



Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy

2020 - 2030

Updated 12 October 2019



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Foreword

We recognise that **climate crisis is a hugely important issue** facing not just our residents, but also our environment, our wildlife and the planet.

It is clear that if action is taken now to address climate breakdown and to halt damage to biodiversity, **we can contribute significantly to reducing the impact of these issues** locally and on a wider global level.

We care deeply about our environment and our wildlife and since the cross party motion at full council in July we have been working closely to develop this strategy and action plan.

We must take every action possible to prevent the further changes to the climate before it is too late, we believe that it is everyone's responsibility to do whatever they can to help protect our precious planet, its environment and our wildlife for generations to come.

Any alternative is simply not an option.

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Liberal Democrat
Cabinet member for Environment
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Working Group

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Introduction

The Borough Council has a long history of tackling Climate breakdown including being awarded Beacon Status for its efforts in 2008. The Council's 2011-2020 Climate Change Strategy expires at the end of December 2019.

On 18 July 2019, the Council unanimously declared a Climate and Environmental Emergency. This new strategy builds upon the work over the last decade, taking into account new scientific information, policy developments and new technology to further respond to what has now become an emergency.

Throughout the life of its current Climate Change Strategy the Council has generated hundreds of thousands of kilowatt hours of renewable energy, supported residents and community groups to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, lobbied Government and worked with partners to improve the resilience of the Borough.

In its declaration, Council reaffirmed its commitment by joining other local authorities and institutions in declaring a Climate and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed to:

- a. put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025
- b. work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030
- c. ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations
- d. recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to the changing climate in every decision taken by the Council
- e. establish a cross-party working group to develop a plan for how the Borough of Eastleigh could achieve carbon neutrality by 2030
 - i. to be Chaired by the Cabinet Lead for the Environment and to include representatives from within the local community and businesses
 - ii. to report to Council within six months with a new Climate and Environmental Strategy alongside immediate actions the Council will take to address this emergency
 - iii. to be followed by a detailed Action Plan to be developed to include reporting requirements and assessment of the associated resource implications.
- f. include all of the recommendations above in a revised Climate and Environmental Strategy to be completed and approved by Council in 2019/20.

This report sets out progress to date, baseline assessment and the strategy that the Council is taking to meet these targets.

Climate Emergency

Climate breakdown is likely to have significant impacts on the Borough.

An increase in the severity, depth and regularity of flooding from surface water, rivers and the sea due to sea level rise, storm surges and increasing intensity of rainfall. Although the trend is for drier summers, the intensity of storms will also increase.

Hotter summers will also lead to increased heat stress, particularly for vulnerable members of the community, such as the elderly, and on the environment as a whole with particular reference to stress on our water supply, tree and wildlife survival.

The UK Climate Change Act 2008 sets a statutory target to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 1990 by 2050. In May 2019, the UK Committee on Climate Change recommended that the UK Government increase this target to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Government has now adopted this target.

In parallel, the UK Climate Change Act established the National Adaptation Programme. The corresponding UK Climate Change Risk Assessment identifies six priority risk areas: flooding, high temperatures, water supply shortages, natural capital, food production, and pest and diseases.

Environmental Decline

Climate breakdown and other human activity are having a significant impact on nature and the environment. An October 2019 State of Nature Report starkly set out the need for urgency to deal with environmental decline in the UK. It includes the following figures:

- 15% of species are under threat of extinction and 2% of species are already gone for good
- The average abundance of wildlife has fallen by 13%, with the steepest losses in the last ten years
- The populations of 41% of UK species studied have fallen and 133 species have already been lost from our shores
- Butterflies and moths are down 17% and 25% respectively. Numbers of high brown fritillary and grayling butterflies have fallen by more than three quarters
- The average amount of mammals has fallen by 26%. The wild cat and greater mouse-eared bat are almost extinct

Key Principles

The following are the core principles that set out the Councils approach to the Climate and Environmental Emergency, shaping actions to be taken forward.

