

REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed :			
Any especially affected Wards No	Discretionary	Be entirely within Cabinet’s powers to decide		YES	
		Need to be recommendations to Council		NO	
		Is it a Key Decision		NO	
Lead Member: Cllr Michael de Whalley E-mail: cllr.michael.dewhalley@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted:			
		Other Members consulted: Environment and Community Panel			
Lead Officer: Ged Greaves, Climate Change Manager E-mail: ged.greaves@west@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Officers consulted: Corporate Leadership Team			
Financial Implications NO	Policy/ Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES	Risk Management Implications YES	Environmental Considerations YES

Date of meeting: 23 April 2026

CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Summary

The Council's Climate Change Policy and Strategy were last reviewed and approved by Cabinet in October 2020 and September 2021 respectively. The policy and strategy have been refreshed to ensure they remain relevant to the needs of the organisation. They have been integrated as part of the update, to simplify documentation.

The proposed plan covers the Council's greenhouse gas emissions and its role as a community leader to influence emissions reductions across the geographic borough and sets out the activities required to support emissions reduction and wider changes such as active travel.

The climate change strategy and action plan are key to delivering elements of the Corporate Strategy.

The proposed strategy and action plan were considered by Environment and Community Panel on 14 April 2026 and have been considered by the Panel's Climate Change Informal Working Group (9 February 2026).

Recommendation

That Cabinet approve the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Reason for Decision

To ensure there is a comprehensive and up to date framework for the Council's response to climate change.

1. Background

- 1.1 The current policy outlines the Council's approach to climate change and the strategy describes how it will be implemented. The climate change policy was first adopted in October 2020. A climate emergency was declared in September 2021 and supported by the initial climate change strategy that was also approved in September 2021.

2. Climate Change Policy and Strategy

- 2.1 The current policy and strategy have been integrated into a single document. The policy states the Council's commitment to addressing climate change and the strategy describes the approach to be carried out in practice. It includes the particular actions that the Council will focus on until a new local government structure is operational.

3. Changes from the previous strategy

- 3.1 Responding to a recent Internal Audit recommendation, ownership and accountability for each of the actions is allocated to individual lead officers within directorates.
- 3.2 Updates on particular projects have previously been provided through standard corporate performance reports. An annual update on the strategy and carbon footprints for the Council and its wider borough will also be provided to Cabinet.
- 3.3 Scientific consensus is that the Paris Agreement targets on temperature change will be missed. Guidance advises that adaptation risks should therefore be identified and managed and an action is proposed to inform future mitigation measures. This is an important progression from the previous climate change strategy which focused on decarbonisation.
- 3.4 The action plan includes a wide range of contributions from across the Council's directorates. The projects range from major capital schemes such as the St George's Guildhall to award schemes that encourage environmental awareness and practices such as the annual garden wildlife competition or school competition.
- 3.5 Given local government reorganisation, the action plan is limited to March 2028. The strategy provides an indication of the local challenges that will need to be addressed after structural changes to local authorities across Norfolk.

4. Policy Implications

- 4.1 The proposed Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan refreshes and integrates the Council's existing policy, strategy and action plan and corporate approach to climate change which encourages mitigation of carbon emissions,

wider outcomes for residents in terms of environmental and housing improvements and adaptation to a changing climate.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The delivery of the strategy will be supported by a climate change reserve fund, revenue budget and applications for external funds. Actions that contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions may also be included in the capital programme. The corporate electricity tariff is included in the revenue budget and potential capital schemes such as the installation of solar PV generation and LED lighting contribute towards the management of corporate electricity consumption and costs.

6. Personnel Implications

- 6.1 There are no personnel implications.

7 Environmental Considerations

- 7.1 The strategy provides a framework and actions for the Council's ongoing response to its declaration of a climate emergency, to reduce its carbon emissions and to encourage wider action across the borough.
- 7.2 There will clearly be a positive environmental benefit through the policy and strategy, which is in line with Government and local policies on climate change.

8. Statutory Considerations

- 8.1 There are no specific statutory requirements for a local authority to have a climate change strategy. However, there is a mass of complex legislation such as the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Climate Change Act 2008, Planning Act 2008, Planning and Energy Act 2008, Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 and the Environment Act 2021 which impact on local authorities and climate change. Drawing actions together into a strategy is encouraged by [sector guidance](#) and notable practice.

9. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- 9.1 The policy and strategy are considered to have positive equalities implications. For example, housing retrofit measures will support vulnerable households with improvements that make their homes more comfortable.

10. Risk Management Implications

- 10.1 The current corporate risk register includes several risks relating to flood management and coastal erosion and carbon emissions.

11. Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

11.1 None

12. Background Papers

12.1 None