

Leaders' Committee

Climate Change Strategy

Item no: 8

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Summary: This report seeks to update Leaders Committee on the work that has been taking place on climate change policy since the last report in December 2019 and what is planned in the run up to COP26 in November this year.

London Councils officers have been working closely with TEC, LEDNet and CELC to establish an ambitious programme of activity, support for individual climate action plans and a common approach to data.

Furthermore, London Councils is working with a number of organisations to develop the national advocacy asks and a programme of activity in the run up to the COP26.

This paper seeks endorsement of these activities from Leaders Committee.

Recommendations: Leaders' Committee is asked to:

- Endorse the addition of 'resilient and green London' as a seventh theme to London Councils ambition around climate change, as outlined in paragraph 6
- Endorse the requirement of boroughs individual climate action plans to include the actions as outlined in Appendix 1
- Endorse for all boroughs to use the data outlined in paragraph 16 to ensure a consistent, minimum standard across London boroughs
- Endorse the collaboration with the GLA on scope 3 emission research as outlined in paragraph 17
- Note and discuss the high-level governance as outlined in paragraphs 20-22
- Note and discuss the activities planned in the lead up to COP26 as outlined in paragraphs 23-27

Climate Change Strategy

Introduction

1. The Executive and Leaders' Committee considered climate change policy at their meetings in November 2019 and December 2019 respectively. Both committees expressed the desire to have oversight of activity and progress in this policy area, together with TEC.
2. London Councils, together with borough officers at different levels from policy officer through to director and chief executive have made progress in a number of areas, which Leaders will wish to comment on. TEC will have discussed a similar report at its meeting on 19 March.
3. COP26 is taking place in Glasgow 9-19 November 2020 and there are a number of activities and events leading up to this internationally significant event. London Councils is working with a number of colleagues to showcase the positive contribution of London local government to the climate change challenge at COP26.

Climate Change Programme of activity

4. London Councils has been working on six main areas of activities for boroughs covering; retrofitting all buildings, ensuring low carbon development for the future through boroughs' planning function, halving petrol and diesel journeys, buying and investing in renewable energy, reducing consumption emissions (also often referred to as scope 3 emissions) and building the green economy.
5. London Councils has been working closely with borough officers to develop more detail on these six ambitions, as well as governance arrangements, a common approach to data and reporting, and some shared priorities for borough climate action plans.
6. During these discussions, it has become clear that adaptation and biodiversity is missing from the list above and should be added. London Councils officers therefore suggest adding a seventh ambition about creating a resilient and green London.

Borough climate action plans

7. London Councils officers have analysed the four published borough climate action plans (some of which are currently undergoing consultation) together with three recent climate strategies, to identify key trends, and the level of alignment with the main programme of activity.¹

¹Camden Climate Action Plan (consultation in progress) – published Jan 2020; Hounslow Climate Emergency Action Plan (consultation in progress) – published Jan 2020; Wandsworth Climate Action Plan – approved by council on 27 Jan 2020; Richmond-on-Thames Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-

8. At least another 18 boroughs have announced an upcoming publication or a revision of their existing documents in 2020.
9. Although actions in the seven plans varied in scale and scope, they overall aligned strongly with London Councils climate ambitions. There were some additional actions related to air quality or overarching enabling actions for the council or other stakeholders (for example, raising awareness of climate change). This is illustrated in the two graphs below.