All Council decisions will take into account the potential impact on the climate and the environment to achieve what's been outlined in this strategy

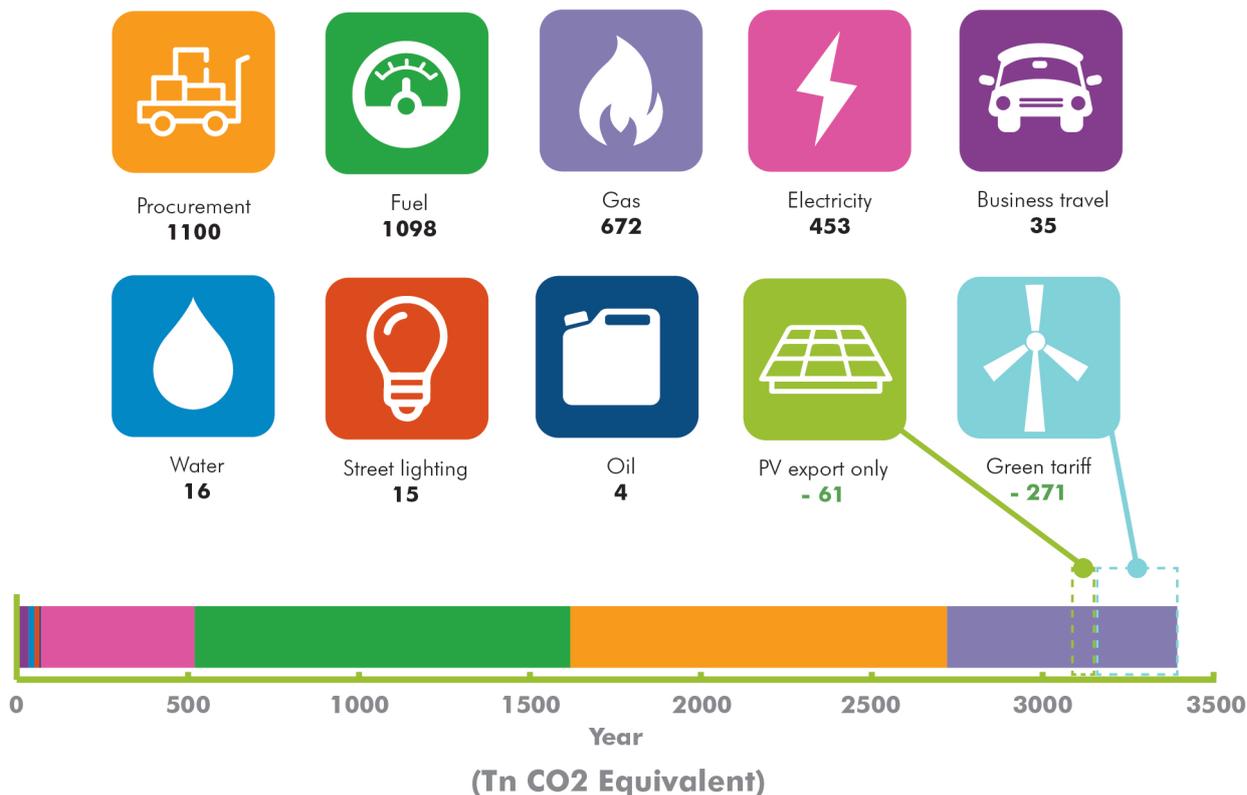
In order to appropriately respond to this emergency it is critical that all Council decisions take into account and respond to the potential impact that they will have on the climate and wider environment. This will be embedded in decision making through updates to templates, policy and guidelines, alongside a communications campaign and additional training. Through procurement and partnership this responsibility will be extended to suppliers and partners engaged in activities with the Council.

Need to take a prudent, proportionate and replicable approach to setting the baseline and understanding the impact of activities

The Council has a good record of tracking its own direct emissions (scope 1) and those created from the energy it consumes (scope 2) over several years as part of the previous Climate Change Strategy and emission reduction targets.

