

Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2020/21: Annual Progress Report

Vision: Making Uttlesford the best place to live, work and place



Theme 3: Progressive custodian of our rural environment

We Will:	Activities	Outputs/Milestones	Resources	Lead Member	Further considerations
1. Take action on Climate Change					
<i>a. Adopt policies to meet new environmental national guidelines/standards as they emerge</i>	Develop a Climate Change Action Plan, prioritised by impact, cost, and deliverability.	Action Plan developed by 31 March 21	Officer time in 2020/21. Funding allocated for the plan actions of £333K per annum for years 21/22, 22/23 and 23/24	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues /Assistant Director of Planning	No further changes identified subject to general caveat
<p>Progress Update: An Interim Climate Change Planning Policy Guidance document has been agreed by Cabinet to highlight the Council's climate change objectives and expectations in new developments in the District. A Climate Crisis Strategy has been agreed by Cabinet in February and will be considered by Full Council on 23rd February. An Action Plan setting out the projects to deliver the Strategy's aims will be prepared with an Interim Action Plan going to Scrutiny Committee in Spring 2021 and a final Plan in September 2021.</p>					
<i>b. Drive policies to deliver low carbon buildings</i>	Implement policies that reduce the carbon footprint of new development e.g. passivhaus; mandate carbon neutral local energy generation, such as solar panels or heat source pump, aiming for no new gas boiler installations in line or	Detailed proposals to come from the Climate Change Action Plan by 31 March 21	Within existing officer resources	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues /Assistant Director of Planning	No further changes identified subject to general caveat

	ahead of government timescales.				
<p>Progress Update: Interim Climate Change Planning Policy Guidance document has been agreed by Cabinet to highlight the Council's climate change objectives and expectations in new developments in the District. A Climate Crisis Strategy has been agreed by Cabinet in February and will be considered by Full Council on 23rd February. An Action Plan setting out the projects to deliver the Strategy's aims will be prepared with an Interim Action Plan going to Scrutiny Committee in Spring 2021 and a final Plan in September 2021. Green initiatives are also promoted at the pre-application and PPA stage of the planning process to ensure that developers are fully aware of their climate change obligations and members' expectations when finalising planning proposals.</p>					
<i>c. Improve average energy efficiency of Council housing stock</i>	To be included in the Review of HRA business plan	Measurable improvement in energy efficiency of housing stock. HRA business plan by 31 March 21	Within existing officer resources	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Youth and Health / Assistant Director of Housing, Health and Communities	No further changes identified subject to general caveat
<p>Progress Update: Work delayed pending release of government grants and review of HRA Business Plan.</p>					
<i>d. Increase the number of trees in the district (and protect existing trees).</i>	Introduce a tree planting initiative in partnership with town and parish councils.	TBC as this is the first year of the initiative	£15,000 capital budget	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues /Assistant Director of Planning	No further changes identified subject to general caveat
<p>Progress Update: All town and parish councils in the district have been invited to submit tree planting proposals for assistance under the UDC Tree Planting Initiative 2020-21. Seven participating councils are receiving trees for their planting schemes. These are Clavering, Felsted, Great Chesterford, Hadstock, Saffron Walden, Thaxted, and Wendens Ambo. Additionally, tree planting is being carried out on UDC open spaces in Gt. Dunmow, Hatfield Heath, Thaxted, and Saffron Walden. Additional funding of up to £7,000 for tree planting has been secured from Essex County Council for the current planting.</p>					
<i>e. Oppose a second runway at Stansted Airport</i>	Respond to Government consultation on Carbon Emissions and Aviation before Aviation Strategy 2050 white paper published.	A response has been submitted by the Assistant Director of Planning. No further activity planned until Aviation Strategy 2050 published.	Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure, Transport and Stansted Airport/Assistant Director of Planning	Continue to monitor but unlikely to require action
<p>Progress Update: The Council continues to ensure that it comments on any Government consultations on airport growth and will ensure that such responses continue to oppose any proposals for a second runway at Stansted Airport.</p>					
<i>f. Set a Net Zero Carbon goal for the Council and implement supporting policies</i>	In making every policy decision, consider the opportunity to reduce	Review capital programme to consider vehicle replacement and	Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/Portfolio Holder for Finance and	No further changes identified subject to general caveat

