vehicle charging installation for on-street parking using LEVI funding.

Action 1.4.4 – Cycle path and infrastructure improvements

The Burton Towns Fund programme is funding cycle lane improvements connecting the Train Station to the town centre, covering the non-pedestrianised areas of Station Street. Future work will be delivered as part of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, funded by other sources.

Action 1.7.2 – Green energy tariff for the Council

The Council's electricity supply will move from a standard energy mix to Green electricity for the contract period 1st October 2023 to 30th September 2024. Based on the current forecast, the additional premium (£4,977) can be met from existing electricity budgets as the estimated increase in October 2023 is lower than anticipated. This assumes the price increase remains consistent with ESPO's estimate.

The Council can reconsider whether it wishes to maintain a green electricity supply in May 2024, ahead of the contract year October 2024 to September 2025.

Action 3.2 - District license for strategic Great Crested Newt conservation

The first Great Crested Newt offsetting site has been funded through developer contributions at Brankley Pastures nature reserve near Barton-under-Needwood. A pond has been dug in a suitable location with good surrounding terrestrial habitat. Planning authorities in Staffordshire have a license to grant permission to developers to progress developments without costly delays for seasonal newt surveys on the condition they pay a specified amount into an offsetting fund. The offsetting scheme is run by the NatureSpace Partnership.

Action 3.3 – Tree planting using Council grown plants

Approximately 300 trees were planted on Council-owned sites during the last planting season. In Pennycroft Park, approximately 100 trees were planted that had been grown by the Council avoiding the need to purchase from an external supplier.

Action 3.4 – Relaxed mowing regimes to enhance biodiversity

Relaxed mowing and/or wildflower planting continues to expand across Council owned sites with different planting regimes and mixes trialled to achieve maximum effect. Fourteen locations have been prepared for 2023-24.

6.1.6. Four actions in the Action Plan have been rated as Red:

Action 1.6.1 – Plant Carbon Capture Areas with native tree species

Many trees were planted during 2022-23 (see Action 3.3 above) but none were designated as Carbon Capture Areas. The revised Tree Policy includes provision for identifying planting locations and as the new Policy was only approved in February the planting of the Carbon Capture Areas will begin during the next tree planting season later this year. **It is recommended that the target date for planting the Carbon Capture Areas is revised to Q4 2023/24.**

Action 1.7.9 – Review the Staff Travel Plan

A survey to better understand staff travel behaviour and the perceived barriers to change is currently being conducted. The results of the survey will be used to inform the revised Staff Travel Plan. **It is recommended that the target date for reviewing the staff travel plan is changed to Q4 2023/24.**

Action 1.7.14 – Review the recycling provision in Council buildings

A more settled work pattern is now in place following the COVID-19 pandemic so the timing is more appropriate for a review of the recycling provision in Council buildings. **It is recommended that the target date for reviewing the recycling provision in Council buildings is revised to Q4 2023/24.**

Action 4.3.2 – Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP)

Transport is one of the key sources of air pollution and therefore Staffordshire County Council's Highway Department are a key partner and consultee for the AQAP and producing the AQAP requires their input. However, an update on the actions from the Integrated Transport Strategy for East Staffordshire has been delayed. **It is recommended that the target date for the Air Quality Action Plan is revised to Q4 2023/24 in line with the Corporate Plan.**

6.2. Revised actions

6.2.1. It is recommended that one action in the Action Plan is revised:

Action 4.3.3 – Continue to encourage more environmentally friendly taxis as appropriate through licensing policy

The Corporate Plan requires a review of licensing policy in consultation with the trade to ensure drivers are supported in the transition to more environmentally friendly taxis. This could include hybrid or electric taxis when drivers are ready to upgrade. The Staffordshire Joint Sustainability Board are currently reviewing ways to support this transition. **It is recommended that this action is changed to reflect the Corporate Plan.**

6.3. Actions to be deleted from the Plan

6.3.1. It is recommended that one action is deleted from the Action Plan:

Action 1.7.15 – Achieving ISO14001 EMS certification

ISO14001 is an externally audited and certified environmental management system suited to large organisations. Gaining certification requires all of the elements of a management system but not necessarily a large improvement in environmental performance. Preparing and managing paperwork, arranging audit visits and closing out audit findings is a significant administrative burden. The auditors are also required to focus on legal compliance (eg. chemical storage, waste disposal etc) as a priority. This can distract from strategic issues such as climate change and nature recovery. There is also a significant cost associated appointing external auditors and gaining certification. **It is recommended that this action is removed as ISO14001 is no longer considered suitable for the Council.**

6.4. Actions added to the Plan

6.4.1. Additional actions have been added to the Action Plan, mostly from the new Corporate Plan:

Action 1.3.4 (Corporate Plan GD01) – Identify 150 properties with an EPC of D or below where the occupant is on Council tax reduction to offer a range of energy efficiency measures, including insulation, to reduce fuel poverty.

Action 5.3.1 (Corporate Plan GD04) – Promote new green technologies in the borough

Action 1.4.5 (Corporate Plan GD05) – Promote increased use of public transport

Action 1.4.6 (Corporate Plan GD06) – Work with local cycle firms to provide affordable bike rental for visitors and residents

Action 5.1.2 (Corporate Plan GD07) – Work with partners to introduce the Passivhaus housing development standard (which will keep heat loss in new homes to a minimum)

Action 3.7 (Corporate Plan GD08) – Find opportunities to use vertical and rooftop spaces to plant new gardens

Action 3.8 (Corporate Plan GD09) – Find opportunities and create a network of community orchards and wildlife corridors

Action 1.5.1 – Environmental support for businesses

Through the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) East Staffordshire Borough Council is working with Staffordshire County Council to bring forward a programme of Environmental business support to enable local SMEs to reduce costs and/or energy consumption. Following the re-profile of the Fund, agreed at Council on 3rd July 2023, environmental support for

businesses remains an area of focus and will form part of the business support and funding schemes delivered over the next 18 months.

