

Cheltenham Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Meeting date: 25 March 2024

Meeting time: 6.00 pm

Meeting venue: Council Chamber - Municipal Offices

Membership:

Councillor Tabi Joy (Chair), Councillor Steve Harvey (Vice-Chair), Councillor Graham Beale, Councillor Nigel Britter, Councillor Jackie Chelin, Councillor Stephan Fifield, Councillor Emma Nelson, Councillor Stan Smith, Councillor Julian Tooke and Councillor Suzanne Williams

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Contact: democraticservices@cheltenham.gov.uk

Phone: 01242 264 246

1 Apologies

2 Declarations of interest

3 Minutes of the last meeting (Pages 5 - 10)

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2024.

4 Public and Member questions, calls for actions and petitions

5 Cabinet Briefing

Briefing from Councillor Hay, Leader (if she has an update, or if O&S Members have questions for her)

Objective: An update from the Cabinet on key issues for Cabinet Members which may be of interest to Overview and Scrutiny and may inform the work plan

Please note the update from the Leader on the CBH-CBC Transition will be taken under Agenda Item 10

6 Matters referred to committee

7 CBC Flood Risk Management Overview (Pages 11 - 32)

18:10 30 mins

Objective : Examining the role of CBC in national and local flood risk management plans and strategies. Progress on mitigations since 2007 and CBC role in flood mitigation (to include biodiversity and nature-based solutions) and involvement in the planning process.

James Mogridge, Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer, Cheltenham Borough Council

James Blockley, Flood Risk Manager, Gloucestershire County Council

8 Climate Emergency Action Plan Update (Pages 33 - 74)

18:40 30 mins

Objective : Having received the LGA's recommendations and compared with the national picture, what plans do we have, what progress is being made and how are we communicating our successes ?

Debbie Baker, Programme Director for Climate Change

Maizy McCann, Climate Emergency Officer

9 Cheltenham Physical Activity and Sports Strategy (Pages 75 - 80) 19:10 20 mins

Objective : To input into the strategy prior to its adoption

Richard Gibson, Head of Communities, Wellbeing & Partnerships

10 Feedback from other scrutiny meetings attended

[Gloucestershire Health O&S Committee](#) (12 March 2024) – update from Councillor Bamford
TO FOLLOW

[Gloucestershire Economic Growth O&S Committee](#)– update from Councillor McCloskey TO
FOLLOW

[Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel](#) (22 March 2024) – update from Councillor Clucas
TO FOLLOW

11 Updates from scrutiny task groups

19:35 15 mins

Update from the Chair of the CBH-CBC transition scrutiny task group

Update from the Leader on the CBH-CBC transition

12 Review of scrutiny workplan (Pages 81 - 86)

13 Any other item that the Chair determines to be urgent

14 Date of next meeting

Monday 3 June 2023 – this will be a dedicated Member induction training session for all Members appointed to the committee following the borough election.

Informal de-brief

What went well? Can we identify opportunities for improvement or training needs?

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Cheltenham Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee Minutes

Meeting date: 26 February 2024

Meeting time: 6.00 pm - 7.30 pm

In attendance:

Councillors:

Steve Harvey (Vice-Chair), Graham Beale, Nigel Britter, Jackie Chelin, Emma Nelson, Smith, Julian Tooke and Suzanne Williams

Also in attendance:

Helen Mole (Head of Place Marketing and Inward Investment) and Claire Hughes (Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Joy and Fifield.

Councillor Harvey took the Chair.

2 Declarations of interest

Councillor Nelson declared an interest in agenda item 9, in relation to the Police and Crime Panel.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

An amendment was proposed under agenda item 5, Cabinet Briefing, to explain that the agents were assisting the council with the sale of the municipal building. The amendment was accepted.

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January were then approved and signed as a correct record.

4 Public and Member questions, calls for actions and petitions

There were none.

5 Cabinet Briefing

The Leader stated that as she had provided Members with a full briefing at Council on 24th February, there was no further update.

In response to a question with regard to the planting of flowering trees as part of the Minster project, the Leader confirmed that there were no plans for further planting, due to the fact that there were a large number of unmarked graves. She remarked that there are already a number of trees in the area which do flower in the springtime.

6 Matters referred to committee

There were no matters referred to the committee for this meeting.

