



Meeting	Health and Environment Policy Committee
Date and Time	Tuesday, 5th December, 2023 at 6.30 pm.
Venue	Walton Suite, Guildhall Winchester and streamed live on YouTube at www.youtube.com/winchestercc

Note: This meeting is being held in person at the location specified above. Members of the public should note that a live video feed of the meeting will be available from the council's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/winchestercc) during the meeting.

A limited number of seats will be made available at the above named location however attendance must be notified to the council at least 3 working days before the meeting. Please note that priority will be given to those wishing to attend and address the meeting over those wishing to attend and observe.

AGENDA

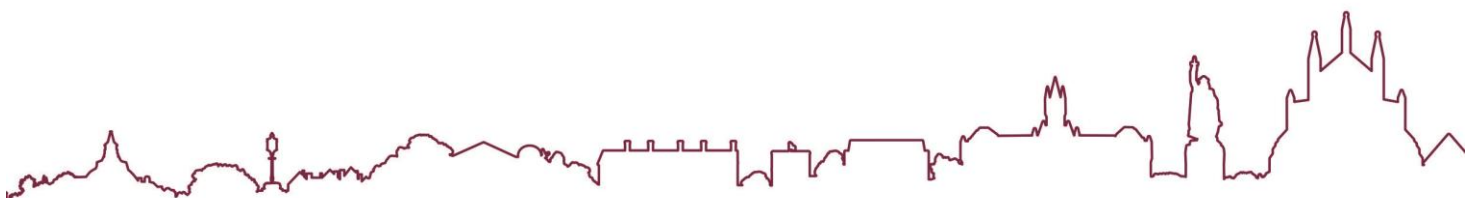
PROCEDURAL ITEMS

- 1. Apologies and Deputy Members**
To note the names of apologies given and deputy members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed members.
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
To receive any disclosure of interests from Members and Officers in matters to be discussed.

Note: Councillors are reminded of their obligations to declare disclosable pecuniary interests, personal and/or prejudicial interests in accordance with legislation and the Council's Code of Conduct.

If you require advice, please contact the appropriate Democratic Services Officer, prior to the meeting.

- 3. Chairperson's Announcements**
- 4. Minutes** (Pages 5 - 10)
Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 September 2023.



BUSINESS ITEMS

5. **Public Participation**

To receive and note questions asked and statements made from members of the public on matters which fall within the remit of the Committee.

NB members of the public are required to register with Democratic Services three clear working days before the meeting

(contact: democracy@winchester.gov.uk or 01962 848 264).

Members of the public and visiting councillors may speak at this Committee, provided they have registered to speak three working days in advance. Please contact Democratic Services **by 5pm on Wednesday, 29 November 2023** via democracy@winchester.gov.uk or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

6. **Water Quality Update - Representatives from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust in attendance (Verbal Update)**

7. **Ecological Sites (HEP036)** (Pages 11 - 18)

8. **CNAP Report: Renewable Energy (HEP040)** (Pages 19 - 40)

9. **To note the Work Programme for 2023/24** (Pages 41 - 42)

Laura Taylor
Chief Executive

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27 November 2023

Agenda Contact: Claire Buchanan, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01962 848 438 Email: cbuchanan@winchester.gov.uk

**With the exception of exempt items, Agenda, reports and previous minutes are available on the Council's Website www.winchester.gov.uk*

MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson: Cramoysan (Liberal Democrats)

Vice-Chairperson: Tippet-Cooper (Liberal Democrats)

Conservatives
Bolton
Warwick

Liberal Democrats
Greenberg
Morris
Wise

Deputy Members

Kurn and Pearson

Brophy and Williams

Quorum = 4 members

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

Representations will be limited to a maximum of 3 minutes, subject to a maximum 15 minutes set aside for all questions and answers. To reserve your place to speak, you are asked to **register with Democratic Services three clear working days prior to the meeting** – please see public participation agenda item for further details. People will be invited to speak in the order that they have registered, subject to the maximum time period allowed for speaking not being exceeded. Public Participation is at the Chairperson's discretion.

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

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VOTING

- apart from the Chairperson, every Member has one vote when a matter before the meeting requires a decision.
- in the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson may exercise a casting vote and that vote may be exercised in any way seen fit.
- a Member may abstain from voting, or vote differently from how they may have indicated during the debate, without further explanation.
- the way each Member voted will not be recorded in the minutes, unless a motion to have a Recorded Vote has been passed.

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 21 September 2023

Attendance:

Councillors
Cramoysan (Chairperson)

Tippett-Cooper
Bolton
Greenberg

Morris
Warwick
Wise

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Becker (Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement), Learney (Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency) and Wallace.

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Cook

[Full Video Recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

There were no apologies for absence given at this meeting.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Warwick declared a personal (but non prejudicial) interest concerning agenda items that may be related to her role as a County Councillor.

Councillor Tippett-Cooper declared a personal (but non prejudicial) interest in respect of item 6 (Cost of Living Programme) due to his role as volunteer/director for the community food pantry at Unit 12 which had been referenced within the report.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson announced that at the previous meeting held on 4 July 2023 that had been a work request put forward to the committee by Councillor Wallace, on behalf of Councillor Lee, this had been considered by the Cabinet Member and officers. As a consequence of the motion passed by Council at its meeting on 20 September 2023, it was considered that the work request had now been resolved.

The Chairperson made reference to a number of work programme items that had been suggested by the committee at its last meeting these included, requests for updates on the carbon neutrality action plan where it was noted that members had recently received a briefing during the week and in relation to the public conveniences strategy which has since been approved by Cabinet and had also featured in the Hampshire Chronicle.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 4 July 2023 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Councillor Wallace addressed the committee in relation to item 6 (Cost of Living Programme) and item 7 (CNAP report: Winchester Movement Strategy and Transport Actions Update) and his comments are summarised under the relevant minutes below.

6. **COST OF LIVING PROGRAMME (HEP035)**

Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee on this item.

In summary, Councillor Wallace made reference to the following points which were responded to accordingly by Councillor Becker and relevant officers:

- Residents had been hit hard by the cost-of-living crisis with high numbers of residents turning to The Trussell Trust and other foodbanks for emergency food parcels, with a significant rise in the number of households requiring support over the last three years.
- He supported the report and thanked officers for their hard work of those directly involved in the cost-of-living programme and those across the council who provided short term crisis support, including the revenues and benefits, housing, communications and customer service team, as well as the Citizen's Advice Bureau who provide invaluable support for residents.
- Consideration of a feasibility study (possibly funded from the rural prosperity fund) to provide a mobile advice service to support those in rural locations throughout the district where vulnerable residents may be unable to access public transport and require face to face advice and support – The Service Lead: Communities and Wellbeing reported that the council's work with Citizen's Advice Bureau had enabled them to increase their outreach work to service in rural areas and work with existing partners and activities targeted at vulnerable groups. Continued dialogue on this matter would take place.

Councillor Becker introduced the report which provided an update on the on-going cost of living help and support that has been and continues to be delivered by the council as a result of the economic crisis, the impact on everyday living costs for residents and organisations and set out the key objectives and aims of the programme and outcomes to date. Furthermore, the

report outlined the interventions that had been put in place to help since 2022 and also looked ahead to the provision of support for the future.

It was noted that a cost-of-living webpage was available on the council's website providing the latest up to date information for those requiring support and that the work of the Social Inclusion Partnership and the outcomes of the Summit held in November 2022 continuing to bring organisations together to address the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and wider inclusion goals.

The Town Centre and Community Manager reported on partnership working across council teams and with stakeholders and advised that the council had provided £60k in financial support through emergency grant funding to organisations that supported over 5,000 vulnerable residents across a range of beneficiaries and additional practical support was given to Citizen's Advice Bureau and used further financial support to strengthen their resources and increase capacity. This also improves their business case for funding from other organisations going forward.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member, the Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing and other relevant officers.

- (i) Continued discussions with local Parish Council's to work with hard-to-reach vulnerable residents, particularly in rural communities, to bring services to isolated people.
- (ii) Plans to run another cost-of-living summit – it was noted that the social inclusion partnership would now address this matter going forward.
- (iii) Continuing to work together internally and externally to avoid duplication of work and improve services for residents.
- (iv) The empowerment given to organisations to create important legacy outcomes.

At the conclusion of debate, the committee thanked officers for the positive shared working practices across a variety of council teams and with partners to help deliver support and advice to residents in need of assistance during this difficult time.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be received, and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

7. **CNAP REPORT: WINCHESTER MOVEMENT STRATEGY AND TRANSPORT ACTIONS UPDATE (PRESENTATION)**

Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee on this item.

In summary, Councillor Wallace made reference to the following points:

- Four years into the ten-year Winchester Movement Strategy (WMS) plan he stated that progress had been poor, whilst officers highlighted the small steps

that had taken place, he suggested that residents deserved better than any pretence that the plan was on track.

