

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision 18 March 2024

Portfolio:	Planning and Development
Subject:	Environment Update
Report of:	Director of Planning and Regeneration
Corporate Priorities:	Respond to Climate Change and Protect the Environment

Purpose:

To present to the Executive the full range of work that the Council has undertaken in recent years to protect and enhance the environment of the Borough, and to seek approval to prepare an Environment Strategy which will provide a co-ordinated programme of environmental work going forward.

Executive summary:

Improving our environment is a key priority for Fareham Borough Council. In 2019 the Council committed to becoming carbon neutral in its operations by 2030. To achieve this a Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) was put in place. The CCAP focuses mainly on carbon reduction to help mitigate climate change. However, there are many elements other than carbon reduction which have an environmental impact.

The report also highlights the other project areas that the Council works on which have also helped to protect and enhance the environment.

A Fareham's Greener Future document (Appendix A) is attached to this report and contains information in a magazine style format on the different projects that the Council has undertaken over the past few years that have had a positive environmental impact.

The report then goes on to set out the need for an Environment Strategy which will bring the different environmental elements together to formulate one cohesive strategy. The strategy will guide decision making going forward and ensure the Council continues to protect and enhance Fareham's environment.

Once this report has been considered by the Executive, the 'Fareham's Greener Future' publication will be shared in late March. Social media and local media opportunities will also be used to raise awareness of the progress achieved and next steps on environmental matters.

The report will be presented to the 14 March Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel for pre-scrutiny. Comments from the Panel will be presented to the Executive.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Executive:

- (a) approves the preparation of an Environment Strategy to guide decision making and priority projects going forward; and
- (b) requests that Officers undertake a range of actions to publicise the 'Fareham's Greener Future' publication which sets out the delivery progress and next steps.

Reason:

To enable residents to see the work the Council has been doing on protecting and enhancing the environment and to enable the Council to guide decision making going forward.

Cost of proposals:

The costs of the Fareham's Greener Future document (Appendix A) have been met within existing budgets.

Appendices: **A: Fareham's Greener Future**

Background papers: **None**

Reference papers: **Corporate Strategy 2023-2029**
 Climate Change Action Plan (June 2021)

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Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	18 March 2024
Subject:	Environment Update
Briefing by:	Director of Planning and Regeneration
Portfolio:	Planning and Development

INTRODUCTION

1. Improving our environment is a key corporate priority for Fareham Borough Council. This report first sets out the work that has been taking place focused on reducing our carbon footprint as part of our Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP).
2. However, 'environment' incorporates much more than just carbon management and reduction, so this report brings together all the different strands of work the Council delivers that have had a positive impact on the environment. It sets out a position where the Council will look to formulate an Environment Strategy which will incorporate these strands into one cohesive strategy.

Climate Change Action Plan

3. At the 26 September 2019 Executive meeting the Leader pledged a commitment for the Council to be carbon neutral in its operations by 2030. To achieve this a CCAP was formulated and approved at the June 2021 Executive meeting.
4. Since declaring our commitment to carbon neutrality, the Council has undertaken several projects which have helped see the operational carbon footprint of the Council reduce from 1,926 tCO₂e in 2019/20 to 1,505 tCO₂e in 2022/23 which is a 22% decrease.
5. Carbon reduction is focused on mitigating climate change which in turn has environmental benefits. However, there are also other strands of work which the Council undertakes which also have environmental benefits but through different means than carbon reduction.

Further Environment Projects

6. Alongside carbon reduction there are a further five key areas that the Councils' work impacts which have a positive effect on the environment. These are:

Sustainable Development: Mitigating and managing the impact of the development throughout the Borough is an essential part of protecting our environment and is at the

core of Planning Service delivery. However, notably Fareham Housing also has a key role in ensuring development is both sustainable in design and also in how it interacts and impacts the wider environment. These are projects such as our new sheltered housing schemes which are being developed with sustainability as a one of the main priorities. For example, the new Assheton Court development in Portchester will have two communal air source heat pumps to provide heating and hot water.

Land Stewardship: These are projects focused on protecting our green spaces and enhancing biodiversity in the Borough. For example, the Abbey Meadows site in Titchfield which opened in 2021 comprises of wildflower meadows, and an active apiary (beehive area). These all help improve biodiversity in the area.

Air Quality: Air pollution effects both human health and the natural environment. Therefore, the Council monitors certain sites for high levels of pollution and takes action to reduce levels when necessary.

Coastal Management: Fareham Borough Council's coastal management service, delivered through Coastal Partners, have several projects in place that both protect and enhance our coastlines.

Waste and Recycling: There are several projects focused on reducing the impact waste has on the environment. For example, the Council's Garden Waste service has increased the amount of waste that goes to compost.

7. Following the structure set out above, Appendix A to this report provides readers with a cohesive magazine style document that provides information on all the projects that the Council has undertaken over the past few years that have had a positive environmental impact on the Borough.

Environment Strategy

8. As can be seen in Appendix A to this report, the Council has put a huge amount of work into preserving and improving our environment over the years and we will look to continue this focus going forward.
9. Therefore, the next step is to create a formal Environment Strategy which will guide us in all our decision making to continue to protect and enhance Fareham's environments for future generations. The strategy will bring together all the different environmental elements into one cohesive strategy.

Environmental Considerations

10. The main environmental considerations associated with this report are to do with the production of the magazine in Appendix A to this report. To mitigate any potential impacts, hard copies will only be printed when necessary.

Financial Considerations

11. The costs associated with this report can be met within existing budgets.

Conclusion

12. This report sets out the work the Council has done to protect and enhance the Borough's environment and how it plans to continue to do so with the formation of an Environment Strategy.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Alex Jolley (01329 824470)