FIG. 1: SUB-TOPICS IN THE ORIGINAL 6 LONDON COUNCILS AMBITIONS

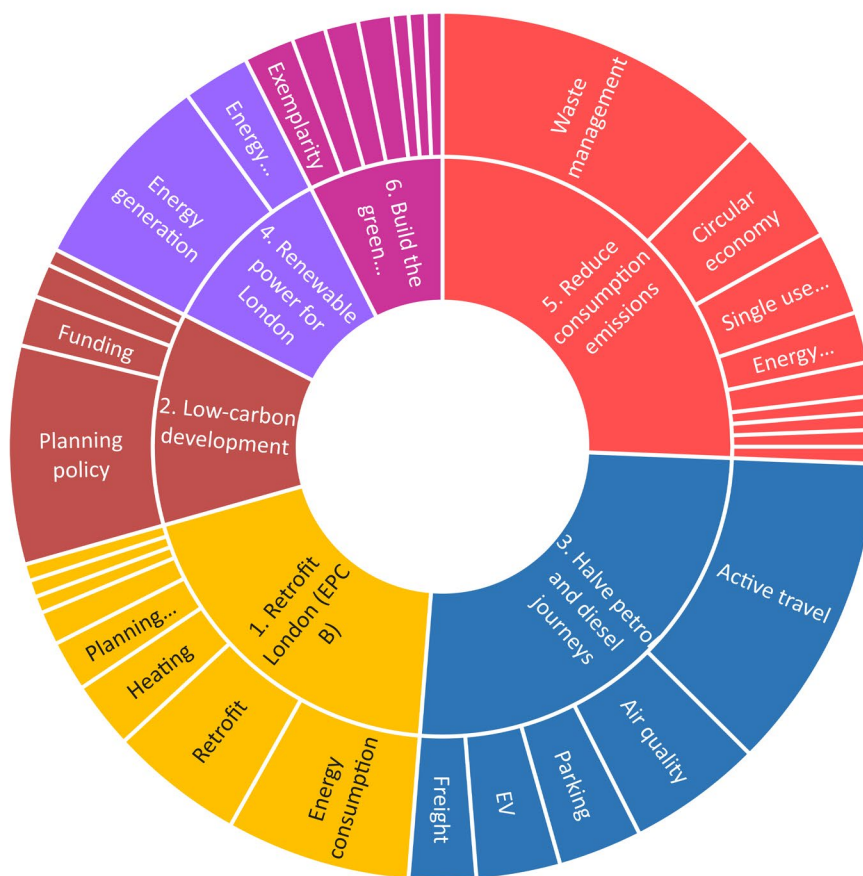


FIG 2: SUB TOPICS FOR OTHER IDENTIFIED CATEGORIES



10. In order to drive collaboration, learning and cost savings, London Councils officers, with support from senior officers through LEDNet and the CELC Environment sub-group have drawn together the existing plans into a single set of actions, organised via the seven ambitions, and a set of enabling actions (see Appendix 1).
11. It is recognised that each borough will need to respond to its own local circumstances. However, in order to meet the seven ambitions and allow London local government to speak with one voice on the climate agenda, all boroughs should adopt the thematic areas and actions as outlined in Appendix 1.

Borough climate change data

12. To deliver on their greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets, councils need to understand the source and size of their emissions, how actions can effectively reduce those emissions and how to track and monitor them effectively going forward. Given that many boroughs have committed to emissions reductions from their own council operations

and the wider borough, they will need an accurate picture across both council and borough emissions.

13. Emissions management is structured into three 'scopes':

- i. Scope 1 is direct emissions of greenhouse gases, for example from borough energy infrastructure, including gas boilers, and fleets
- ii. Scope 2 is indirect emissions associated with electricity purchased and used
- iii. Scope 3 is all other indirect emissions from activities that arise from sources boroughs do not own or control, for example procurement, waste and water use

14. Leaders have previously asked that London boroughs adopt comparable approaches to data management, so that an accurate picture of total borough emissions can be established, the efficacy of different approaches to emissions reductions (including their costs and co-benefits) understood and informed public engagement with council action supported.

15. Although it is accepted that greenhouse gas emissions data management will become more accurate over time, boroughs should start with a consistent minimum standard to ensure transparency around climate action. This minimum standard will be limited to scope 1 and 2 emissions in the short-term, because there is not currently a robust methodology for assessing London's scope 3 emissions.