- Councillor Wallace stated that no reference had been made to the delays to the LTP4, the City's local walking and cycling infrastructure plan, the Winchester district walking and cycling infrastructure plan and spending on new cycle parking which was also behind plan, whilst infrastructure projects continued to be approved to increase traffic in the city centre.
- The Mini-Holland project had been cancelled by the Government so funding for this initiative was no longer available.
- Bus services in the district continue to be reduced or cut in some areas.
- Although many of the issues raised were out of the council's control, Councillor Wallace stated that the council should not be part of perpetuating the myth that there was an effective plan being worked.
- A need to re-evaluate matters going forward to align with the council's net zero priorities.
- The priority to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- He suggested that the emissions savings from each of the schemes needed to be quantified to help with prioritising the key actions.
- The next steps need to be bolder to have any significant impact on reducing traffic in Winchester and the carbon impact across the district.

In response to the points raised above, Councillor Learney stated that whilst she understood the sentiment expressed by Councillor Wallace, it needed to be recognised that transport schemes were extremely costly and that government funding requirements to support these schemes were fast-changing, with the competitive process requiring a council to place significant resource into putting bids together. Currently local authorities were struggling and needed to work practically within the resources that were available to them.

The Chair welcomed Geoff Hobbs and Stewart Wilson of Hampshire Highways to the meeting to contribute to the presentation and answer questions thereon.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency introduced the item which provided an update on the Winchester Movement Strategy. The committee were reminded that the strategy was a joint city and council transport strategy agreed in 2019, with the aims of reducing traffic, increasing levels of walking and cycling and improving air quality whilst supporting economic growth. Since the agreement, there had been many changes with the declaration of the climate emergency. However, given the timescales involved in transport projects, the benefits of the long-term partnership work and continuing the workstreams of the Strategy, still remained strong and would result in significant benefits to the city for the future.

The Transport Planner and the Hampshire Highways representatives gave a detailed presentation which provided an update on the Winchester Movement Strategy and transport actions, its priorities and set out the latest on the plans, schemes and workstreams involved within the process.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by the relevant Cabinet Member, the Transport Planner and Hampshire Highways representatives:

- (i) Plans to improve cycling access links into the city centre for those wishing to cycle from surrounding wards and villages such as Colden Common and Twyford.
- (ii) Reassurance from data that the measures within the WMS are sufficient to deliver the necessary reductions in carbon and traffic required to achieve the 2030 target, following the recent Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) presentation indicating that transport, as a whole, was the biggest contributor to carbon emission.
- (iii) Funding requirements and pressures.
- (iv) The ability to meet the Department for Transport decarbonisation targets of 50% of journeys to be walked or cycled within the city by 2030 and the world class cycling network by 2040.
- (v) The scope of the WMS relative to the transport elements of the overall CNAP.
- (vi) The park and ride expansion.
- (vii) The inclusion of an emission impact on each of the schemes within the WMS updates going forward.
- (viii) Re-evaluation of the schemes to establish if any matters could be delivered in the short-medium term.
- (ix) The reliability of the bus service provision.

At the conclusion of debate, thanked officers for the update and the informative presentation received.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the presentation be received, and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

8. **SOCIAL VALUE DELIVERED THROUGH WINCHESTER'S LEISURE CENTRES (HEP039)**

The Chair welcomed Alison Lewis of Everyone Active to the meeting to provide an update and answer questions thereon.

Councillor Becker introduced the report. The Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing and the Area Manager (Everyone Active) provided a detailed background regarding social value and an update setting out the findings used to calculate the social value generated by Winchester Sport and Leisure Park and Meadowside Leisure Centre. Both centres have been operated by Everyone Active for the last two years, with use of both sites continuing to flourish and the contract performing well.

The committee noted that the report focussed on social value which Everyone Active were not contractually required to report, but which they provided voluntarily, giving a valuable perspective on the added value the contract delivered. It was reported that the sports and leisure park had generated social value of over £3.5m last year indicating that the contract was delivering far more than access to sport and aligned with council priorities.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member, the Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing, the Contract Manager and the Area Manager, Everyone Active.

- (i) The levers for driving a positive outcome for social value overall.
- (ii) Targeting different demographic groups – increasing use by the older generation and hard to reach groups of people with specific needs.
- (iii) Encouraging visitors to walk or cycle to use the leisure facilities.
- (iv) Plans to improve the uptake and provision for swimming lessons.
- (v) Any review of the charges for under two-year-olds.
- (vi) The use of relevant metrics in benchmarking and the interpretation of figures.
- (vii) Geographic and demographic data collection.

At the conclusion of debate, the committee thanked Alison Lewis and officers for their attendance and providing useful and detailed information regarding social value.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be received, and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted

9. **WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24 (INCLUDING TABLE OF ITEMS SUGGESTED BY THE COMMITTEE AT THE LAST MEETING)**

At the previous meeting, the committee made a request for various items during 2023/24 and these were set out within a table of actions and outcomes circulated with the agenda which outlined how these items had been or would be addressed for information purposes.

The committee suggested that an item be added to the work programme for 5 December 2023, to request that a representative from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust attend the committee to provide an update on water quality.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the response to the committee's work programme requests, as set out within the table of items circulated with the agenda, be noted; and
- 2. That, subject to the inclusion of the following item for 5 December 2023 (added subject to attendance confirmation at this stage), the work programme for 2023/24 be noted.
 - (i) Water Quality Update – Attendance from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (tbc)

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 9.05 pm

Chairperson

REPORT TITLE: ECOLOGICAL SITES

5 DECEMBER 2023

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr Kelsie Learney, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency

Contact Officer: Rick Smith Tel No: 01962 848532 Email rsmith@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): N/A

PURPOSE

In declaring the Nature and Climate Emergencies, the council acknowledged the importance of environmental and ecological issues.

The council owns and manages sites specifically for biodiversity due to their ecological importance. There is a challenge to meeting the cost of creation, management and monitoring of the district's sites of ecological importance, aimed at conserving and enhancing habitats and species, within the resources available to council. Sites with high ecological value do not deliver financially, but the benefits are significant in terms of providing natural capital assets such as biodiversity, flood alleviation, air quality, carbon sequestration, localised cooling and benefits to our health and wellbeing.

The council's recognition of the nature emergency also supports its Greener Faster objectives. Therefore, consideration is required regarding the long-term maintenance and management of its green spaces with a full appreciation and valuation of these spaces in terms of what they provide compared to other potential land-use types such as residential development.

There are several current and imminent drivers and factors, including mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), the introduction of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) and the council's declaration of a Nature Emergency. All of which means that it is an appropriate time to review the way in which the council manages ecological sites and how this is resourced.

This report aims to briefly update on delivery of the council's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), which is the mechanism by which ecological projects are planned and monitored. Intrinsically linked to this is a brief update on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) which has been introduced via the Environment Act 2021 and is now expected to

become mandatory for planning projects to deliver an uplift in biodiversity value of a minimum of 10%, from January 2024.

This report includes:

- a summary of how ecological sites are currently managed.
- the identification of a need for review of how ecological sites are managed.
- the request for input from the Committee on what to include in policy principals on how to manage ecological sites.

Next steps will be to:

- consider a strategic approach supported by structured processes and procedures to guide future ownership and management of ecological sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Policy Committee are asked to comment on:

1. Council's approach to the management of its green spaces and sites of ecological importance. Including how it should respond to opportunities to take on ownership and or management of new or additional ecological sites.
2. The proposal for a Nature Improvement Plan for the district that can be devised to tie into Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Biodiversity Net Gain.
3. The proposal to establish guidelines and criteria for undertaking a strategic assessment of potential new or additional ecological sites as and when they arise.

1 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 1.1 Section 2.2 below outlines the current management of council ecological sites. It costs approximately £100,000 for the management of ecological sites, and this includes c£30,000 for the specialist contract management of the national sites, and c£14,000 on a service level agreement (SLA) with Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre.
- 1.2 Current ecological improvements via changes in management of council green spaces are budgeted for within the existing Natural Environment and Recreation Team (NERT) reactive grounds maintenance budget. In practice one of the main changes in management relates to grass cutting regimes as where amended grass cuts have been introduced (cut and collection of arisings) this improves biodiversity and abundance of wildflowers. The maintenance contract with IdVerde means that these management amendments are difficult to agree as they can involve the need for changes in equipment and staffing. Some of the grass cuts have been included in a pilot called the “wildflower verge project”. Any further changes in management or the addition of areas of ecological value will have impacts on both resources and contract arrangements.
- 1.3 The current staffing resource consists of a Principal Ecologist and Biodiversity Officer post and an Ecologist and Biodiversity Officer post. Consideration will need to be given to how to resource the imminent increase in ecological workload due to come in January 2024 because of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) becoming part of planning consideration. It is anticipated that the monitoring work associated with BNG will increase workloads, but this cannot be predicted at this time. New burdens funding is anticipated from Defra for January 2024 onwards, but this has not yet been confirmed. Should workloads increase with no new burdens funding then the BAP will need to be adjusted to ensure we work within our resource parameters.
- 1.4 Mandatory BNG will only apply to “major” applications (over 10 dwellings or above 1,000sq m) from January 2024, then from April 2024 it will apply to applications including 1-9 dwellings. Therefore, resourcing needs will be reviewed at the end of March after a three-month period processing BNG-related planning applications has been completed, and then again at the end of June.

2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 2.1 The Policy Committee are asked how the council should respond to opportunities to take on management of new and or additional ecological sites. The Nature Emergency and Climate Emergency highlight the value given to ecological sites in the Winchester district and it is important therefore that there is suitable management and enhancement plans for ecological sites.