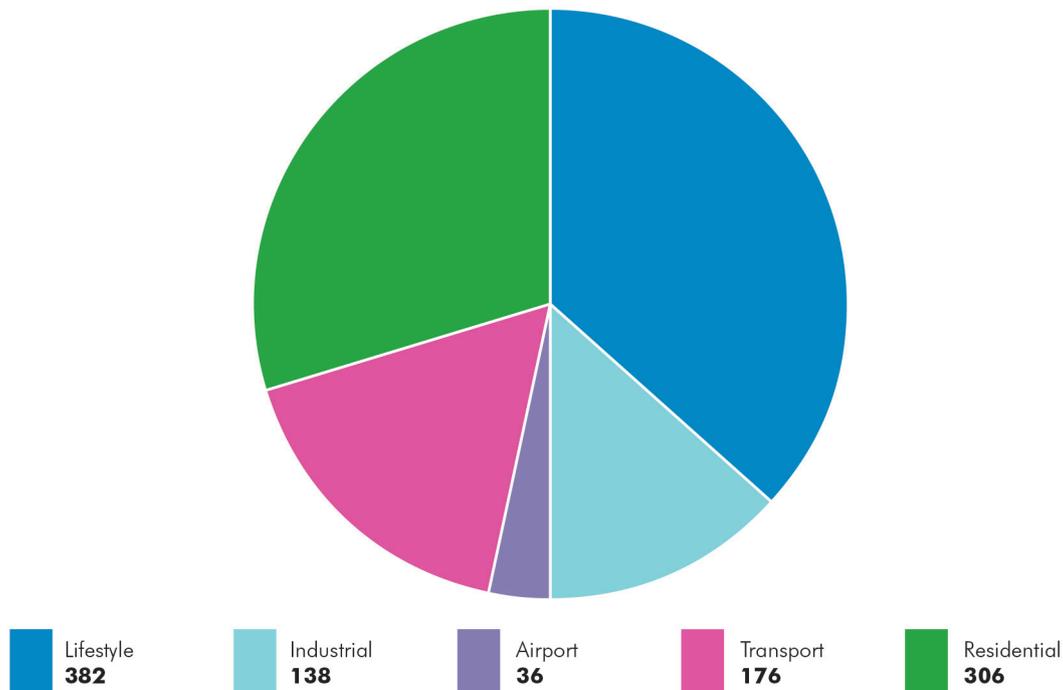
Emissions stand at 1.8 kiloton of carbon dioxide equivalent (ktCO₂e) for 2017/18 (latest compiled data). While this data is comprehensive, it does not include emissions from all areas of the Council's activity, in particular the Council's procurement activity. An analysis of procurement activity suggests this accounts for a further 1.1 ktCO₂e (approximately) of emissions. It is proposed the Council sets an operational target for 2025 to reduce or offset emissions by 2.9 ktCO₂e.

Eastleigh Borough Council Operation Emissions



The Government produces area based CO2 emissions data. These figures include a broad range of data with the notable exceptions of aviation, shipping, military transport and lifestyle emissions. To ensure that a prudent approach is taken, the Council has carried out an assessment of lifestyle and airport emissions and these have been included within the area target. This assessment has found that in order to reach Net Zero emissions by 2030 there would need to be a Borough wide reduction of 1046.1ktCO2e. This is based on 619.7ktCO2e industrial, residential and transport, 378.4ktCO2e lifestyle and 48ktCO2e airport.

Eastleigh Borough Carbon Emissions in ktCO2 Total CO2 Emissions = 1037.7ktCO2



N.B Graph above, Solid segments are national data, hatched segments are estimated extrapolations from other national data sets.

It is critical that all forms of emissions are included and clearly communicated to residents and businesses leaders to ensure that they understand the various contributions and the required level of collective responsibility.

Need to take the precautionary principle approach

History is littered with examples of often well-meaning decisions made with environmentally damaging consequences, such as the rise in use of CFCs and the promotion of diesel vehicles increasing local air quality issues. Therefore it is critical that decisions are made with a high degree of certainty over the full consequences. This approach is best defined as following the precautionary principle, which is enshrined in law.