7 Tourism and Town Marketing Provision

The Chair opened the item by giving his thanks to the Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing as it was the last Overview and Scrutiny meeting that he would be attending prior to the elections in May when he will be standing down.

The Head of Place Marketing and Inward Investment explained that her department is responsible for the following:

- Destination management and marketing to support the visitor economy.
- Events – both delivery and support for external organisers.
- Inward investment and the promotion of Cheltenham as a place to do business.
- Commercial income generation
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme management.

The published report focused on the first point.

It was explained to the committee that travel and tourism is hugely important to the economy, worth an estimated £237 billion to GDP. Cheltenham welcomed approximately 2 million visitors in 2022 which supports around 4% of all employment in the town and many businesses.

As travel and tourism is such a competitive business, exciting promotional campaigns are a powerful way to persuade visitors to choose Cheltenham.

Within the seasonal campaigns, the team follow the objectives listed below:

- Communicating what is on and where to go – attracting visitors and residents.
- Working with local business partners – especially businesses in the visitor economy.

Page 7

- Presenting a positive image of Cheltenham.
- Encouraging people to stay within the area for longer and engage in multiple activities whilst here.

There is also year round marketing activity which includes: daily posts and engagement on social media, a fortnightly newsletter, the Visit Cheltenham website, the printed town guide and printed posters in town.

Destination or place management is the 'behind the scenes' work of the team. It contributes to the public perception and experience of the town and looks at the overall visitor experience.

The team are looking at ways to provide a Tourist Information service. The details of which are set out in the report. Success of the team is measured against organisational performance, for example, social media followers or website visitors. Details of the outcomes are in the report.

The Head of Place Marketing and Inward Investment explained that each year the council commissions an independent assessment of the volume and value of tourism and the impact of visitor expenditure on the local economy. Year-on-year comparison figures are a fairly reliable indicator of the current position of the sector. Data for 2023 will be available in November.

While the figures look at first glance to be outstanding – and this is of course a good thing – these figures have to be seen in the context of the recovery from the impacts of the covid pandemic. Visitor numbers had not quite recovered nationally by 2022 and Cheltenham is broadly in line with national figures.

The following points were made:

- KPIs should reflect attracting people to move to the town. The officer confirmed that this one of the KPI's for the wider team and were not included in the report.
- The officer acknowledged that there was a blossoming relationship between marketing Cheltenham and twinning but there was potential for more.
- The marketing Cheltenham newsletter was sent to people who sign up for it on the website and customers who had purchased ice rink tickets were given the opportunity to opt in.
- The static signs that are in the town centre, Bath Road, the Brewery and Montpellier are all being renewed, these are the maps in the metal signs as other signs are the responsibility of the County Council.
- The wheel which is currently in Imperial Gardens, is operated by the Cheltenham BID; information on revenue from this was currently not available.
- The Minster Exchange (MX) was highlighted as a place to host some form of tourism information. When CBC leave the Municipal Offices there will be tourist information in the public area of its new home.

- Recognising that not all people have access to digital technology, the officer explained that there is a balancing act between printed media and online media due to the carbon footprint and cost. However, 70,000 printed town guides are printed and reprinted if required.
- A Member highlighted that the younger generation will only use digital when looking for information and at some point the old ways might have to be sacrificed. The officer confirmed that her team were undertaking training on Artificial Intelligence.

The Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing addressed the committee and acknowledged that the format of information provision was a key issue. He recognised that digital was not the default for all and printed media is still distributed. The previous Tourist Information Centre, and latterly the pods, have only attracted a handful of visitors and they have been mainly residents and there needed to be a way to attract both residents and visitors alike. The Cabinet Member wished to bring Members' attention to the reduction in the carbon footprint of the Christmas ice rink compared to the previous year.

When asked how day visits to the town are monitored, the officer explained that this was currently not available, but it was down as a priority to look into.

The Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing commented that he had recently been present at a well-attended event with social media followers who in tagging the event would have reached out to a large audience.

With regard to a question on UKSPF funding, the officer explained that this was council wide and not limited to tourism. The Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing stated that when the country left the EU the UKSPF was the funding promised by the government, although this represented only one third of the amount promised.

The Chair thanked the Head of Place Marketing and Inward Investment and the Cabinet Member for their welcome contributions.

8 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer introduced the report and stated that this represented a draft work plan for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I). In producing this document there is due regard to the Equalities Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

She explained an officer ED&I working group has been set up and it will include Member appointed Equality Champions in due course.