2.2 Council land

The council's portfolio of green spaces can be classified in a hierarchy in relation to its type of designation or classification (see examples Table 1 below) including Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). As well as these designations, there are classifications of green spaces including Fields In Trust (FIT).

2.3 Table 1 below lists the ecological sites owned and under management by the council, and what type of site they are (plus the River Itchen and the Hamble Estuary as examples of internationally-designated sites – but not owned or under management by the council). These sites are included in the BAP, which focuses on four habitat types (chalk river, trees and woodland, species-rich grassland, and hedgerows and arable field margins) and 22 species which rely on these habitats (including hazel dormouse, stag beetle and slow worm).

Table 1. Ecological sites owned and managed by the council.

Site name	Designation /classification	Statutory / Non-statutory	Site classification	Classification Level
<i>River Itchen</i>	SAC	Statutory	<i>Chalk River</i>	<i>International</i>
<i>Hamble Estuary</i>	SPA	Statutory	<i>Estuary</i>	<i>International</i>
Abbots Barton	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Bar End roundabout	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Chilcomb Rec	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Garrison Ground	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Gordon Avenue	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Greenacres	None	None	Pond / scrub	N/A
Hilliers Haven	None	None	Woodland	N/A
Ivy Close	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Joyce Gardens	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Land opposite Stanmore Rec	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Magdalen Hill Cemetery	None	None	Chalk grassland	N/A
Otterbourne Common	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Pitt roundabout	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Sainsbury roundabout	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
St Cross roundabout	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
St Faith's Meadow	SSSI	Statutory	Lowland meadow	National
St Giles Hill	None	None	Grassland / woodland	N/A
St Matthews Field	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A

Site name	Designation /classification	Statutory / Non-statutory	Site classification	Classification Level
Thurmond Crescent	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
Topfield	FIT (tbc)	None	Grassland / woodland	National
Water Lane	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A
West Hill Cemetery	SINC	Non-statutory	Chalk grassland	County
Whiteshute Ridge	SINC	Non-statutory	Chalk grassland	County
Winnall Moors	SSSI	Statutory	Wetland	National
Winton close	None	None	Species-rich grassland	N/A

2.4 Current Management

Following the hierarchy of designation/classification:

- a. the Internationally classified sites are covered by relevant legislation and policy which means they are heavily protected and the council's management input comes via the implementation of the planning process which governs this.
- b. the nationally classified sites are also protected under relevant legislation and policy and the council's management input is often via contracting specialists (in this case Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust) to undertake the specific management.
- c. the county-level classification (or local-level) sites are protected, but this is by way of policy control rather than legislation. Management of SINC sites owned by the council have targets set and measured by regular ecological surveys by Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC).
- d. Sites which are not designated at County/local level can still be important, especially as stepping stones or links between other designated sites. An example is Top field, Kings Worthy where a site was transferred to the council as part of a housing development. This site had some inherent ecological value and now with suitable management the council has improved and enhanced this site in terms of biodiversity.

2.5 Proposals

To prioritise or rationalise the approach to management of ecological sites a Nature Improvement Plan could be formulated to tie into Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LRNS) and Biodiversity Net Gain, which are nationally led schemes. A Nature Improvement Plan would update the BAP and amalgamate the Green Infrastructure plans with LNRS.

- 2.6 A Nature Improvement Plan would tie-in with Defra's Environmental Improvement Plan- 2023, and would focus on the council's strategic priorities, set our targets for taking actions that will help us restore nature, reduce

environmental pollution, and increase the prosperity of our district. By implementing the Environment Act 2021, including Local Nature Recovery Strategies to identify areas to create and restore habitat, and Biodiversity Net Gain to enhance the built environment, we will be able to deliver nature improvements.

- 2.7 Climate emergency mitigation can be achieved in tandem with nature improvements. A focus on carbon reduction and how our management of ecological sites (including tree planting and species-rich grassland creation) offers benefits to nature improvement as well as other benefits such health and wellbeing through access to nature, and flood alleviation.
- 2.8 Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain is due to commence in January 2024, and NERT are now entering into discussions and forming working groups (established by HCC in October 2023) to progress LNRS. These national initiatives can form a significant part of the council's Nature Improvement Plan and we are dependent on them to a degree to understand the direction and extent of our nature improvement plans. With mandatory BNG it is hoped that there will be new burdens funding from January onwards to resource this work, or the BAP would have to be adjusted to accommodate new mandatory tasks
- 2.9 Potential opportunities to take on additional ecological sites come via planning when developers look to hand-over open space to the council. It is the council's overall approach at present not to take on these areas of open space and to encourage the parish councils to take them (Decision Record - Review of management/maintenance of Open Space procedure - 19.03.21). There have been numerous occasions where parish councils have not wanted to do so and, in these instances, the city council has been approached by the developer / landowner to discuss the possibility of taking on the new open spaces. Examples include Lovedon Fields in Kings Worthy and historic open space adoptions in Badger Farm.
- 2.10 Clear guidance on how to consider and to respond to requests for taking on ecological sites is needed for the strategic assessment, appraisal and planning for the delivery of nature improvements on council land to be undertaken. This would further facilitate the delivery of the BAP and CNAP.
- 2.11 If and when a potential new or additional ecological site becomes available as an option for the council to own and/or manage, a strategic assessment could be undertaken to ascertain whether this would fit policy and delivery of biodiversity/carbon targets. Critical to this will be the cost increase implications and how this can be resourced.
- 2.12 An assessment could take into account:
- Habitat (and how these fit BAP priorities)
 - Location (strategic significance in relation to wider habitats)

- Cost of management and monitoring
- Potential to deliver carbon targets (i.e. sequestration)
- Potential to deliver BNG (and possible habitat banking)
- Other benefits (including public access, recreation)

Future Policy

- 2.13 As BNG policy evolves, there may be a need to amend council strategy with opportunities to monetise open spaces via a “habitat bank” approach. This could involve taking payments from developers who are unable to meet their BNG targets on their own land and delivering this for them through open space management. This “offsetting” will require significant investigation into the mechanism of taking payments for land management and the capacity (in relation to biodiversity units) that the council currently has within its land ownership. Future policy within the Local Plan will need to reflect these aims and the direction of movement for the council.
- 2.14 We are currently awaiting secondary legislation and guidance from Defra in relation to BNG and this will be published at the end of November.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 3.1 One option is to halt all management of ecological sites and revert to previous management practices. For example, to cease the wildflower verge project cuts and revert to the previous pattern of grass cutting. This would result in a net loss in terms of biodiversity and is not acceptable nor in line with the council’s Greener Faster and Nature emergency declaration. HEP previously supported the proposal to continue the wildflower verge project (Biodiversity Grass Verge Management, pilot road verge project, HEP028) and this is upheld so the option of abandoning suitable management for ecological sites has been rejected.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

Biodiversity Grass Verge Management, pilot road verge project, HEP028 – 04 October 2022.

Other Background Documents:-

Decision Record - Review of management/maintenance of Open Space procedure - 19.03.21

APPENDICES:

None

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REPORT TITLE: CNAP REPORT: RENEWABLE ENERGY

5 DECEMBER 2023

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Kelsie Learney, Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency

Contact Officer: Anna Wyse Tel: 01962 848538 Email: awyse@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

In September this year the council approved the revised Carbon Neutrality Action Plan in which is a set of five pathways. The third of these is “Increase renewable energy generation and or/purchase” with a target carbon saving of at least 251 kt Co2e by 2030. There are several interventions and actions proposed to help achieve this, such as through new large scale renewable energy generation schemes and roof top solar on domestic and commercial property.

The purpose of this report is to set out the work of the council to date to increase renewable energy generation for its own assets and in the district. It provides information on measures to increase the renewable energy generation capacity within Winchester district including commercial, domestic and community energy schemes and outlines the approach to further renewable energy generation by the council.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Health and Environment Policy Committee are asked to note:

1. Data on the current and future energy (electricity) consumption and renewable energy generation.
2. The existing and emerging policy framework for the delivery of renewable energy projects.
3. The council’s delivery since the declaration of a climate emergency in 2019 on renewable energy generation.

1. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

1.1. Financial considerations

1.2. There are no financial implications of this report which sets out the activity to date that the council has delivered, enabled or influenced to increase renewable energy generation.

1.3. To support the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan, the council allocated in 2020 a one-off revenue budget of £840k to fund the delivery of carbon neutrality projects. To date £699,364 has been spent. In 2023 a base budget of £200k was established to ensure resources continued to be available for carbon neutrality programme delivery.

1.4. The capital expenditure on carbon related projects providing roof mounted solar PV totalled over £6M in 2021/22 which was mainly the Vaultex site decked car park and 400 solar PV panels funded by Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership. Other sources of funding that have been used for solar PV installations are Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the Football Foundation and Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

1.5. Expansion of the council's roof mounted solar PV programme will continue to come from the £1m Energy Management Budget with external grant funding sought where opportunities arise. The Energy Management Budget is funded by prudential borrowing and is intended for schemes where the savings and/or income generated exceed (or match) the cost of borrowing.

