



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Audit Committee

Wednesday 28 January 2026

Telford & Wrekin Becoming Carbon Neutral and Climate Change Adaptation - update report

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Carolyn Healy - Cabinet Member: Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability
Lead Director:	Katherine Kynaston - Director: Housing, Commercial and Customer Services
Service Area:	Housing, Commercial & Customer Services
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Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Report considered by:	Cabinet – 6 January 2026 Audit Committee – 28 January 2026

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

- 1.1 To note and review the update on Telford and Wrekin Council becoming Carbon Neutral and the additional work the Council has undertaken to develop a corporate climate change risk register which identifies how the Council is seeking to adapt to manage unavoidable risks and impacts of the changing climate.

2.0 Purpose of Report

To allow Audit Committee the opportunity to:

Telford & Wrekin Council Becoming Carbon Neutral Update

2.1 Note and review the update on Telford and Wrekin Council becoming Carbon Neutral and the additional work the Council has done to develop a corporate climate change risk register as set out in the report to Cabinet on 6th January 2026 (Appendix A) and accompanying Carbon Neutral Action Plan (Appendix B) and Strategic Climate Change Adaptation Risk Register (Appendix C).

2.2 Note that in recognition of the strong synergies between climate change mitigation and adaptation both areas are reported together within a single, integrated report.

3.0 Background

3.1 Tackling climate change is one of five priorities set out in the current Council Plan. In July 2019, the Council declared a climate change emergency and made a commitment to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. Through its support of a borough partnership the council is also playing a full part in helping the wider borough achieve the same target.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

4.1 In recognition of the strong synergies between climate change mitigation and adaptation both areas are reported together within a single, integrated report.

4.2 In summary the Cabinet report can be broken down into three sections

- It provides an update of the work undertaken by the Council since the last report in September 2024.
- It sets out the progress the Council has made against the net zero target and the way we measure emissions as well as our progress on climate change adaptation.
- It includes an updated climate change action plan as set out in Appendix B and climate change risk register as set out in Appendix C

4.3 In 2024/25 the Council achieved an overall reduction of 63% in CO₂e emissions from a baseline of 2018/19.

4.4 To support this target the Council undertook a wide range of activities across its functions. These activities provided both direct benefits to borough residents and provided a wide range of other indirect co-benefits through the investment of income and efficiency savings into frontline services.

4.5 Direct benefits have included.

- Further improvements to the Council's operational estate including the installation of energy efficiency measures.
- Providing direct grants to residents who are in fuel poverty and support to those residents who can self-fund to install renewable technologies to their own properties.
- Through NuPlace, building more energy efficient homes.

- Continuing to improve the walking and cycling routes in the Borough
- Further delivery of Electric Vehicle charging points across the Borough
- Continuing to generate renewable electricity from the Council's own solar farm at Wheat Leasows.
- Improving green spaces and nature reserves.
- Continuing to reduce waste and support reuse.

4.6 These actions are detailed in the Cabinet report but include how:.

- The refurbishment of the Wellington Leisure Centre has delivered improved facilities for users and achieved an annual reduction of 70 tonnes of CO₂e emissions.
- The Council's affordable warmth programmes have retrofitted 10 off-gas properties with 22 energy-saving measures, while 50 homes in Sutton Hill benefited from 77 upgrades, including insulation, double glazing, and solar panels. These initiatives have substantially increased energy efficiency, reducing residents' heating bills by up to £640 per year and cutting emissions by up to 600 kg CO₂e annually.
- Active travel initiatives in Telford & Wrekin reduce vehicle emissions and promote healthier, more active lifestyles. The New School Journey project encouraged walking, cycling, and scooting among pupils, with 11 schools participating. In 2023–24, schools like Ladygrove Primary and Meadows Primary saw significant drops in car use and increases in active travel, demonstrating the project's effectiveness in shifting travel habits and supporting both environmental and health goals.

4.7 The Council also reviewed and refreshed its climate change adaptation risk register and integrated it into the Business Continuity Plan process.

5 Alternative Options

5.1 The alternative option would be to do nothing and not deliver on the Council's climate change commitments. However, this could lead to serious reputational risks for the Council as a community leader.

5.2 Not addressing issues such as energy efficiency of buildings or development of renewable energy generation opportunities would also lead to significant cost implications through increase in fuel bills and loss of income. Doing nothing would also lead to a negative impact on the health and social / economic wellbeing of Telford and Wrekin businesses, communities, and residents.

6 Key Risks

6.1 The Climate Change Committee's *Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk for the UK* (CCRA3), published in June 2021¹ sets out the priority climate change

¹ <https://www.ukclimaterisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CCRA-Evidence-Report-England-Summary-Final.pdf>

risks for the UK. In summary, risks in the report include:

- The impacts of climate change on the natural environment.
 - An increase in the range, quantities, and consequences of pests, pathogens, and invasive species.
 - more frequent and severity of flooding, and coastal erosion, causing damage to infrastructure services.
 - A reduction in public water supplies due to increasing periods of water scarcity.
 - The impact of extreme temperatures, high winds, and lightning on the transport network.
 - The impact of increasing high temperatures on people's health and wellbeing.
 - Disruption to the delivery of health and social care services due to a greater frequency of extreme weather.
 - Damage to cultural heritage assets as a result of temperature, precipitation, groundwater and landscape changes.
 - Impacts internationally that may affect the UK, such as risks to food availability, safety and security, risks to international law, trade routes and public health.
- Therefore, there are significant risks as outlined should the Council fail to mitigate climate change and ensure that residents, businesses, and the natural environment are able to adapt to the future climate conditions.

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 towards all other Council priorities including:

- Every child, young person, and adult lives well in their community.
- 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 The initiatives outlined in the report are funded from a combination of Council funding, and external grant funding. Finance will provide ongoing support in relation to any bids for external funding as required. Scheme expenditure is monitored on a regular basis.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

9.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended) establishes a legally binding target to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by 100% by 2050 when compared with the 1990 baseline. At a local level, 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.

9.2 The Council has the legal power to undertake the activities set out in the report. Implementation of the proposals in this report may give rise to specific legal issues upon which legal advice will be provided as and when necessary.

9.3 There are no specific human resource implications arising from this report.

10.0 Ward Implications

10.1 This report has a borough wide impact.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

11.1 Climate change is expected to continue having a significant impact on the health, social, and economic wellbeing of residents in Telford and Wrekin. For example, the summer of 2025 was the warmest on record, with prolonged heatwaves posing serious health risks—particularly to vulnerable groups such as older adults, children, and those with existing health conditions.

11.2 Many of the actions outlined in the Council's Climate Change Plan offer substantial health co-benefits, including improved air quality, increased access to green spaces, and better housing energy efficiency. These measures not only support climate resilience but also contribute to healthier, more equitable communities. The impact of climate change is also considered in the Council's Health and Well Being Strategy 2023-2027.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 The Council's Climate Change Action Plan takes account of 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.

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

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

Telford & Wrekin Council Becoming Carbon Neutral Update

- 13.1 This report sets out the key areas as to how Telford and Wrekin Council is helping address climate change and environmental implications.

14.0 Appendices

- A Telford & Wrekin Becoming Carbon Neutral and Climate Change Adaptation - update report - Cabinet Report 6th January 2026
- B Corporate Climate Change Action Plan
- C Telford and Wrekin Strategic Climate Change Adaptation Risk Register

15.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	13/01/2026	16/01/2026	EH
Finance	13/01/2026	13/01/2026	DR
Director	05/01/2026	19/01/2026	KK