

Review of Leicester City Council's Draft Climate Emergency Action Plan (2023-2028)

Produced by the Leicester Climate Emergency
Partnership

October 2023

1 Introduction

1.1 This short report by members of the Leicester Climate Emergency Partnership has been produced as a response to viewing and discussing an October 2023 draft of Leicester City Council's 2023-2028 Climate Emergency Action Plan.

1.2 The report comprises a summary offering overall feedback, a small number of specific *Recommendations* for enhancements to the Action Plan and a list of *Issues to Consider* which were raised by Commission members as feedback.

2 Summary

2.1 The Partnership has reviewed the feedback provided by the Leicester Climate Commission and agrees and supports its key points and recommendations.

The aims of the Action Plan align with those of members of the Leicester Climate Emergency Partnership in relation to carbon neutrality / net zero carbon, climate resilience, a fair and just transition, support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, etc.

Close collaboration between LCC and different groups supporting and advising on climate actions such as the Leicester Environmental Experts Reference Group and the Leicester Climate Emergency Partnership needs to continue to ensure engagement of important stakeholders across the city.

2.2 Suggestions and recommendations include:

- Be clear on its use of terminology (carbon neutrality / NZC) and provide a glossary. It also needs to be clear where targets relate to LCC or to the whole city.
- Make reference to recent changes in government policy, reinforcing the point that it is the journey what matters, the speed of carbon reduction, and not just the 2050 target. It should also take into consideration that there may be further changes in government policy during the duration of the plan, so it needs establish clear priorities to have sufficient flexibility and accommodate to different scenarios.
- Provide clarity on how much of current and forecast carbon reductions rely on external societal factors outside LCC control (e.g., grid decarbonisation) and which are within LCC influence within the LCC estate but out of its control for the city as a whole (e.g. transition to EV and heat pumps).
- Link to the Local Area Energy Planning project for both city and county to connect questions around planning, grid and renewables to be included and referenced throughout the plan.
- Consider the use of carbon pricing based on BEIS-IPCC (DESNZ) and require Whole Life Carbon and Cost Analysis as a planning requirement above certain thresholds.

- Include review of success implementation of other LA plans and projected implementation of measures set by other LAs (e.g. GLA acknowledging the obvious differences).
- Include links to neighbouring Local Authorities / outside organisations and regions as it is important that the City Council does not deliver its Climate Action Plan in isolation and takes into consideration outside influences and opportunities. This may be covered under “partnership development” in the Actions supporting the Whole Plan but greater detail would be beneficial.
- Include further support and engagement with businesses to de-carbonise their activities including in their production processes, distribution and use of supply-chains. Identify forums and organisations of high energy users and liaise with them to coordinate plans and actions including funding options.
- Highlight the risk of stranded assets if not meeting regulatory standards (e.g. MEES EPCs) or not adaptable to climate change (temperature, flooding, etc).
- Report figures on (hopefully) increased use of buses and in particular of EV buses) and cycling if figures exist, making references to Low Traffic Neighbourhood areas or 15-20 minutes neighbourhoods if those are part of the strategy aims.
- Include actions to support the existing heat network and signpost to other networks in development (e.g. new DMU energy centre which will heat the majority of our campus through heat pumps).
- Include references to Social Value and Circular Economy.
- Include major focus on refurbishments.
- Reinforce the need not only for capital funding for projects utilising existing frameworks and procurement routes to increase speed delivery but also for staff resources to deliver the plan.

3 About the Leicester Climate Emergency Partnership.

The Partnership membership is formed by a group of relevant stakeholders closely linked to Leicester providing a forum for discussion and co-ordination of activities to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of the Climate Emergency declared by Leicester City Council in 2019, covering areas such as Sharing Knowledge on decarbonisation, Skills/workforce training, Procurement, Energy networks & grid capacity, Comms and engagement, Education & research, Adaptation/ nature recovery. The Partnership also has sub-groups dedicated to Communications, Carbon Reduction (Scopes 1 and 2) and Procurement.

Members include the following organisations: Active Together, De Montfort University, Leicester City Council, LLEP, Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust, Midlands Net Zero Hub, National Grid,

NHS East Leicestershire and Rutland CCG, Pick Everard, Severn Trent Water, UHL NHS Trust, University of Leicester.

The Partnership members reviewed a draft of LCC's Climate Action Plan in October 2023, discussed the report and offered feedback to the partnership in an online meeting. This document is a summary of key points made in that feedback meeting and from notes compiled by reviewers.

This report has been drafted by Dr Jose Hernandez (Pick Everard Head of Sustainability and Energy, and Chair of Leicester Climate Partnership) drawing on inputs from Dr Andrew Reeves (DMU, Associate Professor at IESD), Gavin Fletcher (Midlands Net Zero Hub, Principal Net Zero Projects Officer for Leicester and Leicestershire) and Mary-Louise Harrison (LLEP Senior Projects Manager with responsibility for the Carbon Neutral Agenda).