



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT COVER SHEET

Title of Report:	A Green New Deal - Review of Progress	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
Meeting of:	Corporate Management Team – 15 th November 2023	X
	Pre Cabinet – 23 rd November 2023	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group – 30 th November and 6 th December 2023	X
	Cabinet – 18 th December 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:	NO	Is this a Key Decision:	NO
Is this in the Forward Plan:	YES	Is the Report Confidential: If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:	NO []

Essential Signatories:

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

Monitoring Officer: **John Teasdale**

Date Signature

Interim Chief Finance Officer: **Stephen Fitzgerald**

Date Signature

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Report to Cabinet
Date: 18th December 2023**

REPORT TITLE: A Green New Deal - Review of Progress

PORTFOLIO: Environment and Climate Change

CHIEF OFFICER: John Teasdale

CONTACT OFFICER: Rachel Liddle Ext. No. x1838

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All Wards

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1. This report provides an overview of the progress made against the corporate priority: Developing a Green New Deal for East Staffordshire

2. Executive Summary

2.1. This progress report directly supports the council's corporate priority of developing a Green New Deal for East Staffordshire.

2.2. The report provides a comprehensive update on initiatives aligned to targets GD04 through GD09, which focus on promoting green technologies, increasing the use of public transport, implementing energy-efficient housing standards, establishing gardens and orchards, and working with partners on sustainability projects.

2.3. Key achievements highlighted include supporting electric bus and EV infrastructure bids, researching community energy projects, piloting vertical gardens, and identifying locations for community orchards.

2.4. The report confirms the council is on track to meet its Green New Deal commitments by the 2023/24 year-end.

2.5. Ongoing priorities include finalising the Parks Development Plan, developing cycle hire recommendations, promoting energy efficiency through planning, and ensuring the success of the Newton Road Park community orchard.

- 2.6. Overall, the report demonstrates the council's strong commitment and progress to date in delivering a wide range of sustainability initiatives under the Green New Deal corporate priority.

3. Background

- 3.1. Developing a Green New Deal for East Staffordshire was outlined as a key corporate priority in the revised 2023/24 edition of East Staffordshire Borough Council's Corporate Plan
- 3.2. This priority is underpinned by several objectives and targets referenced as GD04, 05, 06, 07, 08, and 09, progress against which is outlined in the main body of this report.

4. Contribution to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1. **Improving Local Democracy:** This report demonstrates accountability through transparent reporting on progress against environmental and climate change-related targets. This enables residents to see how the council is delivering on its commitments.
- 4.2. **Creating a prosperous East Staffordshire:** The initiatives support economic prosperity through promoting sustainable transport, energy efficiency, green technologies and environmental enhancements. There are also opportunities to develop green skills and jobs related to installing EV charging points, retrofitting homes, renewable energy projects, etc.
- 4.3. **Developing a Green New Deal for East Staffordshire:** As outlined previously, the report directly supports this priority through updating progress on sustainability targets GD04-GD09.
- 4.4. **Protecting our heritage:** Gardens, orchards and green spaces will help preserve the natural heritage of the borough. Sustainable developments also protect heritage for future generations.
- 4.5. **Standing up for our communities:** The projects deliver benefits for local communities through climate action, environmental enhancements, transport improvements and community orchards/gardens.
- 4.6. In summary, the report contributes to all five priorities by demonstrating accountability, sustainable development, and environmental action and community benefits. This aligns with the council's wider mission to serve residents and improve the borough.

5. Review of Progress

- 5.1. **GD04 - Promote new green technologies in the borough**
(Target Date: Review Dec 23/Team: Environmental Health)

5.1.1. **Public EV charging points:** We are working with Staffordshire County Council to identify potential locations for delivering EV charging across ESBC-owned land using the government LEVI funding. Locations suitable for EV have been identified in a report approved by cabinet in November 2023. This includes the investigation into the viability of solar charging units.

5.1.2. **Low-carbon home energy efficiency measures:** As part of the Staffordshire Warmer Homes scheme, we are supporting the delivery of low carbon home energy efficiency measures (such as loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, solid wall insulation, air source heat pumps, heating controls and solar PV). These are being delivered through the following funding schemes:

> **LADS** (Local Authority Delivery Scheme): Scheme to help improve the energy efficiency of homes of low-income households and to help reduce fuel poverty.

This scheme has now closed, and as of May 2023, a total of 44 homes have been supported through this scheme.

> **HUGS2** (Home Upgrade Scheme): For homes that are heated by any means other than gas. We are working with Community Home Solutions (CHS) to deliver this.

This scheme launched in November 2023 and working with CHS we have funding to target approximately 92 homes.

