

TITLE OF REPORT: Climate Emergency Strategy

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek endorsement from the Health and Wellbeing Board of the Climate Emergency Strategy and ensure partners work together to tackle the climate emergency.

How does the report support Gateshead's Health & Wellbeing Strategy?

2. Links between health and wellbeing and climate are plentiful. The Council [Climate Action Plan](#) and the draft [Climate Change Strategy](#) for the Borough relate to health under each theme, some examples are set out below;
 - Transport – active travel promotes health and wellbeing
 - Energy – including decreasing fuel poverty and the provision of warm homes
 - Housing – provision of low carbon homes
 - Community – through the benefits of social connection and the creation of community allotments or orchards providing healthy food
 - Nature and the environment – through active lifestyles and the proven link between access to open spaces and mental health
 - Economy and consumption – through provision of local jobs
 - Food – through the increased consumption of plant based foods and access to local sourced food.
 - Resilience to climate – protection from flood and heat events

The Climate team and public health meet regularly to discuss these connections and ensure that co-benefits are exploited to result in the best outcomes for Gateshead and its residents.

Health and wellbeing is also referenced in the Council [Environmental Policy](#) adopted in 2021.

Background

3. The Council [declared a Climate Emergency](#) in 2019. As a result, the Council committed to become carbon neutral by 2030 and to assist the borough in meeting the same targets. The [Climate Action Plan](#) setting out how the Council will work towards net zero was published in 2021 and a Council wide [Environmental Policy](#) was adopted in 2021.
4. The Council commissioned an independent environmental audit of the Council operations in 2020 using the Investors in the Environment methodology, where it received a silver accreditation. The audit helped inform the Climate action Plan and focused the Council's priority actions. The Council received the first annual review of the Environment Audit in 2021. The Council is continuing to achieve Silver level accreditation and has improved its rating from 70% to 75% since the first audit in 2020 despite resources being diverted during Covid-19 in many services. The second review will commence in the coming months. However the Council's

footprint forms a very small part of that of Gateshead and it is clear that all partners, business, voluntary sector and community must play their part.

5. The Council consulted on the Gateshead wide [Climate Strategy](#) from December 2021 to February 2022. The Strategy is set out in themes: transport; energy; economy and consumption; woodland and nature; food; and resilience and adaptation.
6. As part of the preparation of this report, we asked partner members of the Health & Wellbeing Board to provide a brief statement from their organisation regarding the following questions; Have they declared a climate emergency? Do they have a strategy or plan? What has been their best success? What has proved difficult? What do they need some help with?

We had a response from the Gateshead Health NHS Trust Foundation, who set out some of the vast successes achieved by the Trust to date, but also set out some of the ways that others can assist in the delivery of their climate objectives;

- Improve public transport and cycle routes for staff, patients and visitors. Improving safety and lighting as well.
- Increase electric charging points available across the region.
- Financial resources/funds.
- Help engaging and educating the public and our staff on climate change, its impact and how they can take action. This includes low carbon diets and sustainable travel which can be linked to health prevention work too and improving public health.
- More collaborative working of Local Authorities with the ICS and Trusts to deliver sustainable schemes that provide innovation and change.

7. Many of these are recurring actions that are required through Gateshead, in particular the need for improved EV infrastructure and public transport.
8. One of the objectives of the draft Climate Emergency Strategy is identifying gaps and enabling action across organisations and communities to deliver common goals and climate objectives
9. It is worth noting that the NHS Supply Chain has committed to ensuring that their supply chain aligns with the NHS net zero strategy and that by April 2022 all Trusts must adopt a procurement social value model with a minimum of 10% weighting. Gateshead Council have also recently adopted a Social Value Toolkit with a 10% rating, in addition to establishing our supply chains climate and carbon emissions through a questionnaire requested in each tender. The Council has also started to monitor its scope 3 emissions, including supply chain emissions.

Proposal

10. The draft Climate Emergency Strategy sets out a vision for Gateshead;

By 2030 we will have achieved our commitment to making Gateshead carbon neutral

Organisations will be working together in a combined effort to reduce carbon emissions. Opportunities in the 'green economy' will be realised, with businesses

benefitting from sectors that have seen substantial growth as our economy moves away from its reliance on fossil fuels.

Our communities will have been supported through this change: healthier and more active lifestyles, improved access to nature, cleaner air, warmer homes with lower energy bills, better access to local services, all of which have reduced inequalities across the borough.

11. The Strategy then sets out the objectives under each of the themes transport; energy; economy and consumption; woodland and nature; food; and resilience and adaptation and provides examples of best practice climate action from the Council, our partners and communities.
12. The Strategy sets out the proposed Ward level action plans, where we will develop locally specific action plans tailored to the needs and priorities of each ward. These action plans will be delivered by a combination of the Council, businesses, communities and other organisations.
13. The Climate Strategy also seeks to fully utilise natural co-benefits to climate action, including improved health and wellbeing, improved air quality, improved environments/places, habitat creation, and a reduction in inequality.
14. It is proposed that the Health and Wellbeing board endorse the draft Climate Emergency Strategy and commit to help achieve the vision and objectives within in, where appropriate along with their own climate targets.

Recommendations

15. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to endorse the Climate Emergency Strategy
16. The Health and Wellbeing board commit to delivering the objectives within the strategy, in partnership with the Council and others, where appropriate

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