



REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE
DATE:	22 MARCH 2022
SUBJECT:	ADOPTION OF CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY
PURPOSE:	FOR MEMBERS TO RECEIVE THE FINAL VERSION OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND RECOMMEND ITS APPROVAL
KEY DECISION:	YES
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR PAUL SKINNER
REPORT OF:	CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT MANAGER
REPORT AUTHOR:	SARAH BAKER
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	N/A
EXEMPT REPORT?	NO

SUMMARY

This report provides background to the accompanying Climate Change Strategy for the geographical area covered by the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (S&ELCP). This document is the next step in our Climate Change aspirations, moving beyond the confines of our own carbon footprint and emissions to look at the wider issues for Climate Change in our local communities. S&ELCP cannot deliver this strategy in isolation and a new South and East Lincolnshire Climate Action Network (SELCAN) will be established to bring together all relevant partners and ensure delivery at all levels as we work towards a net zero ambition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Environment and Performance Committee is asked to recommend approval of the final version of the Climate Change Strategy to Cabinet.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To progress work on the Climate Change Strategy and enable the establishment of a South and East Lincolnshire Climate Action Network.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Since establishing Climate Change as a priority within the Corporate Strategy, Boston Borough Council has been working to address its own impact in terms of carbon emissions and commissioned the Carbon Trust to produce a Carbon Reduction Plan which was approved in January 2022. As part of that process, the Council committed to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero by 2040 with a minimum emissions reduction of 45% by 2027 ensuring it leads by example in encouraging the Borough as a whole to undertake similar steps.
- 1.2. The development of a Climate Change Strategy for the wider Borough was identified in the work programme developed following the nine recommendations adopted by Council in January 2020, as put forward by the Climate Change Working Group. Those recommendations also identified that a citizen's assembly should be established. Planning is now underway for a Climate Action Network which will take ownership of the Climate Change Strategy and lead delivery with the support of the Council.
- 1.3. In October 2021, Cabinet agreed the draft Strategy for consultation. Consultation has subsequently taken place across Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland and the comments have informed this final version of the Strategy.

2. REPORT

Overview of the Strategy

- 2.1. The Climate Change Strategy is one of the first major joint pieces of work for the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP) and seeks to provide an overarching framework to reduce emissions as a whole across Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland. It identifies the strategic themes and key sectors that are central to helping achieve the carbon reduction ambitions not just of the three Councils but of the UK as a whole as the nation seeks to be net zero by 2050.
- 2.2. Delivery of the Strategy will be the responsibility of a new South and East Lincolnshire Climate Action Network (SELCAN), with the support of S&ELCP. SELCAN will bring together stakeholder representatives from across the area including relevant authorities, business leaders, non-governmental organisations and communities.
- 2.3. The Strategy has used currently available data alongside recognised local priorities as the rationale for a number of key themes relevant to our area. Under each theme, the key challenges and opportunities have been identified and these link to an overarching strategic

action plan that will form the basis of the more detailed delivery plan which it is intended SELCAN will coordinate once established later this year.

- 2.4. It is important to note that while the Strategy focuses on driving down carbon emissions, it also seeks to promote a more sustainable future for everyone which as well as helping to address Climate Change issues, will bring wider benefits for our local communities including improved health and wellbeing outcomes, economic prosperity and social value.

Consultation overview and key changes to the document

- 2.5. Public consultation began in November 2021. Due to the later inclusion of South Holland within the document, the governance around agreeing the draft strategy for consultation followed slightly behind Boston and East Lindsey and so the public consultation was split into two parts.
- 2.6. For East Lindsey and Boston, an online public consultation was launched on 10 November 2021 and ran for five weeks. A total of 55 responses were received during that period.
- 2.7. In addition, two stakeholder workshops were held – one in Boston and one in Louth – which attracted 38 attendees and were very well received with an excellent mix of representation from organisations and sectors across the region including the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership.
- 2.8. The South Holland consultation was launched online on 10 January 2022 and ran for four weeks. A total of 14 responses were received during that period.
- 2.9. Unfortunately, due to rises in Covid cases it was felt an in-person workshop would not be appropriate during the consultation period and an online webinar was instead organised for stakeholders in the South Holland area which was attended by 15 people.
- 2.10. Further opportunities to engage with people about the Strategy consultation were also undertaken and included presentations to groups such as the Rural Lincolnshire Enterprise Hub.
- 2.11. The stakeholder workshops in particular were very well received. Attendees were very engaged with the subject and keen to understand more about how they could be involved with delivery of the Strategy.
- 2.12. Overall responses from both the workshops and consultation were that the Strategy presented a very clear and informative overview of the current picture in terms of Climate Change and the overall vision was strongly supported.
- 2.13. The online consultation was designed to not only ask respondents to agree or disagree but to input more widely into the approach of the document and to help us understand the concerns of residents and businesses. Inevitably, this did lead to number of comments that

were outside the remit of the Strategy but there were also some very useful contributions which have been channelled into the final document.