> **ECO4 & ECO4 Flex** (Energy Company Obligation): Targeted at low-income households with low EPC ratings. Delivered through referrals from Beat the Cold (BTC).

This scheme is ongoing and in the last six months, we have approved 18 referrals made through BTC.

5.1.3. Our Statement of Intent for eligibility for ECO flex has recently been amended and approved via EDR and now includes the Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS).

5.1.4. **Renewable Energy:** From October 2023 the Council has moved to a new Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) green energy tariff. The REGO scheme certifies that the electricity supplied has been generated from renewable sources.

5.1.5. **Community Energy Project¹:** We are researching the viability of utilising the council's own buildings and estate for solar generation. This will also be supported through the completion of energy audits

¹ Previously articulated as Community Energy Company in Administrations Manifesto

which are due to be completed on the Town Hall, Brewhouse, Burton Market Hall and Stapenhill Cemetery by March 2024. The leisure centres are also producing their own options appraisals for carbon reduction measures including the viability of solar panelling.

5.2. GD05 - Promote increased use of public transport

(Target Date: Review Dec 23/Team: Environmental Health)

5.2.1. We have successfully supported Staffordshire County Council's bid to secure government funding for 4 new electric buses for inner Burton routes, potentially saving around 93.300 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually². This will support improvements in air quality with a reduction in harmful pollutants like nitrogen oxides and particulate matter along with reductions in noise levels compared to conventional buses.

5.2.2. A detailed section on sustainable transport is being incorporated into the Climate Change Communications and Engagement Action Plan. This promotes existing options like the £2 bus fare cap, new electric buses, routes, timetables etc.

5.2.3. The team is actively monitoring the development of Staffordshire County Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), which aims to improve bus services across Staffordshire.

5.2.4. Data and insights gathered from Staffordshire County Council's recent county-wide household travel survey are being analysed to understand barriers, challenges and opportunities to increase bus usage in East Staffordshire.

5.3. GD06 - Work with local cycle firms to provide affordable bike rentals for visitors and residents

(Target Date: Review Dec 23/Team: Environmental Health)

5.3.1. A briefing paper will be completed by December 2023 to provide an overview of existing local and national bike hire schemes and rental options. This will include pricing models, and technologies used (e.g. apps, electronic locks), and will compare the pros and cons of different models like docked systems, dockless bikes, electric bikes, and traditional bike rentals.

5.3.2. Using analysis of local visitor and resident needs, the briefing will make recommendations for an affordable bike rental scheme that could increase sustainable transport in Burton upon Trent and other key destinations across East Staffordshire. This will provide considerable benefits to public health and support the reduction in transport related pollutants.

² Pro-rotated using government figures quote here: [Greener bus journeys - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/greener-bus-journeys)

- 5.3.3. This will include consideration of the interest and viability of the proposed rental scheme following discussions with local cycle shops and hire firms. Their insights on pricing, demand and logistics will be used to shape the recommendations
- 5.3.4. With the Tourism Team, work is being done to map cycle routes around East Staffordshire, with a focus on linking key attractions and town centres. An app and associated promotional campaign is proposed to make finding and accessing these routes easy for visitors and residents further promoting active, sustainable travel around the borough.
- 5.3.5. Additionally, synergies with Staffordshire County Council's existing active travel schemes are being explored to align promotional activities.
- 5.3.6. The council's 'Cycling Strategy 2015' provides a framework to promote cycling in the borough through infrastructure improvements, route development, bike parking facilities, awareness campaigns and partnership work. There are synergies between the strategy and the GD06 target, with both aiming to increase cycling uptake.
- 5.3.7. The cycling infrastructure improvements suggested within the Cycling Strategy, such as new cycle lanes, parking and signage, will complement and enable the success of new bike rental schemes by providing and supporting facilities for cyclists.
- 5.3.8. New cycle lanes are currently being implemented along Station Street, Burton through the Towns Fund partnership with Staffordshire County Council as part of their "Active Travel Burton" project.
- 5.3.9. This dedicated cycling infrastructure will provide an attractive, safe route between the town centre and the railway station. It aligns closely with target GD06 and will enable increased cycling participation called for within the Green New Deal.
- 5.3.10. Work will be done to explore opportunities to partner with the [Get INTO Walking and Cycling](#) scheme run by Staffordshire County Council. This provides free coaching, bike loans and maintenance training to help adults across the district get active through cycling and walking. Initiatives like this further reinforce the cycling participation aims within the Green New Deal.
- 5.4. **GD07 - Work with partners to introduce the Passivhaus housing development standard (which will keep heat loss in new homes to a minimum)**
(Target Date: Review Dec 23/Team: Planning Policy)
- 5.4.1. An initial project scope has been initiated which has looked at the different energy efficiency standards which exist within local and national planning policy and building regulations.