Action 4.1.2 – Review climate change section of the procurement policy

The Council's current Procurement Policy already contains a commitment to consider climate change and sustainability. This commitment needs to be strengthened during the next scheduled review of the Policy in November 2023.

Action 5.2.2 – Washlands visitor centre

As part of the £23.8m Burton Towns Fund programme, the Council plans to develop a new Washlands Visitor Centre on the current Molson Coors High Street Campus, in a prominent position overlooking the Washlands riverside and soon to be enhanced central area of the Washlands.

Section 6 – Communications and Engagement

This section of the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan has been revised to incorporate the actions in the ESBC Climate Change Communication and Engagement Plan that was approved by Executive Decision (Ref 576.23) earlier in the year.

6.5. New structure for the Action Plan

6.5.1. The Action Plan has been restructured to reflect the four aims of the Climate Change and Nature Strategy that was published in October 2022. Additional sections have been added for cross-cutting actions that contribute to several aims and Communications and Engagement. The six main sections are:

1. Aim 1 – Protect climate from man-made climate change
2. Aim 2 – Adapt to the consequences of climate change
3. Aim 3 – Protect and enhance nature
4. Aim 4 – Use resources wisely, and minimise waste and pollution
5. Cross-cutting actions
6. Communication and Engagement

7. Financial Considerations

This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit: Lisa Turner

7.1. There are potentially significant financial issues arising from the proposals identified within the action plan. These are likely to have financial implications in the medium to long term. Where projects are underway provision has been made within the MTFS.

7.2. Going forward, each action will be costed on a case by case basis and affordability will be considered as part of the annual review of the MTFS /or funded using existing budgets, in accordance with financial regulations.

8. Risk Assessment and Management

- 8.1. There are numerous risks associated with actions detailed in the action plan, however these will be considered for each individual action. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:
- 8.2. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):
 - 8.2.1. Reduced CO₂ emissions to protect the climate from man-made climate change
 - 8.2.2. Possible financial benefits and energy security through energy conservation and/or self-sufficient energy generation
 - 8.2.3. Adaptation to the consequences of climate change
 - 8.2.4. Nature recovery
 - 8.2.5. Wise use of resources and reduced waste and pollution
- 8.3. **Negative** (Threats):
 - 8.3.1. Insufficient capacity and funding to deliver the change necessary
 - 8.3.2. Profound consequences of climate change and biodiversity loss
- 8.4. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

9. **Legal Considerations**

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team:
John Teasdale*

- 9.1. In 2008, the government set a target for the UK to reduce its greenhouse emissions in 2050 by 80% compared with 1990 levels (the Climate Change Act 2008) and, in June 2019, the government passed legislation committing it to achieving 'net zero' greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019).
- 9.2. The individual actions detailed within the action plan may have their own legal implications and will therefore be considered as part of the approval process for each action.

10. **Equalities and Health**

- 10.1. **Equality impacts:** The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required at this stage but may be needed for specific policies and actions undertaken as part of the action plan.

10.2. **Health impacts:** The actions outlined in the Action Plan will result in improved health outcomes. Assessments will be completed on a case by case basis. An equality and health impact assessment is not required at this stage.

11. **Data Protection Implications – Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)**

11.1. A DPIA must be completed where there are plans to:

- use systematic and extensive profiling with significant effects;
- process special category or criminal offence data on a large scale; or
- systematically monitor publicly accessible places on a large scale
- use new technologies;
- use profiling or special category data to decide on access to services;
- profile individuals on a large scale;
- process biometric data;
- process genetic data;
- match data or combine datasets from different sources;
- collect personal data from a source other than the individual without providing them with a privacy notice ('invisible processing');
- track individuals' location or behaviour;
- profile children or target marketing or online services at them; or
- process data that might endanger the individual's physical health or safety in the event of a security breach

11.2 Following consideration of the above, there are no Data Protection implications arising from this report which would require a DPIA.

12. **Human Rights**

12.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

13. **Sustainability** (including climate change and change adaptation measures)

13.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) Yes- Reduced CO₂ emissions and nature recovery.

14. **Recommendation(s)**

14.1. The report makes the following recommendations:

- a) The overall downward trend in annual CO₂ emissions for both the Borough and the Council are noted;
- b) The overall positive progress with the implementation of the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan is noted;

- c) The proposed changes to the target dates for the actions rated Red (section 6.1.6) are approved;
- d) The recommendations for revised, deleted and new actions (sections 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4) are approved; and
- e) The Climate Change and Nature Action Plan is restructured to reflect the aims of the East Staffordshire Borough Council Climate Change and Nature Strategy (section 6.5).

15. **Background Papers**

- Climate Change Declaration and Action Plan, Cabinet 17th Aug 2020
- Nature Recovery motion approved by Council, March 7th 2022
- Climate Change Communications and Engagement Plan
- [East Staffordshire Borough Council Climate Change and Nature Strategy](#)

16. **Appendices**

Appendix 1: The Climate Change and Nature Action Plan - Progress end 22-23

Appendix 2: The Climate Change and Nature Action Plan - Completed Actions