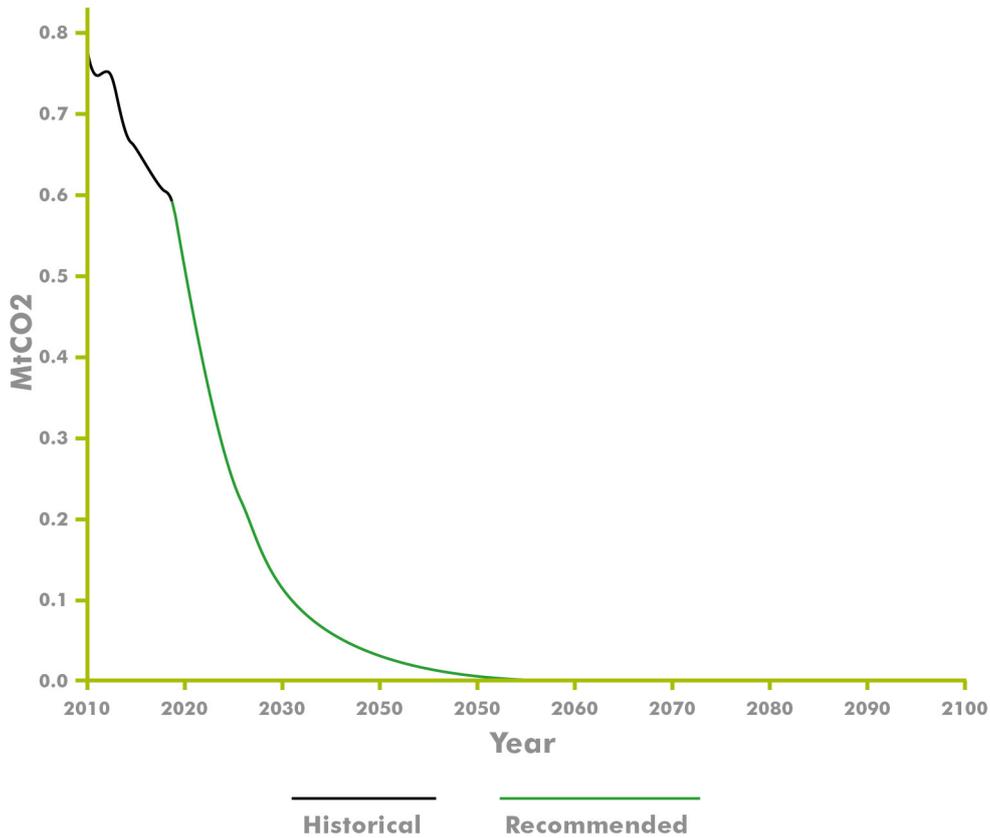
Wherever possible changes should be front loaded

The earlier reductions are made the better that will be for the environment and the local community. Manchester University and the Tyndall Centre produced a tool allowing local authorities to understand the

area wide CO2 reductions required to meet the Paris Accord 2 degree limit. The model, which uses UK government area data to calculate a CO2 "budget" for each area, indicates that at current rate of emissions, the entire budget to 2100 would be used up by 2027.

An example of how the Council could approach this could be for the Council to offset its operational emissions from year one, whilst activities are carried out to reduce emissions over time.

Pathway projections for Eastleigh



As a last resort there will need to be offsetting to reach net zero emissions, local approaches which lead to local environmental improvements will be prioritised.

It will not be possible for Council and Borough wide activities to be carried out without causing some CO₂e emissions. The Council will follow the mitigation hierarchy, with activities that avoid prioritised over mitigation, restoration and then offsetting. As a last resort, offsetting will need to be included in the approach. Local borough based offsetting activities will be prioritised; this will increase the benefit to local residents and wildlife.