5.4.2. The next steps are to investigate the difference between these standards, liaise with key developers and partners and use the adopted Climate Change and Sustainability SPD to promote standards through new development.

5.4.3. The SPD was adopted in 2022 and includes a checklist to facilitate sustainable development across all aspects of building and site design. The SPD supports proposals which are being built to the Passivhaus standard and promotes other developments which would minimise heat loss in new homes, but not necessarily meet the standard given it wouldn't apply to all building types. The SPD also promotes low carbon design for all forms of development so includes sustainable building design, incorporating access to sustainable and active travel methods, using renewable and low carbon energy systems and making better use of green infrastructure and water management.

5.5. GD08 - Find opportunities to use vertical and rooftop spaces to plant new gardens

(Target Date: Review Dec 23/Team: Communities & Open Spaces)

5.5.1. Open Spaces and Facilities teams have investigated the possibility of introducing vertical and rooftop gardens.

5.5.2. The officer's initial inspections have highlighted there are relatively few buildings that are suitable for either rooftops or vertical gardens within the council's estate. However, the Open Spaces and Waste Management teams have collaborated to introduce a pilot vertical garden on Newton Road Park.

5.5.3. Waste Management has funded wooden cladding to a section of the public toilet block and Open Spaces are utilising volunteers to maintain the new garden.

5.5.4. The ongoing key to the success of this pilot will be the use of volunteers who can monitor the condition of the garden closely and help sustain its development.

5.5.5. Existing budget provisions will be used to assist volunteers and cover the pilot costs of planting, weeding and watering. Should the pilot be successful, a wider roll-out will require a review of resources and budgets. Alternatives such as climbing plants have also been considered as these should provide a more cost-effective alternative.

5.5.6. Public toilets and changing rooms appear to provide the best options for climbing plants and the forthcoming Parks Development Plan update will consider these options moving forward.

5.5.7. Other potentially suitable premises available for these types of schemes include the three leisure centres, especially in relation to the vertical garden approach. However, at the current time, the leisure

centres are being appraised for solar panelling and other carbon reduction measures, so any assessment of suitability will need to take place following the completion of the carbon reduction measures and with the consent of Everyone Active.

5.5.8. Further options will be explored as part of our ongoing regeneration work at the Maltings, Uttoxeter and the Burton High Street Project.

5.6. **GD09 - Find opportunities and create a network of community orchards and wildlife corridors**

(Target Date: Review Dec 23/Team: Communities & Open Spaces)

5.6.1. Four locations have been identified by the Open Spaces team as potential carbon capture areas that can incorporate fruit trees and help create important habitats for wildlife, they are as follows:

- > The Oxhay (Washlands)
- > Vancouver Drive
- > Pennycroft Park
- > Edgehill Community Park

5.6.2. In addition, working with volunteers and the National Forest, a community orchard is to be established at Newton Road Park. Once established, the ambition will be to utilise these volunteers to harvest the fruit and nuts. These will then be supplied to Winshill Neighbourhood Resource Centre and used in meals for the community.

5.6.3. Critical success factors for this project are having people harvest the fruit and an end destination for the produce. Without these elements, the fruit will go to waste.

5.6.4. Again, the Parks Development Plan update will provide a review and further details on these potential developments.

5.7. In summary, good progress has been made against the Green New Deal corporate priority.

5.8. Key achievements include:

- Supporting electric bus and EV infrastructure bids
- Researching a community energy project
- Establishing a pilot vertical garden
- Identifying locations for community orchards/wildlife corridors.

5.9. Priorities for the remaining period of the corporate plan include:

- Finalising the Parks Development Plan update
- Developing recommendations on cycle hire schemes
- Continuing promotion of energy efficiency standards through planning policy

- Ensuring the successful establishment of the Newton Road Park community orchard.
- 5.10. Overall the Council is on track to deliver against the key targets within this corporate priority by the end of the 2023/24 year.
- 5.11. Continued partnership working and community engagement will be critical to building on the progress made to date.
- 5.12. Future Opportunities: In addition to the current initiatives outlined above, several other green technologies could be considered in future years to support the council's commitment to sustainability:
- The recent 'Phase one Locations for Delivering Off-Street Public Charging points for Electric Vehicles' report identified an opportunity to trial a pop-up solar EV charging solution as a part of the ongoing regeneration work taking place at the Maltings, Uttoxeter. The deployment of this would boost the rollout of EV charging infrastructure in a smart and low-carbon way.
 - Alternative energy sources - The council could explore additional renewable energy options such as wind, hydro and heat networks as potential alternatives or supplements to solar power. Each has its benefits and limitations.
 - Zero & ultra-low emission vehicles - As technology continues to advance, the council could transition more of its fleet to alternative vehicles such as EV or Hydrogen fuelled vehicles. Installation of EV charging infrastructure could also be expanded to include staff/member car parks.
 - Greener Carparks - Tickets sales on ESBC car parks have steadily declined across the past five years. This reduction in usage creates opportunities for innovative and imaginative use of the available space. Consequently, the forthcoming car parking review recommends that underutilised spaces are converted into temporary urban parks. Creating urban parks not only contributes towards the Council's ambitions around climate change and nature recover, but also creates a more pleasing town centre environment and associated health and well-being benefits to residents/visitors. The proposed EV charging point installation at the Maltings in Uttoxeter would be the subject of an initial pilot scheme.