	<p>the Council's carbon emissions, including:</p> <p>Review viability of replacing Council vehicles & equipment with electric alternatives at end of life.</p> <p>Switch to Green Energy tariff</p>	<p>acquisitions programme for 21/22</p> <p>Produce business case regarding grounds maintenance equipment replacement programme to be completed by Dec 20</p> <p>Complete</p>	<p>The new energy tariff has increased the budget by £32k.</p>	<p>Budget/Assistant Director of Environment</p>	
<p><u>Progress Update:</u> Green Tariff - In 2018-19 the Council produced 1138 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions from gas and electricity, which represents half of the Council's total greenhouse gas emissions. After switching to a green energy tariff, the Council is able to claim 100% reduction (i.e. zero carbon dioxide) from Electricity and in the case of biogas, a 72% reduction CO2 emissions.</p> <p>Replacement Vehicles / Equipment - A number of pieces of Grounds Maintenance equipment are being replaced with electrically powered alternatives this financial year. This will mean that almost all hand held kit is electrically powered reducing fossil fuel usage. Electrically powered equipment also has the benefit of reducing hand arm vibration levels which significantly reduces the risk to staff of acquiring long conditions such as white finger. Vans within the Grounds Maintenance team are due for replacement and options for improved environmental performance are currently being investigated. This work has been delayed slightly by the ongoing disruption / pressures associated with Covid-19.</p>					
<p><i>g (i). Increase walking, cycling and sustainable transport</i></p>	<p>Improve connectivity for walking and cycling</p>	<p>£106 contributions and liaison with ECC to secure the implementation of additional walking and cycling facilities.</p>	<p>Within existing budget.</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure, Transport and Stansted Airport/ Assistant Director of Planning</p>	<p>No further changes identified subject to general caveat</p>
<p><u>Progress Update:</u> The Council will continue to negotiate new sustainable transport initiatives as part of new developments in the District. We will continue to work with and press ECC to prioritise Uttlesford in new initiatives for sustainable transport measures in and around the District.</p>					
<p><i>g (ii). Increase walking, cycling and sustainable transport</i></p>	<p>Introduce EV charging point provision</p>	<p>Four 22kw fast charging posts with twin ports at London Road Council Offices. Future projects identified as part of the Climate Change Action Plan</p>	<p>£15k in capital programme for EV chargers</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure/Transport and Stansted Airport and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/Assistant Director Planning</p>	<p>No further changes identified subject to general caveat</p>

Progress Update: Orders have been raised for four electric vehicle charging points at the London Road Offices in Saffron Walden. Once the necessary electrical and power works have been completed, these charging points will be installed as soon as practically possible. It should be noted that UKPN are experiencing extended delays during the pandemic, so not exact date as yet can be given.

<i>h. Recognise the district's 'greenest' businesses and developers</i>	No work is scheduled on this item in 20/21			Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/ Assistant Director of Planning	
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Progress Update: Due to Covid 19, it has not been possible or pragmatic to promote this initiative. This year's Business Breakfast event was postponed due to Covid 19 and so it wasn't even possible to acknowledge the success of our green businesses at that event.

2. Conserve our natural resources

<i>a. Implement and enforce policies that protect water and reduce energy consumption</i>	Include in Climate Change Action Plan	Detailed proposals to come from the Climate Change Action Plan by 31 March 21	Resources identified as part of the Climate Change Action Plan	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/ Assistant Director of Planning	
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Progress Update: Policies promoting the more efficient use of water resources has been included in the Climate Change Planning Policies agreed by Cabinet in February 2021. While these policies are not statutory in planning terms, they will be flagged up to developers as the Council's expectations in relevant new developments coming forward in Uttlesford.

<i>b. Drive programmes that increase biodiversity</i>	Include in Climate Change Action Plan	Detailed proposals to come from the Climate Change Action Plan by 31 March 21	Resources identified as part of the Climate Change Action Plan	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/ Assistant Director of Planning	
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Progress Update: Improving and enhancing Uttlesford's biodiversity forms a key part of the Climate Crisis Strategy. Subsequent actions will be set out in the emerging Action Plan. Part of this work is likely to require a Biodiversity Action Plan to be prepared for the District.

<i>c. Support local energy production initiatives</i>	Include in Climate Change Action Plan	Detailed proposals to come from the Climate Change Action Plan by 31 March 21	Resources identified as part of the Climate Change Action Plan	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/ Director of Public Services	
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Progress Update: The Climate Change Strategy to be recommended to Council following the Cabinet meeting on 9 February places emphasis on upgrades to the electricity distribution network to support electric powered heating and transport rather than on local energy generation.