1.6. It is proposed to spend £45m over the next eight years up to 2030-31 to be funded from in the Housing Revenue Account capital programme for "retrofitting" of energy measures to council homes. Further investment has been made in the new homes programme to provide high standard green energy schemes and to test and deploy green design and technologies including renewable energy.

1.7. In considering development of a larger scale renewable energy project within the district, a full business case will determine the delivery and operating model together with the financial case for investment. It is expected this will be brought forward for consideration, with the appropriate due diligence and governance review in early 2024.

1.8. Procurement and Legal considerations

1.9. This report sets out an overview of the renewables approach for the Winchester district and deployment of solar PV panels in the council estate for which there are no immediate procurement or legal implications.

1.10. Officers will work closely with colleagues in the legal, procurement and finance teams to ensure all procedures are followed and appropriate legal agreements are entered into.

1.11. Workforce considerations

1.12. There are a number of teams across the council currently active in delivering, supporting or promoting renewable energy generation projects and schemes. This includes:

- a) Asset Management – for council owned and occupied buildings and leased assets.
- b) Housing - new building and Retrofit Ready programme.
- c) Economy – business carbon audits programme and grants, green skills.

1.13. The Sustainability team takes a coordinating role and also leads on projects including of Go Greener Faster Grants; the UK Shared Prosperity funded Community Solar Support Scheme and Winchester Climate Action Network (WeCAN), feasibility research on large scale renewable generation schemes.

1.14. No additional staffing resources arise from this up-date to policy committee.

2. SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

2.1. District electricity consumption and renewable generation.

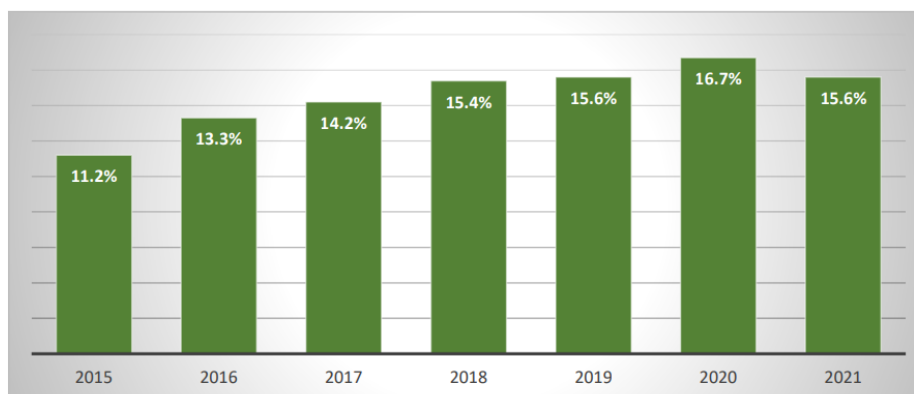
2.2. In 2023 Winchester Action on Climate Crisis (WinACC) produced a Renewable Energy in Winchester District 2023 report, setting out a picture of energy (electricity) consumption and generation both in terms of past and future trends. Extracts and data from this report provide a useful context for renewable energy interventions.

2.3. Renewable electricity accounted for 15.6% of consumption in 2021 (latest data available) with no discernible change this over the past five years.

Electricity Consumption	GWh	Share of total
Domestic	235.9	41.9%
Non-domestic	326.6	58.1%
Total	562.5	

Electricity Generation	GWh	Share of total
Photovoltaics (PV)	87.9	99.9%
Hydro	0.12	0.1%
Total	88	

Contribution of local renewable generation to local use of electricity



Source: Renewable Energy in Winchester District 2023

- 2.4. The data are a useful metric as a function of reduced energy (electricity) consumption (CNAP Pathway 1) and increased supply of renewable energy (CNAP Pathway 3).
- 2.5. Increased demand for electricity.
- 2.6. Future consumption of electricity will be affected by:
- i. increased demand from new housing and commercial development in the district;
 - ii. existing premises moving from gas or oil to electric heating sources e.g. Air Source Heat Pumps; and
 - iii. decarbonisation of transport e.g. electric vehicles.
- 2.7. As a priority, measures that reduce consumption still need to be supported (CNAP Pathway 1) through improvements to building fabric (insulation and glazing), behaviour changes, reducing car travel etc.
- 2.8. WinACC has assumed a 50% increase in demand between 2020 and 2035. This date is the government's target for the decarbonisation of the electricity grid and the increase adopts the national assumption of the Climate Change Committee.
- 2.9. Consumption in 2019, the best last reference point pre-covid was 586.4 GWh so by 2035 the estimated consumption would be 880 GWh. Installed capacity as at the end of 2022 was 1 GWh generating 94.4 GWh; indicating a requirement for a nine-fold increase in generation to meet potential future demand.
- 2.10. Working with WinACC the assumption in local growth will need to be refined and scale and number of installations quantified to meet demand through a mix of the various options. This should also include accounting for carbon emission reductions given it can lead to double-claim carbon savings on locally installed renewable energy installations, feeding the national grid,

which is becoming decarbonised over time. Targets for roof top solar installation by 2030 have been included in the CNAP 2023, so alignment with this is also needed. Further, because consumption of electricity is variable, it is important that the targets for renewable electrical generation are annually reviewed, to monitor progress in reaching the targets.

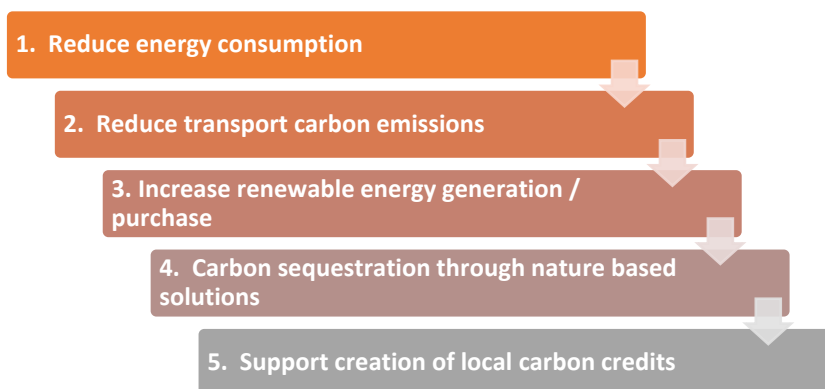
- 2.11. It will be important to understand the amount of land area, that may be required to support renewable energy generation (most likely as solar farms) to a level where it is broadly equivalent to local consumption (i.e., within the range 586 GWh per annum to 880 GW hours per annum).
- 2.12. The CNAP targets for Pathway 3 Increase renewable energy generation / purchase is 203 MW of additional generation.

Option	Capacity assumptions	No. by 2030	No installed p.a.
Solar Farm	12 MW (mid-size)	14 = 168 MW	2 = 21 MW
Domestic – rooftop PV	3kW	9,000 dwellings = 27,000 kW / 27MW	1,285
Commercial - rooftop PV	80 kWp (mid-size) 160 kWp (Large)	50 -100 installations = 8000kWp / 8MWp	7
Total		203 MW	

- 2.13. Policy Framework: Council Plan and Carbon Neutrality Action Plan 2023
- 2.14. The Council Plan acknowledges that "dealing with the climate crisis and reaching carbon neutrality is the city council’s overarching priority”. Its vision for a climate resilient district includes is that it is “broadly self-sufficient in renewable energy”. This is to be achieved through reduced energy demand and an increase in locally generated renewable energy which will require utility scale capital investment in order to achieve this. There are four main areas of activity which include reducing energy demand and increasing the generation of renewable energy.



2.15. The Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) 2023 sets out five pathways to focus the interventions and targets that are needed to become a carbon neutral district by 2030.



2.16. The CNAP also notes that the council has a number of roles to take forward and support interventions. It also recognises that it cannot do this alone and needs others to act.



Lever	Priority		Supporting	
	Utility scale energy generation	Roof top solar	Community energy schemes	
Deliver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant work to identify viable site and development business case for feasible site(s) Investment in development of local schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate further sites for PV installation based on Biffa and Marwell model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support through grants schemes. An example is communities working with Centre for Sustainable Energy's to deliver Future Energy Landscapes workshops. 	
Collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share information and work with landowners on the potential of their sites for energy generation arise from the research feasibility work by consultants Buro Happold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCC Solar Together scheme is providing low cost solar, ASHP, and batteries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and work with WinACC's WeCAN project Work with HCC on the delivery of their funded programme. 	
Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness campaigns and information sharing on renewable energy generation options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial properties that are rented will require co-ordination between landlord, tenant and supplier to install solar PV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local networks, share information and case studies etc. Possible community energy forum 	
Enable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging Local Plan policies to support renewable energy generation schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business support programme to guide and advice on options. Case studies on models that have been used. Facilitate access to external grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UK Shared Prosperity Rural Fund and council green project funds to support development of schemes 	

2.17. The emerging Local Plan contains policies that support the development of low carbon infrastructure and renewable energy within the district. These are contained within Chapter Four which includes Policies CN1-7. These policies were consulted on as part of the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation. Officers from the Strategic Planning team are currently in the process of finalising their recommended changes to these policies and the other policies in the Local Plan.