6. Financial Considerations

This section has been approved by the following members of the Financial Management Unit: James Hopwood

- 6.1. There are potential financial implications as plans to deliver the targets continue to be developed, proposed and rolled out. The plan to roll out public electrical vehicle charging points has been considered in a separate report, which sets out the financial implications in detail. Other new plans to deliver targets have

not yet been considered as separate reports, where the financial implications are also detailed.

- 6.2. An example of a new plan where there could be a potential future financial implication is in relation to the development of GD09 – find opportunities and create a network of community orchards and wildlife corridors. Another example is GD08 – find opportunities to use vertical and rooftop spaces to plant new gardens. Using alternative energy sources and transitioning the Council’s fleet to electric vehicles may have different financial implications compared to the alternatives.
- 6.3. As set out in recommendation 13.2, wherever possible any relevant financial implications for the 2024/25 financial year from plans to deliver the targets will be considered as part of the annual review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

7. Risk Assessment and Management

7.1. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:

7.2. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):

- 7.2.1. Reduced CO2 emissions through sustainable transport, energy efficiency, renewable energy
- 7.2.2. Improved local air quality from electric vehicles/buses
- 7.2.3. Enhanced biodiversity through new gardens, orchards and wildlife habitats
- 7.2.4. Preserving natural heritage and green spaces
- 7.2.5. Developing green skills and jobs related to sustainability
- 7.2.6. Promoting sustainable living and environmental awareness
- 7.2.7. Tackling fuel poverty through home energy efficiency improvements
- 7.2.8. Reduced waste through community education

7.3. **Negative** (Threats):

- 7.3.1. Profound consequences of unchecked climate change including flooding, heatwaves, species extinction
- 7.3.2. Biodiversity loss through destruction of natural habitats
- 7.3.3. Air and water pollution, waste and plastics damaging environments
- 7.3.4. Unsustainable resource depletion
- 7.3.5. Lack of action undermining the quality of life for future generations
- 7.3.6. Missed opportunities for sustainable economic growth and green job creation
- 7.3.7. Increasing costs/repercussions of climate change impacts if urgent action is not taken

7.4. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

8. **Legal Considerations**

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

8.1. There are no significant legal issues arising from this Report.

9. **Equalities and Health**

9.1. **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.

9.2. **Health impacts:** The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

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

10.1. 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

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

11. **Human Rights**

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

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

12.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) **Yes**

12.2. Please detail any positive/negative aspects:

12.2.1. Positive (Opportunities/Benefits)

- Directly reducing carbon emissions through renewable energy projects, energy efficiency improvements, and promotion of electric transport.
- Enhancing biodiversity by creating new green habitats and community orchards.
- Promoting behavioural shifts towards more sustainable living through community education and engagement.
- Developing green skills and jobs to support the transition to a low-carbon economy.
- Preserving natural heritage and green spaces for current and future generations.
- Tackling fuel poverty through improving home energy efficiency.
- Reducing waste and plastic usage.
- While continued effort is required to fully address the climate and biodiversity crises, the report highlights tangible actions the council is taking across a range of areas to improve environmental sustainability.
- The proposal delivers against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals related to climate action, responsible production/consumption, sustainable cities and life on land.
- On balance, it will result in a net positive sustainability impact if implemented successfully.

12.2.2. Negative (threats)

- Increased carbon cost of administering projects. While the initiatives outlined aim to reduce carbon emissions overall, there may be some increased emissions associated with administering and coordinating the projects. For example, emissions from staff travel, procurement of materials/services, and disposal of waste.

13. **Recommendation(s)**

- 13.1. To note the contents of the report and continue developing and delivering the current Green New Deal initiatives to ensure all targets are met.
- 13.2. Where there are financial implications for the 2024/25 financial year from any new plans in this report subject to further analysis, the financial implications will be considered within the annual review of the 2024/25 Medium Term Financial Strategy.

14. **Background Papers**

- 14.1. East Staffordshire Borough Council Corporate Plan (Revised 2023/24 Edition)
- 14.2. Climate Change Communications and Engagement Plan

15. Appendices

15.1. None