16. London Councils officers therefore recommend that in the first instance all boroughs should capture:

- i. Total emissions from council operations (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e)), which should be based on the now-retired Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) standard for council operations²
- ii. Emissions from council housing, which should be based on the energy that councils procure for housing
- iii. Emissions from the borough as a whole, which should be based on BEIS data³

Scope 3 emissions

17. Boroughs' scope 3 emissions are significant and include areas where there may be significant public interest – for example emissions from waste and recycling, or procurement. London Councils officers propose that work to develop data on boroughs'

² The CRC standard covers CO₂ from non-domestic energy supplies that the council procures, excluding housing and schools

³ Although the current Mayor of London is committed (through his London Environment Strategy) to the production of the LEGGI dataset, it has some differences from the BEIS dataset, and the production of the BEIS dataset seen as more reliable in the long-term as being produced by centrally by government.

scope 3 emissions should be undertaken in collaboration with the GLA, which has already started to get some consultancy support in this area.

18. Additionally, there are emission sources outside of the control of many councils, such as schools, where there will also be keen public interest. It is suggested that councils utilise their convening roles and status within their local areas to encourage and support organisations in their borough to report their greenhouse gas emissions also.
19. Moving forward, there is a need to continually review London's local government approach to data management and reporting, and to confirm clear principles for which data is reported, based on, for example, ownership of an asset, or control over energy purchasing.

Governance

20. Climate action presents a great opportunity to foster partnership working between boroughs, with London's residents, business, the health sector, GLA and many others.
21. London Councils has called on the next Mayor to set up a Climate Emergency Board that brings together London's elected leadership to engage with Londoners on how to create a zero-carbon city.
22. This joint governance board should have the remit and membership that can ensure that London is delivering the action needed to reach its climate ambitions, and that resources and support are directed to the right place to achieve this. This board should also ensure that London is speaking with a single voice in advocating for the powers, policies and funding that it needs to meet the climate challenge.

Other activities leading up to COP26

National advocacy plans

23. London Councils is working with partners in local government and the third sector, seeking to understand what local government would need in terms of leadership, powers, policies and funding from central government to deliver its climate ambitions.
24. There are three phases to this for 2020:
 - i. Wrote to the Chancellor ahead of the Budget on 11th March, arguing that the Government needs to send the right signals about its ambition and commitment to domestic climate action and stressing the importance of local authorities in delivery
 - ii. Preparation of local government's power, policies and funding asks of central government, to be launched at a Local Climate Emergency Summit in July
 - iii. Advocacy and interventions to lobby for these asks through the Spending Review and Party Conferences in the run up to COP26.

25. The coalition is broadly England-wide, so it is unlikely that London-specific asks will be included; however, if necessary, this can be enhanced with a sub-set of asks brought together by London partners.

London Climate Action Week

26. London Climate Action Week (LCAW) will be held from 27 June – 5 July 2020. This year, London boroughs will be keen to use this opportunity to share their plans and ambitions with stakeholders across the city, and to develop new partnerships and opportunities to deliver on climate action plans.

27. London Councils will partner with Climate Action⁴ to host a high level breakfast briefing between boroughs and selected private sector partners at the Climate Innovation Forum during LCAW. This provides a valuable opportunity to develop local government's strategic conversation with private sector partners who can support our shared ambitions; it may also set the stage for engagement at Climate Action's much bigger and more established Climate Innovation Forum, at COP26 in Glasgow in November.

Recommendations: Leaders' Committee is asked to:

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Financial implications for London Councils