Mitigation Hierarchy



Adaptation Responses need to take a Natural solutions first approach

In order to respond to the Environmental Emergency, in particular species decline and local pollution, nature must be a key part of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

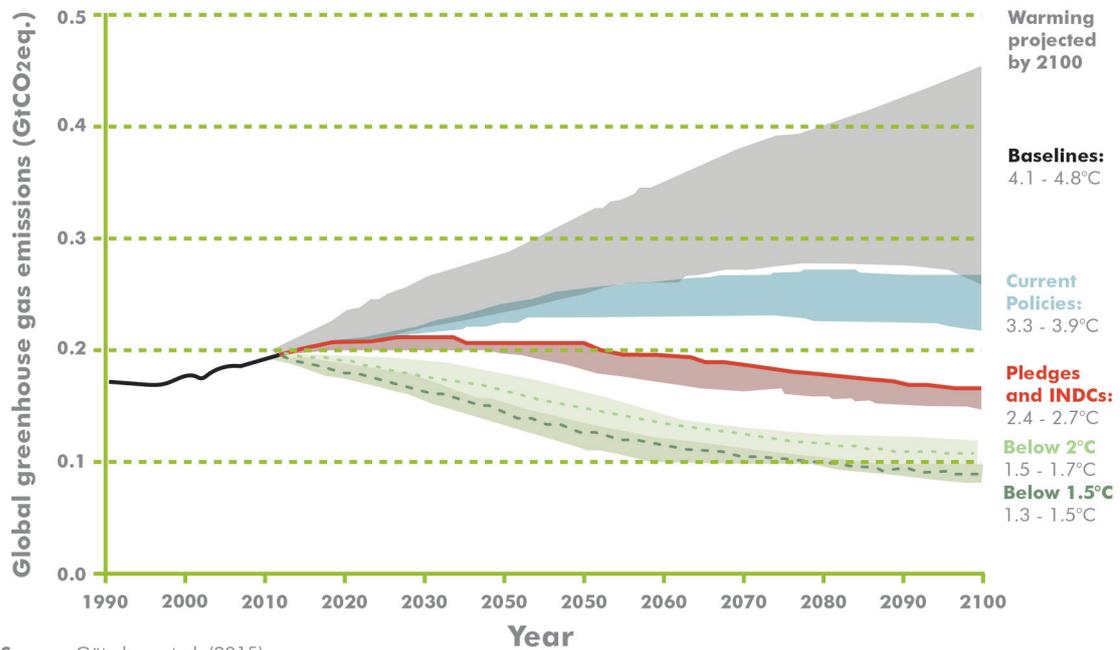
The Council needs to take a stronger approach to communications

A key theme throughout the consultation of this strategy, is that the Council needs to prompt urgent responses by clearly setting out the severity of the climate and environmental emergency.

The Council will carefully consider language (such as using climate emergency/breakdown as oppose to climate change). Alongside highlighting positive actions residents can take, the communication programme will need to support residents and businesses to fully understand the risks associated with the climate breakdown.

In 2017, the Climate Change Committee reported that current policies introduced internally by governments put the climate on a pathway to global temperature rises of between 3.3-3.9 degrees by the 2100's. In 2019, the Environment Agency updated its advice that decision makers should plan for 4oC warming.

Potential trajectories of long-term emissions and resulting global temperatures



Resources

The upfront cost is higher than 'business as usual', but the longer term costs of adapting later are higher, so it is cheaper to mitigate in the shorter term.

The 2008 Stern Review clearly set out the business case for urgent action on the climate crisis both in mitigation and in adaptation to avoid much higher costs in the longer term. A whole life cost assessment will need to be made for decisions, particularly around procurement to ensure that future savings are factored in.

Business cases will be developed for all activities within the action plan. These will be prioritised by the Working Group and funding sought, where necessary, in order to deliver on the strategy within agreed timescales.

Governance

This strategy will be overseen by a Climate and Environment Working Group. This will act as the main Programme Board for activities across the organisation. The working group will meet quarterly to review the process of actions.