



# Borough of Telford and Wrekin

## Environment Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 14 September 2023

### Climate Change Adaptation

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Carolyn Healy - Cabinet Member: Climate Action, Green Spaces, Heritage & Leisure
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Felicity Mercer - Director: Communities, Customer & Commercial Services
<b>Service Area:</b>	Communities, Customer & Commercial Services
<b>Report Author:</b>	Ian Wykes - Team Leader - Climate Change & Sustainability
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 384960 <b>Email:</b> Ian.Wykes@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	Environment Scrutiny Committee – 14 September 2023

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

Environment Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Review the proposed approach to developing a Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan and make recommendations as appropriate.

#### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To provide a summary of what is meant by climate change adaptation and the importance of considering the issue of adaptation for the council and the communities and businesses of Telford and Wrekin.

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- 2.2 To set out an approach towards developing a Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan and seek the Environment Scrutiny Committee's guidance on taking this forward.

### **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 In 2019 Telford & Wrekin Council declared a Climate Change Emergency. Climate is different to weather. Weather is what conditions are like over a short period of time, climate is how the atmosphere 'behaves' over relatively long periods of time.
- 3.2 Climate change is the large-scale, long-term shift that we are seeing in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures, and it has been driven by human activity that has released CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide) and other greenhouse gases into the air which causes an increase in global temperatures.
- 3.3 The key focus of work to date has been on reducing the council's carbon emissions to meet its target of being net zero by 2030. This is referred to as climate change mitigation.
- 3.4 This report is focused on climate change adaptation which refers to the process of building resilience against the impacts of climate change. These impacts could include the frequency of flooding, heatwaves and other extreme weather events and their resultant effects. As a local authority, Telford & Wrekin Council must ensure that its services are able to react to the current and predicted impacts of climate change.

### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

- 4.1 A more detailed summary is set out in Appendix A of the report.
- 4.2 The Telford and Wrekin Corporate Climate Adaptation Plan will identify the key climate risks to the council's estate, services, and as a result, the wider community. A climate change risk register will be used to identify these risks.
- 4.3 Measures which will then be developed and implemented by the council to lessen the impact of these risks will be identified. Through working with key services across the council.
- 4.4 It is acknowledged that not all the measures identified can be delivered solely by the council using existing resources. Where this is the case, the council will adopt partnership working.
- 4.5 Adopting partnership working will not only strengthen the resilience of the borough through the sharing of resources but build upon an existing community network.

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- 4.6 It is in the interest of the council to provide climate adaptation measures to council services and across the wider borough area. This will increase the resilience of the councils' services to future impacts of climate change.
- 4.7 The climate adaptation plan will sit as part of a wider suite of documents which collectively address the council's commitment to decarbonise its services and build resilience, such as the 'Corporate Climate Action Plan' and support existing Business Continuity Plans.
- 4.8 Climate adaptation takes account of both risks and opportunities arising from the impact of climate change. If measures are implemented successfully, climate adaptation co-benefits (such as biodiversity net gain) will arise.
- 4.9 Adaptation is an ongoing, iterative process. It is of note that there will be no final 'adapted state'; the plan must always acknowledge changes in local climate impacts and accommodate the continued process of building adaptive capacity and resilience.
- 4.10 The council is already promoting adaptation measures within the newly adopted Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Developing this adaptation plan will align with national policy for adaptation.

### **5.0 Alternative Options**

- 5.1 The alternative would be not to consider the impact that the effects of climate change will have on the council and the delivery of services and the wider impacts on the residents and businesses of Telford and Wrekin.

### **6.0 Key Risks**

- 6.1 Climate Change is seen as one the greatest risks globally. The Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan will include a risk register to identify risks related to the impacts of climate change and how this will support existing control mechanisms such as Business Continuity Planning.

### **7.0 Council Priorities**

- 7.1 The councils' work on climate change and sustainability is a direct response to the council's priority "Our natural environment is protected, and the Council has a leading role in addressing the climate emergency". However, as a cross cutting agenda it also has a significant contribution to make towards all other council priorities including:

- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.

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- Everyone benefits from a thriving economy.
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live
- A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

### **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 Financial implications will need to be identified as part of the development of the Adaptation Plan. Funding streams will need to be explored once additional costs have been quantified, and considered as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy

### **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

9.1 Section 19(1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to include in their local plans, policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. In the management of its activities, provision of its services and performance of its functions, local councils are in a position to play a vital role in meeting the challenges posed by climate change. The Council has wide scope to decide how best to address these challenges.

### **10.0 Ward Implications**

10.1 Climate change adaptation is applicable across all wards however it is fully understood that some of the impacts of climate change will also vary between wards. For example, wards in low lying areas adjacent to the River Severn will continue to be impacted by flooding events more than others. Also wards with specific demographic or socio-economic makeup may also be differentially impacted by climate change.

### **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

11.1 The impact of climate change on the health, social and economic wellbeing of the communities of Telford and Wrekin will be a fundamental consideration of the Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan. The plan will involve input from across the council and from relevant partners such as those within the Integrated Care System.

### **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

12.1 The Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan will take into account the legal requirement to pay due regard to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Key to this is consideration of people's specific needs based on their protected characteristics.

12.2 People who share protected characteristics of age, race, ethnicity and disability are often disproportionately affected by climate change and its consequences.

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This is true locally and internationally. Extreme weather events, for example heat waves most detrimentally affect older residents and those with pre-existing respiratory and cardiovascular conditions.

- 12.3 The success of our climate change activity relies on active participation by the whole community. Steps are taken to make sure that events are inclusive, and the differing needs of individuals are considered so that they can access activities and contribute effectively.

### **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 13.1 Climate Change Adaptation is an integral part of the Council's climate change and environmental work.

### **14.0 Appendices**

- A Corporate Adaptation Plan – PowerPoint slides

### **15.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Finance	04/09/2023	04/09/2023	MLB
Legal	04/09/2023	06/09/2023	RP