<i>d. Implement programmes to reduce single-use plastics</i>			BAU: opportunities will be taken to jointly promote recycling with wider Essex campaigns, within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/Assistant Director Environment	
<u>Progress Update:</u> The Council supported Love Essex initiatives including the Love Essex Plastic Pledge. Information on why plastics are a problem and what residents can do to reduce their personal usage were promoted via UDC social media releases including during national recycling week. Further examples of countywide initiative can be found at https://www.lovesessex.org/news-and-ideas/ideas-to-help-reduce-your-plastic/					
e. Work to reduce per-capita landfill in the district			BAU: campaigns will be run, within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/Assistant Director of Environment	
<p><u>Progress Update:</u> This target should perhaps be based on reducing the overall volume and weight of all waste collected with particular focus on residual waste. The Mechanical Biological Treatment facility that was planned to treat all of Essex’s residual waste closed in 2020 and the company that operated the facility went into administration. Essex County Council, as waste disposal authority, have put in place contingency arrangements to landfill residual waste and are actively working on a longer term solution. This issue is complicated by contractual obligations and legal action by some parties. As a result the amount of waste landfilled without treatment increased significantly this year however UDC or any other collection authority is not directly in control of where waste it collects is disposed of.</p> <p>Alongside the change in waste disposal arrangements, there has been a significant increase in the overall tonnage of waste produced within the community. At this stage it is not known if this increased level will be a long term change or a response to national lockdowns where more people are working from home and visiting other places less. It is worth noting that commercial waste has reduced as fewer staff are ‘at work’ across the district’s businesses. As well as increases in overall waste there has been a noticeable change in waste composition with more cardboard and glass being presented by residents. Again it is not known whether this is a long term change and this situation is not unique to the Uttlesford District. With that said the Council still ran promotions to encourage waste minimisation including home composting and used social media channels to push recycling messages alongside well tested methods such as messaging on the sides of our recycling and waste management fleet.</p>					
3. Protect and enhance our rural character and heritage					
<i>a. Meet or exceed national standards for open and green spaces</i>	Explore potential for PPGs having regard to the work required and weight that can be attached.	Interim Planning Policy Guidance that sets out the Council’s expectations for open and green space standards by Dec 2020	Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Local Plan/Assistant Director of Planning	No further changes identified subject to general caveat

Progress Update: It has not been possible to prepare Interim Policy Guidance on open space due to other pressing commitments relating to the new Local Plan. Open and green space standards are key elements of the new local Plan and so policies will be developed as part of its statutory development process. The Council will support Neighbourhood Plans exploring options for such a policy where the evidence supports this approach.

<i>b. Encourage positive planning that values and protects our heritage</i>			BAU: heritage considerations will continue, within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Local Plan/Assistant Director of Planning	
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Progress Update: The importance of the District’s heritage forms a key element of any discussions and negotiations on new planning applications. The new Local Plan will develop policies and proposals that will highlight the importance of maintaining or enhancing the heritage as this has already be flagged up by local people as an important priority for Uttlesford.

<i>c (i). Work with others to increase access to the heritage and history of our district</i>	Complete Walden Castle project	Castle to reopen to the public early summer 2020	Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Sports, Leisure, Education and the Arts /Assistant Director of IT, Facilities and Assets	The official reopening of the site was delayed and the bookings for this summer cancelled due to Covid.
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Progress Update: The official reopening of the site delayed due to Covid.

<i>c (ii). Work with others to increase access to the heritage and history of our district</i>	Complete Lottery-funded Audience Development Study and Options Appraisal for Saffron Walden Museum	Final consultant reports detailing approaches to developing and improving museum service delivered by 30 November 2020		Portfolio Holder for Sports, Leisure, Education and the Arts/Assistant Director of Corporate Services	No further changes identified subject to general caveat
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Progress Update: Main work completed – Feasibility Study & Options Appraisal (Fourth Street) completed June 2020 and Audience Development Report (Julia Holberry Associates) completed December 2020 (public consultation work having been delayed a little by Covid restrictions). Remaining 10% of work is with a fundraising consultant to mentor the Museum’s fundraising committee in producing a fundraising strategy, and supplying an informed short-list of potential funders for the Museum’s development plan. This work is expected to proceed March – April and there will be an evaluation for NLHF to compete the project. 90% of the NHLF in total has been drawn down and about 75% of the Museum Society’s contribution (£10,000) to cover project costs.

<i>d. Work with our rural partners and developers to maintain habitat and wildlife corridors</i>	Include in Climate Change Action Plan	Detailed proposals to come from the Climate Change Action Plan by 31 March 21	Resources identified as part of the Climate Change Action Plan	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/ Assistant Director of Planning	
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Progress Update: The need to protect and enhance the rural environment is incorporated into the Climate Change Planning Policies Guidance agreed by Cabinet in February 2021. While these policies are not statutory in planning terms, they will be flagged up to developers as the Council’s expectations in relevant new developments coming forward in Uttlesford. The Council will aim to develop a stronger working relationship with rural business and its representatives, including the National Farmers Union, to develop initiatives that promote the natural environment as a whole.

<i>e. Target littering and fly-tipping</i>	No proactive work is scheduled on this item in 20/21			Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/ Assistant Director of Environment	
<u>Progress Update:</u> The Council supported initiatives planned by the Cleaner Essex Campaign which is part funded by all District, Borough, City and County Council's. The focus of these campaigns was to target littering and fly-tipping.					
4. Take strong action on dealing with pollution					
<i>a. Increase air quality monitoring across the district</i>	Further work is paused pending the outcome of the annual report.			Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/ Assistant Director of Housing, Health and Communities	
<u>Progress Update:</u> As AQ monitoring locations increased during 2019/20, there are no plans to extend the monitoring for 20/21. However, a review will occur at the end of the calendar year and it is proposed that some monitoring locations with consistently good AQ will be moved to other locations.					
<i>b. Deliver reductions in pollution at identified problem areas</i>				Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues/ Assistant Director of Housing, Health and Communities	
<u>Progress Update:</u> No proactive work was scheduled on this item in 20/21					