Policy	Summary
CN1: Mitigating and adapting to climate change	Low carbon solutions which will include renewable energy but also site layout and orientation, building fabric and glazing and the choice of construction materials for the buildings
CN2: Energy Hierarchy	<p>Developers will be required to submit an Energy and Carbon Statement to which all new developments will need to adhere to. The Energy Hierarchy is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximise energy efficiency. 2. Utilise renewable energy. 3. Utilise low carbon energy. 4. Utilise other energy sources as a very last resort.
CN2. Energy efficiency standards to reduce carbon emissions.	<p>New residential dwelling should not burn any fossil fuels on site for space heating, hot water or used for cooking. Demonstrate net-zero operational carbon on site by ensuring that onsite renewables provide 100% of the required energy consumption.</p> <p>Non-residential development should meet the 'BREEAM Excellent' standard.</p>
CN 4 Water efficiency standards in new developments	Developments will be required to meet a high standards of water efficiency.
Policy CN5 Renewable and low carbon energy schemes	Development proposals for the generation of renewable and low carbon energy will be supported especially where it can be demonstrated that it is community energy scheme.
CN6 Micro energy generation schemes	<p>Supports an increase in micro energy generation schemes. This is systems under 50kW for electricity or 45kW in the case of heat.</p> <p>Micro energy generation includes heat and power generated from solar, ground source/air source heat pumps, hydro-electric schemes, small scale biomass schemes and other low carbon heat or power sources.</p>
CN7. Energy Storage	energy storage facilities used to store any excess power generated from low carbon energy sources

2.18. Delivery and enablement of renewable energy generation

2.19. The council has invested in its own solar PV arrays, on housing, owned and occupied estate, on leased assets and in support of local businesses. It is incentivising solar PV through a number of schemes such as the Solar Today consortium, Community Solar Support Schemes for community halls and for tourism and creative businesses. This report brings together this activity as an

up-date and look forward to further work planned and is collated in the following areas:

- a) Deployment on council assets: this covers housing and owned and occupied assets and leased assets.
- b) Power purchase agreements (PPAs): where the council installs solar PV panels and then charges the occupier of the building for the renewable electricity supplied, currently there are two such arrangements.
- c) Supporting district-wide renewable energy generation – enabling others to act across community, domestic and business.
- d) Larger renewable energy schemes: in terms of the council's direct opportunities.
- e) Transport decarbonisation: how to support the local, regional and national aims.

3. DEPLOYMENT ON COUNCIL ASSETS

- 3.1. The CNAP clearly sets out the council measures and targets for increasing renewable energy generation:

3. Increase renewable energy generation / purchase			
Pathway and Projects	Project action	Carbon saving tCo2e	Scope
Solar PV on council estate	Install further Solar PV on council property and register for Smart Export Guarantee payments and REGOs by exporting PV-generated electricity.	30	2
Transition leased assets to renewable energy	Work with contractors of leased assets where we have no direct control on electricity purchased to transition to renewable energy. 2021-22 Emission (location based) Winchester Sport & Leisure Park = 1216.3 tCo2e Target = electricity emissions = 287 tCo2e	287	3
	<i>Sub-total</i>	317	
Renewable energy scheme	Develop utility scale renewable energy scheme	-2440	Offset

- 3.2. The council has developed various Solar PV arrays on both its council and housing properties in recent years. These currently fall under different financial models as outlined in the table below.

Arrangements for council's solar PV panels deployment

Housing	Panels installed on housing properties. Smaller arrays may supply our tenants (e.g. 4 panels) with larger arrays supplying communal areas. Older arrays receive Feed-in Tariff (FIT) payments (income generating).	Communal areas – scope 2 Tenants - out of scope.
Commercial assets	Panels installed on council buildings that reduce our emissions through avoided grid electricity.	Scope 2
Leased assets	Panels installed on council buildings leased to tenant who benefit from the avoided grid electricity.	Scope 3
Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)	Panels installed on 3 rd party roofs leased by the council. Electricity generated is sold to the 3 rd party at reduced tariff rate. Generates income for council and provides green electricity for the 3 rd party.	Out of scope – export to grid can attract Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) certificates

3.3. Solar PV located on council housing stock

- 3.4. The council commenced installation of solar PV on its housing stock in 2012 with the programme gaining pace from 2016. In total, 835 solar PV panels are located on our housing properties. The largest arrays are listed below. Some of these supply electricity to communal areas (landlords supply) whilst those on individual houses are supply that property, with Feed-in Tariff (FIT) income going to HRA account.

Property	Location	Installation date	No. of panels
Block Matilda Place	St Bartholomew Ward	5/3/2012	40
48-66 Stanmore Lane	St Luke Ward	1/1/2016	155
5-8 New Queens Gate	St Luke Ward	2/8/2016	41
Symonds Close Nos 1-12	St Barnabas Ward	6/8/2016	130
Block Chesil Lodge	St Michael Ward	1/1/2018	72
Block 46-56 Ashburton Road	Alresford & Itchen Valley Ward	6/1/2018	15
Block Victoria Court	St Bartholomew Ward	1/1/2018	45
Block 1-4 New Queens Gate Incl 70&72 Stanmore Lane	St Luke Ward	2/6/2017	48
Block 1 - 8 Kingsdale House	St Luke Ward	5/20/2021	17

Property	Location	Installation date	No. of panels
Other - Various Locations	Various	Various	272
Total			835

- 3.5. Generation meters were installed on the larger arrays in 2022, namely Chesil Lodge, Matilda Place, Queens Gate and Victoria Court which have generated 31,321 kWh since April 2023. The larger arrays supply electricity to the buildings and do not generate any surplus to export to the grid. It is not economic to meter the smaller arrays due to the cost of sub-metering. Some housing properties are registered for feed-in-tariff (FIT) payments with the majority of small arrays directly feeding communal areas or landlords supply.
- 3.6. Housing is investigating the possibility of installing solar PV and pairing it with infrared heating as part of its retrofit strategy, as well as the potential for larger housing sites to commission feasibility studies for Ground/Air Source Heat Pump Systems as part of a Post Retrofit Strategy. However, the main focus of the council's retrofit strategy remains improving the property's fabric and heating efficiency, with renewables considered once these have been achieved.
- 3.7. Recent new housing at North Whitely has not included solar PV as this was already past the design stage when it was acquired by the council, so it was not possible to influence the design. However six properties at Micheldever are under construction to PassivHaus standard will include solar panels.
- 3.8. Under the Retrofit Ready programme, solar PV panels are being considered if recommended by the Whole House Retrofit Surveys currently being undertaken. To date, Whole House Retrofit Assessments have been carried out for over 450 properties. The council's approach is 'Fabric First'. Once the fabric of the building is improved through better insulation and the heating strategy confirmed, the council will then consider installing solar PV. However, where pilots have allowed, the council has installed solar PV to evaluate the effectiveness when paired with new space heating technologies such as infrared heating and solar water heating (linked to immersion heater).
- 3.9. Housing will continue to evaluate the success of solar PV for communal heating in Sheltered and Extra Care Homes and consider possibilities to extend this programme.
4. SOLAR PV LOCATED ON COUNCIL ASSETS – OWNED & OCCUPIED ESTATE.
- 4.1. The council had a programme of installing solar PV panels on its own properties. It currently has 647 panels with generation capacity of 264 kWp and annual generation of 223.9 MW. Details are listed in the table below.

Array / Address	No. of panels	Generation Capacity (kWp)	Predicted annual generation (kWh)
Vaultex / Barfield 2 Extension Coventry House Barfield Close	399	161	147,890
City Offices Colebrook Street	162	48.6	47,400
Cipher House Moorside Road	22	7.26	6,737
Bishops Waltham depot Units 1-3, Quarry Business Park, Lower Lane	64	47.5	21,900
Total	647	264.36	223,927

4.2. Asset Management is conducting an appraisal of the potential to deploy solar PV on other council owned sites. Those under consideration include an extension of the City Offices array, Chesil Car Park and the F2 building (leased). The council owns, occupies and leases 745 properties, of these;

- a) 97 are cars parks, e.g. Chesil Multi Storey and Barfield P&R
- b) 40 are offices, e.g. city offices
- c) 38 are community buildings, e.g. The Guildhall
- d) 19 are warehouses, e.g. Bishops Waltham units and Biffa Depot
- e) 3 are storage, e.g. F2 at Bar End

4.3. In line with the council's Asset Management Strategy 2022-2027 carbon reduction and energy saving is a key focus of work. The approached adopted has been to start on corporate occupied buildings, followed by investigations into the extent of viable carbon reduction and energy saving measures on community assets (such as pavilions and public conveniences) and investment properties.

5. RENEWABLE ENERGY SUPPLIED TO LEASED ASSETS

5.1. The council installed 400 panels, with a generation capacity of 152 (kWp), on the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park which is leased to the operator Everyone Active. This array was funded by prudential borrowing. The array has generated a total 321.7 MW since installation in April 2021. A smaller solar PV array of 62 panels with 23.6kWp capacity estimated to generate is due to be installed at Meadowside Leisure Centre in Spring 2024, funded by a CIL contribution. Reduced energy drawn from the grid is reflected in reduced energy costs to the operator, Everyone Active. The benefit to the council of this arrangement is primarily in the reduced carbon emissions.

6. POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENTS (PPA)

- 6.1. The council has installed solar PV arrays on two large businesses within the district, these are at the BIFFA Depot (134 panels) and Marwell Zoo (250 panels). The installation of the panels was part-funded from a grant by Enterprise M3 LEP, with the remainder funded by prudential borrowing. The arrays became operational in January 2021.
- 6.2. Energy generated is sold to Marwell Zoo and BIFFA under a power performance agreement (PPA) whereby the businesses receives the renewable electricity at a discounted market rate. This creates an income stream for the council and supports the businesses in their own decarbonisation targets.

Array	Address	No. of panels	Generation Capacity (kWp)	Predicted annual generation (kWh)
Biffa Winchester Depot	Biffa Waste Services Ltd Barfield Close Winchester Hampshire SO23 9SQ	134	60.1	51,000
Marwell Zoo	Thompson's Lane Colden Common SO21 1JH	250	95	82,291
Total		384	155.1	133291.3

- 6.3. The community engagement on the council's approach to renewable energy generation in July 2023 indicated a strong preference for roof-mounted solar PV. The council should consider how it can support the further development of PPA agreements with local businesses and organisations with large roofs to meet our district decarbonisation targets and to support them in reducing costs and their own emissions. As it has now developed the legal framework for PPA supply and gained experience in installing large solar PV arrays, the council would be well positioned to explore further PPA agreements as part of its aim for the district to become largely self-sufficient in energy generation.
- 6.4. Funding grants for the installation of solar PV arrays have become less available in recent years. Public Sector Decarbonisation Grants, for example, are linked to removal of gas boilers within the building and only open once a year. Therefore further PPA agreements may need to be funded either directly by the council or via Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, however as they are income generating the financial case can still stack up.

7. SUPPORTING DISTRICT-WIDE RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION.

7.1. Community schemes

- 7.2. The council has a number of schemes running to support the development of community energy, including the Community Solar Support Scheme, supporting larger scale community energy projects and promoting the Solar Together scheme.

- 7.3. The Community Solar Support Scheme (CSSS) is a UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) project running from October 2023 until end March 2025. As part of the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda, Winchester City Council has been awarded funding to spend on local investment. The Community Solar Support Scheme (CSSS) is aligned with both the Levelling Up agenda and Winchester City Council's commitment to reach carbon neutrality as a district by 2030. Winchester Action on the Climate Crisis (WinACC) has been appointed by the council to deliver the project and support owners of community buildings in the district to install solar PV panels. Communities supported may be Parish Councils but also community groups such as churches, sports pavilions or scout huts.
- 7.4. The council recognises that many parishes and communities wish to install renewable energy measures on their buildings but do not have the technical expertise, resources or capacity to do so. The project aims to support them through the process, from identifying suitable buildings, obtaining quotations, building a business case and sourcing funding. By building capacity for renewable energy, it will reduce parish carbon footprint and energy costs. The project milestones are for four community buildings to have low or zero-carbon energy infrastructure and a further six buildings to have business plans approved for installation of roof-mounted solar PV by the end of the project.
- 7.5. The council has also supported community groups in developing their own community energy schemes through our Project Grants. A recent project grant to [South Wonston Sustainability](#) allowed that community to put on a Future Energy Landscapes workshop, facilitated by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE). Held in October 2023 and attended by around 30 local residents, the event provided information on types and suitability of different renewable energy sources and where these might be located within the Parish. The outcome was a short list of sites suitable for solar and wind energy generation and the council will continue to support South Wonston Sustainability with moving forward with these sites if the development is feasible.
- 7.6. The council has been asked to fund three further 'Future Energy Landscapes' workshops in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) in Hambledon, Upham and Sustainable Waltham Chase and Swanmore to identify sites for community energy in these parishes. The council's Go Greener Faster Grant and Rural England Prosperity Fund are both suited to fund this type of activity and the applicants have been advised to submit grant applications. It is hoped from this process that community energy schemes may emerge.
- 7.7. Domestic schemes
- 7.8. The Solar Together scheme supports the wider deployment of solar PV panels on domestic properties and is a reverse auction scheme run annually by Hampshire County Council (HCC). New suppliers were appointed in 2022

to provide additional install capacity with Infinity Renewables covering the Winchester district. Also that year the scheme was extended to include electric battery storage which was again included in 2023. Analysis by HCC suggested residents benefitted from a 30% cost reduction but this is sometimes hard to evidence with residents comparing different types and qualities of panel.

- 7.9. As of 16th October 2023 there were a further 764 registrations from Winchester residents for the 2023/24 scheme. The dropout rate is usually quite high between registration and accepting the offer and then around a third after an offer is accepted. The main reasons for this being given are that the resident has changed their mind, the roof is not suitable or due to additional mandatory costs (e.g. scaffolding).

Take-up of Solar Together Scheme in Winchester District

	Registrations	Accepted	Installed
2023	784		
2022		344	117
2021	1079	343	343

Figure showing take-up of Solar Together scheme across Hampshire.

		# Accepted	# Paid	% Paid	# Cancelled	% Cancelled	# Installed	% Installed
September 2022	Borough of Basingstoke and Deane	292	283	97%	88	30%	153	52%
	Borough of Eastleigh	229	222	97%	76	33%	95	41%
	Borough of Fareham	214	204	95%	56	26%	91	43%
	Borough of Gosport	62	60	97%	21	34%	10	16%
	Borough of Havant	112	110	98%	34	30%	38	34%
	Borough of Rushmoor	73	70	96%	22	30%	40	55%
	Borough of Test Valley	247	236	96%	73	30%	130	53%
	City of Winchester	344	328	95%	115	33%	117	34%
	East Hampshire District	301	293	97%	93	31%	23	8%
	Hampshire County Council	0	0		0		0	
	Hart District	238	226	95%	76	32%	121	51%
	New Forest District	259	250	97%	87	34%	94	36%
	Portsmouth (unitary)	12	10	83%	3	25%	2	17%
	Southampton (unitary)	70	65	93%	22	31%	26	37%
	Total	2,453	2,357	96%	766	31%	940	38%

Source: Hampshire County Council

- 7.10. The council has also developed a GIS analysis of land parcels and roofs throughout the Winchester District to provide insight into suitability for future solar energy projects. A training session for officers was run in Spring 2023 on this tool. Some details are provided on the council's website [Renewable energy - Winchester City Council](#) and this data can be shared with community groups by approaching the Sustainability Manager.
- 7.11. Business schemes
- 7.12. The CNAP identifies as an important supporting activity to the three priority interventions the need to address carbon in commercial and industrial

business. Stimulating business investment in energy efficiency and green energy generation aligns with actions in the Winchester District Green Economic Development Strategy and has a potential total carbon saving of 113 ktCO₂e by 2030. The council's economy team will lead on approaches and ways to enable and influence business to act.

- 7.13. Regarding support for businesses, the economic development team is providing a support and advice programme by funding 15 energy audits (by March 2024) for creative and tourism businesses. It is expected that these will include recommendations to extend renewable energy including Solar PV. To facilitate this a grant fund will also be available for up to £5,000 so that business to take forward the recommendations from the audits. As part of reporting on the delivery of programme, the recommended measures and potential carbon savings will be measured for each business. The learning from the energy audits and grants programme will be shared to encourage others to make changes and invest in improvements. The Sustainable Business Network provides an excellent route to promote and report on this work.

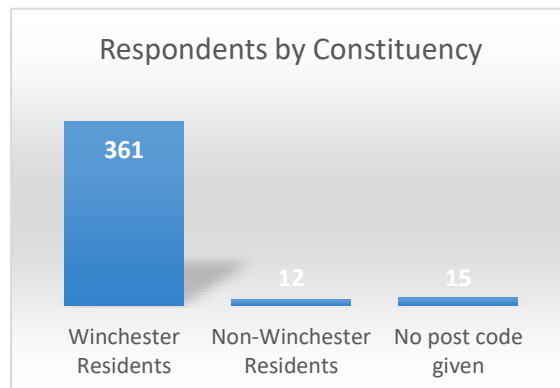
8. THE DEVELOPMENT OF LARGER SCALE RENEWABLE ENERGY

- 8.1. In line with the council plan and CNAP the council has a clear intention to enable the development large scale renewable energy projects. The CNAP sets a minimum target of a further 50 MW of installed large scale solar and 54 MW of wind power by 2030 to reach a medium trajectory for carbon neutrality. The council acknowledges that across the district there needs to be a far greater scale of installed capacity to meet demand and for it to be broadly self-sufficient in renewable energy.
- 8.2. The council is currently exploring the potential to take forward the development of larger scale renewable energy generation and is working with consultants to identify potential sites, delivery mechanisms and investment and funding options. The next stages, subject to the appropriate approvals, will be to complete the design of a scheme to optimise energy generation potential, biodiversity enhancements and return on investment and wider community benefits. A detailed business case will be prepared including delivery programme, carbon impact and budget to include relevant legal and tax advice.
- 8.3. There will be a need to raise awareness for the need for renewable energy scheme development and to understand and address potential the issues and concerns of local communities. The provision of information, supporting evidence and facts responding to concerns raised or believed about renewable energy scheme development will be required, so that residents feel informed and meaningfully engaged with.
- 8.4. Two Open Forum meetings were held in June and July 2023 to explore the public's attitude towards renewable energy generation. An online engagement was held via Citizen Space which asked a number of questions about how the council could take forward renewable energy. This received 388 responses

from residents, organisations, businesses and from councillors in the district. Of these, the majority (363) were council residents with the remaining being councillors (parish, county and city council), businesses or local sustainability organisations. The highest response rate was from St Barnabus, St Pauls and St Michael wards.