None

Legal implications for London Councils

None

Equalities implications for London Councils

None

⁴ <http://www.climateaction.org/>

Appendix 1: Proposed alignment of borough climate change action plans

1. RETROFIT LONDON	2. LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT	3. HALVE PETROL AND DIESEL JOURNEYS	4. RENEWABLE POWER FOR LONDON	5. REDUCE CONSUMPTION EMISSIONS	6. BUILD THE GREEN ECONOMY	7. CREATE A RESILIENT AND GREEN LONDON
Work with partners to identify mechanisms and secure funding to retrofit homes and workplaces in the borough, to increase energy efficiency and introduce low carbon heating sufficient to meet an average of EPC B across the borough	Change planning policy to require zero carbon developments, and/or introduce a climate emergency SPD	Build joined up cycling and walking infrastructure	Switch all council purchased gas and electricity to renewable or zero carbon sources, and drive energy efficiency improvements across the council estate	⌚ Provide clear, robust advice to residents and organisations on reducing their CO ₂ footprint	⌚ Provide training and guidance for council staff and contractors on sustainable procurement, including low carbon procurement standards	Map climate change vulnerabilities and adaptation opportunities within the borough, including flood risk and overheating analysis
Identify sources of funding for/means to incentivise private retrofit	⌚ Create a carbon offset fund	Enable active travel as part of wider schemes (healthy streets, liveable neighbourhoods)	Work with partners to explore options for a renewable energy PPA	Improve capture of new recycling streams, including food waste and textiles	⌚ Map out and support green local businesses	Support the delivery of sustainable drainage systems and urban greening
Engage with landlords, housing associations and businesses in the borough to encourage retrofitting of their premises	Support planners to secure low carbon standards and adaptation measures in final developments	Implement local low or zero emission zones	Work with UK Power Networks and other partners to prepare for a zero carbon grid, including use of smart energy networks	⌚ Support circular economy schemes and principles	Provide residents with skills and education to work in the low carbon sector	⌚ Plant trees
Take action to reduce overheating risk in existing and new buildings	Pilot passivhaus/low carbon design in council housing	Pilot and promote alternative means of transportation for urban freight	Support generation of renewable energy and low carbon heat within the borough	⌚ Conduct a waste inventory and review existing practices, including those of contractors	Ensure courses and curricula reflect changing job requirements	Avoid loss of green spaces and expand the network of open green spaces
Prioritise and support residents living in fuel poverty with targeted actions		Support the creation of travel plans for all organisations (e.g. council, schools)	⌚ Support opportunities for residents and businesses to create community energy generation projects	Reduce single plastic usage		⌚ Improve environmental practices in park maintenance operations
Enforce minimum energy standards in the private rented sector		Facilitate the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles		Grow food locally		Require developers to improve the biodiversity value of their sites

ENABLING THE COUNCIL TO ACT					
GOVERNANCE	COMMUNICATIONS	LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT	RESOURCES	DATA	LOBBYING AND INFLUENCING
Establish clear internal governance structures and a whole-council approach to climate delivery	🕒 Create a unified borough climate emergency 'brand'	🕒 Support the capacity and capability of all council staff to deliver on council climate targets	🕒 Identify funding needs and potential sources, from within and outside the council	🕒 Create a baseline of council and borough wide emissions	🕒 Lobby national to support a London wide position on climate change
🕒 Ensure that all council committee papers include the carbon impact of decisions	🕒 Increase engagement around climate change to help residents make climate-informed decisions	🕒 Review best practice by other councils	Set a climate budget as part of the borough's budget	Collect data on energy and CO ₂ from council operations	Lobby the private sector and London's growth partners to support climate action in London
🕒 Create a partnership panel to monitor the borough's climate action plan with residents (including young people) and others, and support co-design and co-delivery of borough-wide action	Support residents and businesses to register their climate change pledges		Review pension investment funds and ensure all council investment addresses the climate emergency, and/or divest from fossil fuels	Have contractors provide their own carbon emission data so it can be integrated in the councils' total	🕒 Support action in schools (e.g. influence curriculums, hold climate assemblies)
🕒 Ensure that those most vulnerable to climate impacts have a voice in the council's climate action planning and delivery	🕒 Integrate climate-related advice to council helplines				Work with local representative groups (e.g. Voluntary Action, Local Chambers) to support climate action
Ensure all existing council policies and procedures are revised and integrate low-carbon thinking					

Text that appears in **red** in the tables represents actions added by London Councils; actions with a clock symbol (🕒) are quick wins.