



Carbon Neutral Roadmap

Overview Select Committee

Date: 8th September 2022

Lead director: Matthew Wallace

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Anna Dodd, Energy and Sustainability Manager
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Suggested content

1. Purpose of report

To present the findings of the Leicester Carbon Neutral Roadmap Study.
To present the next steps in using the study findings to inform action planning and project development, both within the council and in collaboration with partners.

2. Summary

Following the council's Climate Emergency declaration and the announcement of its ambition for Leicester to be carbon neutral by 2030 or sooner, the need for expert advice was identified to better understand what it would take to achieve that. This report presents the results of a study commissioned from Ricardo Energy & Environment to provide that advice. The presentations outline the context, report findings and how the Carbon Roadmap will be used to inform our work going forward.

3. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

Note the content of the Carbon Roadmap Study

Note the use of the study to develop a new climate emergency action plan and work with partners in the city to reduce carbon and address climate change.

4. Report/Supporting information

The Carbon Neutral Roadmap study:

- Analyses how far we're likely to get by 2030 based on 'business as usual'
- Models the impact of increased levels of action

- Recommends a decarbonisation pathway capable of getting us closest to our ambition, taking account of likely limits to technological development and Government support between now and 2030
- Gives details of the rate and scale of action needed, along with indicative levels of investment required
- Explains why Leicester’s emissions could not reach zero by 2030 and outlines the options for ‘offsetting’ as many as possible of the remaining ones to get as close as possible to being carbon neutral.

The study will support a new phase in Leicester’s response to the Climate Emergency, aiming to build on the raft of measures already underway through the current Climate Emergency Action Plan to March 2023, to scale up activity and widen engagement.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The Leicester Carbon Neutral Roadmap Study has identified a net cost of up to £5.3bn for the city by 2030, which (to the extent it can be achieved) would be shared across a wide spectrum of individuals and organisations (including central and local government, citizens and businesses). In this perspective the Council will need to be alert to bidding opportunities for grant funding, as well as the role it can take in influencing and enabling change at no financial cost to the Council. The financing of each specific scheme will need to be considered as they are developed.

Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

5.2 Legal implications

The Climate Change Act 2008 committed the UK to legally binding greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019, which came into force on 27th June 2019, has since amended the legally binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as set in section 1 of the Climate Change Act 2008, from 80% to 100%, or net zero. It does not, however, place a statutory duty on local authorities to produce their own plans to cut carbon emissions.

The Council is enabled by other powers to take the action proposed in the report; for example, the general competence powers given to local authorities under the Localism Act 2011 and powers and duties under a range of planning and environmental regulations and policy, both at national and local level, enable and/or require local authorities, through their roles as planning, transport and waste authorities, to set energy efficiency requirements for consistency with the Government’s zero carbon policy.

There are no legal requirements beyond any restrictions in place via the powers outlined above, though it is advised robust and detailed publicity and public engagement is continued with as set out in this report and the legal aspects of particular actions and schemes will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis as they are developed.

Kevin Carter, Head of Law (Commercial, Property and Planning)

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Addressed within the main report.

5.4 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't. Due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty should be paid before and at the time a decision is taken, in such a way that it can influence the final decision.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The report presents the conclusions of the Leicester Carbon Neutral Roadmap Study. Although there are no direct equality implications arising from the report, it is important to note that local authorities have a key role to play in achieving this Net Zero target. Actions taken now, and in the future, locally can scale-up further efforts to address the Climate Emergency.

Action on climate change, reducing emissions and increasing resilience can deliver many local benefits including lower energy bills, economic regeneration and creation of local jobs, reductions in fuel poverty and improved health, avoidance of flood damage costs, enhanced green spaces and improved air quality. These benefits should positively impact people from across all protected characteristics. Action on climate change can also help to address inequalities and improve social cohesion. Vulnerable people and those on lower incomes are often those who are most disadvantaged in relation to issues like poor air quality, mobility, energy costs and access to green space.

Local authorities are well placed to drive and influence action on climate change through the services we deliver, our regulatory and strategic functions, and our roles as community leaders, major employers, large-scale procurers and social landlords. Councils also provide a vitally important leadership role, setting an example for others to follow.

Moving forward and in the development of the action plan there needs to be a continued flexibility in how these actions are achieved - for example at such a point as the service area starts to develop proposals around the action, equalities must be fully integrated into development of proposals and have sufficient influence in decision making, in order to allow for any disproportionate negative impacts identified on any protected characteristic/s to be responded to and mitigated appropriately.

Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

Working towards carbon neutrality will provide opportunities to achieve additional 'co-benefits' for city residents and businesses, a number of which are highlighted in in the equalities implications section above. It will be important, in developing the action plan, to take an approach which aims to maximise the co-benefits as well as the carbon savings. Co-benefits will be identified and, where possible, quantified for each area of action as the proposals are developed.

In some areas there may also be risks of conflict between carbon reduction and other priorities, and care will need to be taken to ensure that these are resolved, or at least minimised, as part of action planning. For example, the replacement of gas boilers with heat pumps, recommended in the report, could worsen fuel poverty if implemented in isolation from other measures. However, where combined with, or preceded by, installing extra insulation, this risk can be avoided.

Finally, it is worth highlighting that the carbon savings and other benefits for the City from working towards the carbon neutral ambition will enable the council to increase its contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals – particularly in relation to good health and wellbeing (goal 3), affordable and clean energy (goal 7), decent work and economic growth (goal 8), sustainable cities and communities (goal 11) and, of course, climate action (goal 13).

6. Background information and other papers:

7. Summary of appendices:

Leicester Carbon Neutral Roadmap – Recommendations for achieving carbon neutrality

Leicester Carbon Neutral Roadmap Evidence Base

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a “key decision”?

No