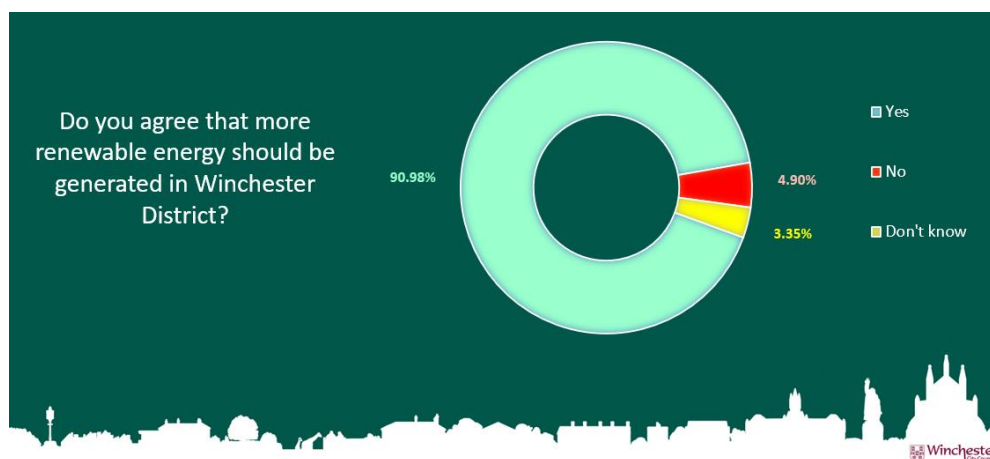
8.5. Respondents by organisational type and location

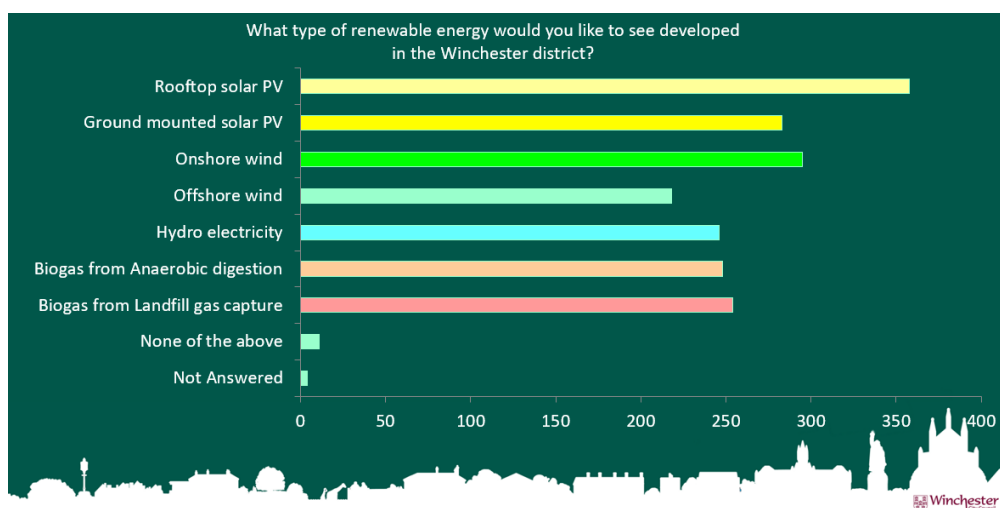
Type	No. of respondents
Residents	363
Councillors	9
Business	3
Organisations	2
Not stated	4



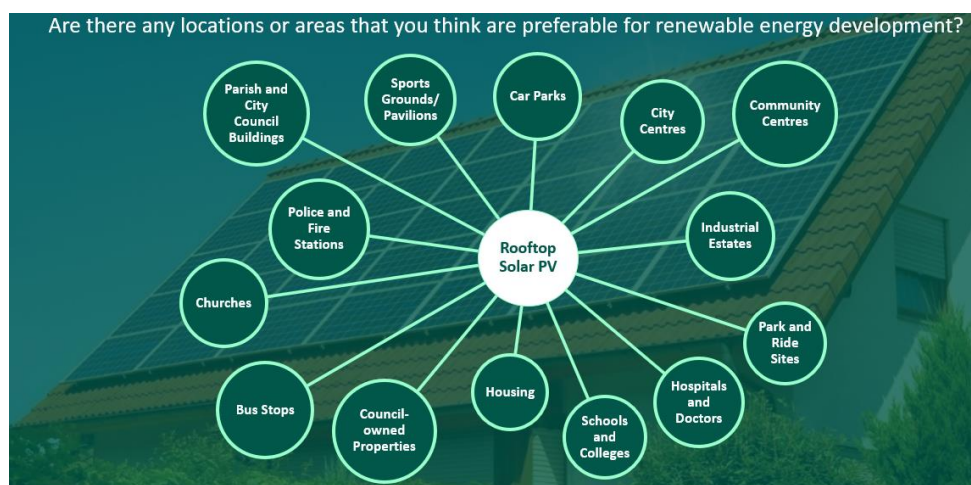
8.6. Findings from the engagement showed there was overwhelming support for the development of further renewable energy. Overall,

- 82% of respondents supported Winchester City Council’s target for the district to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- 91% of survey respondents also agreed that more renewable energy should be generated in the Winchester District.
- 97% of respondents appeared well informed, as they were aware the role of generating renewable energy has in reducing carbon emissions.





- 8.7. A large number of respondents expressed the urgency and importance of doing as much as possible, as soon as possible in terms of widescale renewable energy developments in Winchester. When asked about types of renewable energy, roof mounted solar PV was the most popular option followed by onshore wind and then ground mounted solar.



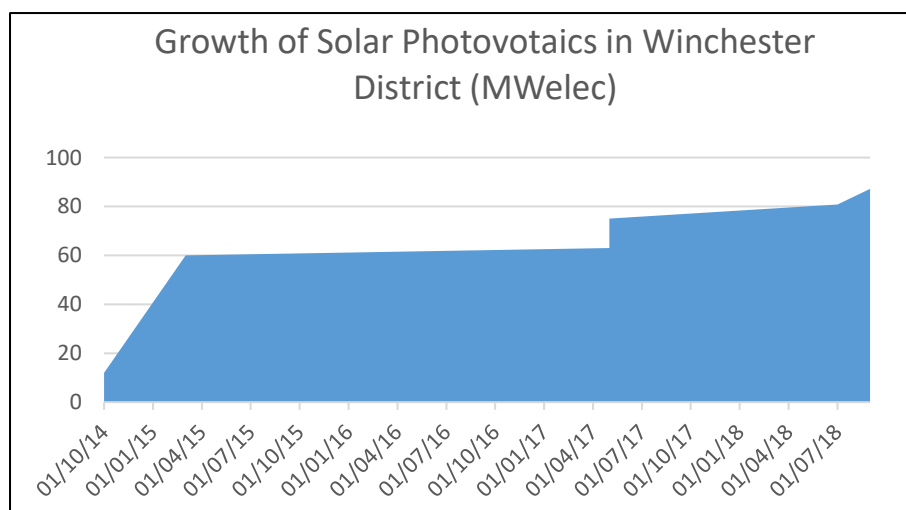
- 8.8. The outcomes of the engagement can be found on the council website [here](#).
- 8.9. The council intends to build on this initial engagement once potential sites have been investigated and a short list determined. The aim is to have a pipeline of potential sites within the district that may be suitable to be taken forward as community energy schemes or by private investors. Further engagement and communications work in support of the preferred project will also be undertaken. This may include presentations to Parish meetings, consultations and or Open Forum meetings with local and district residents.

9. RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION ACROSS THE DISTRICT.

9.1. The following extract from the National Renewable Energy Planning Database shows that Winchester district has six operational large scale solar farms with a total installed capacity of 87.2 MWp, and a further 54MWp with planning permission granted awaiting construction and 20 MWp in the planning pipeline. In addition, the "Embedded Capacity Register" appears to show several SEN consented connections which have not come forward as planning applications and may be as much as 295 MW of "zombie" capacity in the system.