- 2.14. Across the workshops and consultation there were clear concerns that the document needed to focus on the overarching threads that cut across different sectors and bind the vision together. These were consistently highlighted as education, community engagement and innovation and use of new technology. For this reason, the final document has identified Innovation, People and Education as three lead areas which underpin the document.
- 2.15. In terms of the sector themes, there was broad agreement that these covered the key areas although tourism was an area highlighted numerous times as appearing to be missing and one that has a significant impact. This has been addressed with the addition of Visitor Economy as a key theme within the strategy. Two themes have also been broadened slightly to reflect feedback that they were too narrow in their focus and this is reflected in the tweaks to Water Resources and Nature-based Solutions.
- 2.16. The final, consistently highlighted, concern was that the document did not provide a strategic plan for delivery and there were no timelines against any identified needs. For this reason, the strategic actions which had been highlighted under each sector theme have all been moved to one overarching table – aligned to the three new lead areas. These have also been given indicative timescales. It was always the vision that a detailed delivery plan would be produced by SELCAN once established to ensure that action and progress are driven forward and monitored appropriately but this amendment hopefully helps to strengthen the vision that this document will provide the driver that is needed.

SELCAN development

- 2.17. Alongside the public consultation process, discussions have been taking place with stakeholders around the establishment of the South and East Lincolnshire Climate Action Network (SELCAN). Part of the stakeholder workshop was to consider how this might be structured and what the core aims and objectives might look like.
- 2.18. Consensus was generally that one Strategic Board for the whole area would be the most appropriate governance method – comprised of equal representation from the private, public and third sector. Under this, thematic lead groups or specific task and finish groups could be established as needed to address particular topics or areas of work and these would enable greater engagement of additional stakeholders as required. The need to engage youth ambassadors specifically was highlighted and is something the Climate Change and Environment Team is currently working on.
- 2.19. During the course of the consultation, conversations were held with the Greater Lincolnshire LEP about whether they could support or link in with SELCAN. These discussions will need to continue but with Lincoln already having its own Climate Commission and other districts likely to follow suit it was felt there could perhaps be an overarching link between the different commissions and the LEP at a strategic level.

- 2.20. Discussions have been held with the Place-based Climate Action Network (PCAN) which supports Lincoln Climate Commission, Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission and many others around the country and it was agreed that linking SELCAN to PCAN would be a positive step. It will ensure SELCAN is part of a nationwide network that enables knowledge sharing and support but does not restrict local operation to a particular format or agenda.
- 2.21. A Terms of Reference for SELCAN will be established in due course and it is hoped the first meeting will take place by May/June 2022.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1. By taking the lead on developing a Climate Change Strategy for South and East Lincolnshire, the Councils of Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland are sending a clear message both locally, and nationally, that they are committed to playing their part in tackling the challenges Climate Change presents. Success cannot be achieved in isolation and in fostering new relationships and strengthening existing ones, the three Councils will promote a coordinated and collaborative approach to addressing a global issue. Successful delivery of this Strategy will ultimately lead to more vibrant, cohesive and healthier communities which appreciate the importance of a balanced, sustainable future in delivering multiple benefits for everyone.
- 3.2. The public consultation has been very well received and demonstrated clear support for what we are seeking to achieve. The adoption of this Climate Change Strategy is just the start of an exciting partnership approach.

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

The Climate Change Strategy is the first major three-way piece of work to have been developed by the Partnership and demonstrates the commitment of all three Councils in taking forward this agenda. It will demonstrate both locally and nationally that there is a strategic plan in place with strong leadership which will hopefully place the region in a beneficial position when it comes to accessing and drawing down external funding to support various projects and initiatives.

The Strategy and the associated Climate Action Network will enable engagement of key stakeholders across the sub-region to ensure that knowledge sharing, partnership working and an inclusive approach to managing the challenges and opportunities that will be presented is achieved.