Operator (or Applicant)	Site Name	Technology Type	Installed Capacity (MWelec)
Operational			
Lightsource Renewable Energy	Bishops Sutton	Solar Photovoltaics	12.00
Bluefield Solar Income Fund	Southwick Estate	Solar Photovoltaics	48.00
Foresight	Field House Solar / Hursley Road	Solar Photovoltaics	6.40
Solafields U/Bishop's Waltham Renewables Ltd	Bishop's Waltham Solar Farm	Solar Photovoltaics	12.00
NESF (formerly Earthworm/Waltham Solar)	Forest Farm	Solar Photovoltaics	3.00
NextEnergy Solar Fund (NESF)	Raglington Farm	Solar Photovoltaics	5.80
		Total installed Capacity	87.20
Planning Granted - Awaiting Construction			
Jardin Smith International	Fontley House Farm	Solar Photovoltaics	10.00
Winchester Power	Stockbridge Road	Battery	10.00
Environmental Asset Management	Three Maids Hill Solar Farm	Solar Photovoltaics	25.00
Nextpower Spv 12 Limited	Locks Farm - Solar Farm	Solar Photovoltaics	18.00
Thompson Brothers (Esher) Limited	Garsons Garden Centre, Fontley Road - Solar Panels	Solar Photovoltaics	0.21
Axis Real Estate Management Tarn Crag Limited	Fusion, Parkway - Solar Panels	Solar Photovoltaics	0.22
Axis Real Estate Management Tarn Crag Limited	Fusion, Parkway - Solar Panels	Solar Photovoltaics	0.19
Solar Advanced Systems T/A SAS Energy	Concorde Way, Segensworth - Solar Panels	Solar Photovoltaics	1.04
Balanced Grid Solutions	Titchfield Lane	Battery	49.00
		Total Capacity (PV)	54.65
		Total Capacity (Battery)	59.00
Planning Application Submitted			
Novus Renewable Services Limited	South Lynch Farm - Solar Farm	Solar Photovoltaics	20.00
Botley Energy Reserve 2 Limited	Ash Farm, Titchfield Lane - Battery Storage	Battery	15.00
Environmental Asset Management	Three Maids Hill Solar Farm	Battery	
		Total Capacity (PV)	20.00
		Total Capacity (Battery)	15.00

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/renewable-energy-planning-database-monthly-extract> (October 2023 DESNZ Renewable Energy Planning Database).



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/renewable-energy-planning-database-monthly-extract> (October 2023 DESNZ Renewable Energy Planning Database).

- 9.2. It is known that that grid constraints in the area are preventing large scale renewable schemes from obtaining permission to connect to the grid. Scottish and Southern energy Networks (SSEN) has advised the council that connections cannot be guaranteed for renewable energy projects over 1MW in size until 2036. This apparent lack of guaranteed available capacity and ability to connect to the grid will potentially constrain and impede the attainment of the 2030 carbon neutral target for the district. However, the November 2023 budget statement from the Chancellor of The Exchequer, announced a reform to the grid connection process to cut waiting times, including “freeing up over 100GW of capacity so that projects can connect sooner”. Also in November, Ofgem announced that it is introducing rules to remove “zombie” energy projects from the grid connection queue.
- 9.3. It is clear that future demand for electricity will require a well-planned upgrade of the electricity supply grid. As identified in the WinACC report this demand will be driven by an increase in electric vehicles (EVs), air source heat pumps (ASHPs) linked to the removal of gas boilers and an increase in domestic and commercial electric batteries linked to Solar PV generation.
- 9.4. A Local Authority Energy Plan (LAEP) sets out the change required to transition an area’s energy system to Net Zero in a given timeframe. This is achieved by exploring potential pathways that consider a range of technologies and scenarios, and when combined with stakeholder engagement leads to the identification of the most cost-effective preferred pathway and a sequenced plan of proposed actions to achieving an area’s Net Zero goal. A LAEP does not provide additional renewable electricity to power the new demands but does provide clarity on where new renewable energy generation might best be sited.
- 9.5. The council is proposing to develop a LAEP. The benefit of working with the DNO (electric supply network operator) to develop a strategic approach, it is hoped, will facilitate a smoother and faster transition to achieve the 2030 actions. The council has initiated the process through initial meetings with SSE via the Greater South East Net Zero Hub. It is proposed to further explore what is required to create a LAEP, including liaising with SSEN, UK Power Networks, Hampshire County Council and other bodies.

10. RENEWABLE ENERGY SUPPORTING TRANSPORT DECARBONISATION

- 10.1 There is a role for renewable energy to support other priorities within the CNAP, in particular supporting our aims to decarbonise transport emissions by 2030.
- 10.2 Installation of solar PV canopies at the South and St Catherine’s Park and Ride sites facilitate electric vehicle charge point (EVCP) use for cars and for bus services. Solar PV canopies although an expensive technology have the potential to provide electric charging for the Winchester Park & Ride buses to transition to electric. Also for National Express bus services using the St

Catherine's Park & Ride site to meet its own net zero strategy through electric bus charging infrastructure. It also supports the national aim to transition to electric vehicles.

- 10.3 The council made an unsuccessful bid to develop Solar PV canopies at the Park & Ride sites linked to electric bus charging to the Enterprise M3 LEP's Future Fund in the summer 2023. However, it is proposed that further work is undertaken in consultation with Hampshire County Council as owner of these sites to explore this opportunity further. This will assist the council to be prepared and in a good position to bid should other funding streams open.
- 10.4 There is also the opportunity to investigate other opportunities in the local area to create a solar hub that could support a number of decarbonisation opportunities. For example, in addition to St Catherine's P&R, there are several large industrial roofs nearby including the Stagecoach Depot and Hampshire Cultural Trust buildings as well as the WSLP car park. These could combine to support electric bus and coach charging, electric waste vehicle charging or further PV to supply WSLP.
- 10.5 The council would be well placed to initiate and lead such discussions and it is proposed these are also explored further with appropriate officers to investigate opportunities in addition to those on council land and roofs.

11 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The council has invested in its own solar PV arrays, on housing, owned and occupied estate, on leased assets and in support of local businesses. It is incentivising solar PV through a number of schemes such as the Solar Today consortium, Community Solar Support Schemes for community halls and for tourism and creative businesses. The council is working towards developing its own renewable energy schemes and in supporting community solar PV.
- 11.2 To build on this work and achieve the targets set out in the CNAP 2023-2030, it is considered that a statement of intent / strategic approach on renewable energy development would be useful in setting out a timetable, pathways and funding opportunities to deliver the required capacity to achieve a position of the district being broadly self-sufficient in renewable energy to assist the decarbonisation of the grid whilst also contributing to carbon reductions. It is proposed, therefore that officers drawn from the relevant teams across the council come together to scope how to produce such as statement. Consideration will also be given as to how best to report on the energy demand and local generated electricity supply to demonstrate change and to stimulate action by everyone with a role to play in achieving the targets.
- 11.3 This same group could also assist with the next steps needed to develop a Local Area Energy Plan. This will include consideration of the funding and resources required with the ambition to have a LAEP in place for the Winchester district by early 2025.

- 11.4 It is suggested that the council investigates how it can support the development of renewable energy hubs to support wider electric charging infrastructure as set out in Hampshire's emerging Local Transport Plan and the Government's Net Zero Transport strategy, such as that required for electric coach and bus travel, electric waste collection vehicles and for the taxi and delivery network. Discussions with the county council will be undertaken and with transport operators to further develop this proposal so the council can be in a good position to bid for funding as and when funding opportunities open.
- 11.5 It will be important that the council consults with stakeholders on the district wide approach and targets relating to renewable energy and on what levers are required to boost renewable energy generation.
- 11.6 Finally, to boost the roll-out of larger roof mounted solar PV, future exploration be done on opportunities to initiate further PPA offers to businesses and organisations within the district in possession of suitable roofs.
- 12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED
- 12.1 There is an option not to explore further renewable energy generation, either roof mounted on council assets or larger scale. It is recommended that this is discounted as it would not be in line with the council's Climate Emergency Declaration, Council Plan 2020-2025 and Carbon Neutrality Action Plan.
- 12.2 In addition, wind and hydro power generation within the district have been explored but are not currently being taken further forward due to the cost of the infrastructure.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

[Carbon Neutrality Annual Report and Action Plan](#) (HEP027) 5th July 2022

[Carbon Roadmap and Actions](#) (HEP030) 6th December 2022

[Adoption of the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan CAB3423](#) 13th September 2023.

Other Background Documents:-

[Climate Emergency Declaration](#)

[Council Plan 2020-2025](#)

[Carbon Neutrality Action Plan.](#)

[Carbon Neutrality Roadmap for the Winchester District](#)

[Renewable Engagement Survey Results July 2023](#)

[Renewable Energy in Winchester District 2023 \(winacc.org.uk\)](#)

Local plan - [Carbon neutrality chapter.pdf](#)

<https://www.ssen.co.uk/our-services/tools-and-maps/embedded-capacity-register/>

APPENDICES:

None

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE – SCHEDULED ITEMS OF BUSINESS

5 DECEMBER 2023					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	Water Quality Update – Representatives from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust in attendance	Dawn Adey	5 December 2023		Verbal Update from Sienna Somers, Policy Manager of H&IOWWT
	Ecological Sites	Richard Smith	5 December 2023		HEP036
	CNAP report: Renewable energy	Richard Smith/Anna Wyse	5 December 2023		HEP040
28 FEBRUARY 2024					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	Homes for Ukraine community integration programme	Steve Lincoln/Melissa Fletcher	28 February 2024		
	Air Quality Management Area and Air Quality Strategy Annual Update	David Ingram	28 February 2024		HEP041 and Presentation

Other reports provisionally listed to come forward to the Health & Environment Policy Committee during 2023/24 are as follows: (Meeting date to be confirmed)

Environmental impact – airport flight paths	Date TBC
Enforcement Policy	Date TBC

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