IMPLICATIONS

SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP

Development of this single Strategy with all Partners in the S&ELCP provides a single policy platform enabling collaboration and shared learning across the sub region and to drive actions at a larger scale and pace for the benefit of our communities and the environment in which we live, work and enjoy.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The Strategy will support the Council in meeting its Corporate aims around Environmental Awareness and Accountability with particular support for the objective to be *aware and spearhead the change in thinking about the impact that our actions have, not only on the local environment here in Boston but also on the entire planet.*

STAFFING

There will be some facilitation time required to provide ongoing support to SELCAN. This can be absorbed within the current resources of the Climate Change and Environment Team.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Local authorities have a legal obligation to produce plans and policies to adapt to and mitigate climate change in line with the provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008 and failure to do so could result in a legal challenge being made.

DATA PROTECTION

None.

FINANCIAL

There are no immediate financial implications for the Council arising from adoption of this strategy. A small cost outlay will be required to provide the ongoing administrative support to SELCAN but this can be managed within existing budgets.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Council is at risk of failing on its commitments set out in its Corporate Plan if it fails to adopt and then deliver the objectives set out in this Strategy. There are no direct financial implications from adopting this strategy. The main risk would be reputational if the Council failed to act in a way that supports the vision and aspirations of the Strategy going forward and omits to lead residents, the business community and stakeholders by setting a good example.

STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

Public consultation was undertaken in Winter 2022 via an online questionnaire and stakeholder workshops. Corporate Management Team and Service Managers have been given the opportunity to provide feedback on the document and a briefing was also given to the Council's Environment and Performance Committee on 26 October 2021 and 22 March 2022.

REPUTATION

Facilitating the development of the Climate Change Strategy and SELCAN demonstrates S&ELCP's commitment to community leadership, to working towards net zero and ensuring a sustainable future for residents, businesses and visitors to the region. It is important that the Council ensures

its own operations and future activities support the vision and outcomes of the Strategy going forward otherwise there is a potential reputational risk. As a Partnership we want to be at the forefront of tackling the climate change and environmental challenges we face as a sub region and globally but accept that we may not get it right all of the time.

CONTRACTS

None.

CRIME AND DISORDER

None.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

There are no specific implications arising from this report, however inclusivity and a just-transition for all to ensure that financial and technological barriers do not prevent residents and businesses moving forward on the agenda are key to the Strategy and will be picked up by SELCAN's Terms of Reference.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

None directly but the actions arising from the Strategy implementation will deliver multiple benefits as part of providing a more sustainable future for the sub-region.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Climate Change Strategy will not only have a positive impact on driving down carbon emissions across Boston Borough but it will deliver outcomes that support all four key themes of the Council's adopted Environment Policy to protect and enhance our natural environment, adapt and mitigate to climate change, enhance our built environment and ensure a sustainable approach to waste and resource management.

Annual emissions figures for the Borough are compiled by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and continual reductions need to be achieved as we all play our part in achieving the UK's commitment to be net zero by 2050.

ACRONYMS

S&ELCP – South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

SELCAN – South and East Lincolnshire Climate Action Network

PCAN – Place-based Climate Action Network

APPENDICES

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

<i>APPENDIX A</i>	Climate Change Strategy
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Environment Policy	https://www.mybostonuk.com/environment-policy-2021/

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

Name of body	Date
Environment and Performance Committee	26 October 2021
Cabinet	19 October 2021

REPORT APPROVAL

Report author:	Sarah Baker Climate Change and Environment Manager
Signed off by:	Christian Allen Assistant Director Regulatory
Approved for publication:	Clr Paul Skinner Leader

FINANCE PROFORMA

PROFORMA FOR APPROVAL OF THE RELEASE OF RESOURCES

(CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS)

FROM:

THIS PROFORMA PROVIDES THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
IN RESPECT OF THE ATTACHED

REPORT:

REPORT DATE:

OPTION 1	£ Year 1 2020/21	£ Year 2 2021/22	£ Year 3 2022/23	£ Year 4 2023/24	£ Year 5 2024/25
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Revenue

Total Revenue Cost

Funding required:

Total capital cost £

Revenue cost £

Considered by:

Enter committee here

Enter Council or
Cabinet/Executive here

Date:

Financial Services Comments

Risk

Procurement

Value for Money Efficiency

This FP is valid for 3 months from FP date	If this FP is no longer required please advise Finance	If there are changes to the original report it may invalidate this document, it must be reviewed by Finance.