She explained that the current process for equality impact assessments in the decision making process will change. It will become a two stage process to include an initial questionnaire followed up by a more detailed analysis where required. This would mean that there would be a response for every report.

Members who had already provided feedback on the draft were thanked and further comments were invited by the end of March.

As former Mayor, the Chair commented that when in office he had an ED & I advisor and was the first Mayor in the country to do so.

The following points were raised :

- A budget should be made available for this work
- Consideration should be given on how to encourage people to engage
- encourage mandatory training completion, particularly by Members
- It was recognised that those organisations that embrace diversity can be more challenging and more creative and thus perform better.
- Include an acknowledgement of neurodiversity in the workplace

The Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer thanked Members for their input and welcomed further feedback.

9 Feedback from other scrutiny meetings attended

The Chair noted that, at its last meeting, the Police and Crime panel did not receive the budget figures.

Members thanked the representatives for their hard work and their reports.

10 Updates from scrutiny task groups

The Chair of the Scrutiny Task Group (STG), Cllr Nelson updated the committee. It had now met a few times and a current CBH tenant board member was a member of the group. She reported that the interim housing transformation director had addressed the group at the last meeting and Members felt that the transition is in very safe hands having heard his background and experience.

The Chair noted that some staff were feeling nervous about the TUPE process and the STG felt that they need to be nurtured. They are hoping to raise this at the next meeting however they have been told to concentrate on the transition.

The Leader stated that things had moved fast since the scrutiny task group last met. The CBH Chief Executive and 3 other senior members had now left the organisation. Gareth Edmundson had been appointed as acting Chief Executive along with a dual role for Paul Jones and Paul Minnis. Together with the Leader, they were working hard on staff morale, and she was 'meeting and greeting' staff when they arrived at the Municipal Offices.

The Leader referred to the tenant and leaseholder consultation which had now been completed. There were 682 respondents (over 10%) with the majority understanding why the CBH service was taken back in house. The majority of respondents also stated that they would prefer a mix of digital and face to face communication. The

red areas that attracted concern with the respondents were anti-social behaviour, complaints and neighbourhood safety. Feedback was received from tenants, leaseholders and shared ownership customers which was a good representation. The majority of the feedback is supportive and people have an understanding of the process that is in place.

She ended by thanking tenants and leaseholders for responding to the consultation and Campbell Tickell for their comprehensive report.

11 Review of scrutiny workplan

This was noted.

12 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as the 25th March.

13 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT INFORMATION

RESOLVED THAT

“in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining agenda items as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

14 Exempt Minutes

RESOLVED THAT

The Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January were approved and signed as a correct record.

Information/Discussion Paper

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 25 March

2024 Flood Risk Management Overview

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed.

1. Why has this come to scrutiny?

- 1.1 The Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) flooding team (flood risk officer and support officer) were appointed in September 2022. Prior to this work streams were shared between a flood resilience officer and the Publica flood risk management team through a technical support contract, following the retirement of the CBC flood risk engineer in 2020. The officers sit within the climate emergency team and their main responsibility is to improve the Borough's resilience to flood risk, in both existing and future climates.
- 1.2 The flooding team has been called to scrutiny by councillors to better understand the role of CBC in flood risk management, specifically:
 1. Examining role in national and local flood risk management plans and strategies.
 2. Progress on mitigations since 2007.
 3. Role in flood mitigation (including biodiversity and nature-based solutions).
 4. Involvement in the planning process.
- 1.3 The priorities and actions of the team and partner Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) are presented in this paper, with a focus on the items listed in paragraph 1.2.

2. Summary of the Issue

- 2.1 Flooding can cause damage to property and infrastructure. The risk and impacts of flooding can result in significant stress to people and communities. Flooding is the most common and widespread natural hazard to occur in the UK. In catchments such as Cheltenham, urbanisation and historic modification to watercourses has increased flood risk in many areas.
- 2.2 Numerous flood events have occurred, but the 2007 summer floods are the most significant in living memory, particularly in Gloucestershire where impacts were devastating. In Cheltenham 50-100 properties were flooded in June and 600 in July. Cheltenham was also affected by the impacts the floods had on utilities in the region with many homes without water or power. The 2007 floods changed the approach to flood risk management on a national and local scale. The Flood and Water

Management Act 2010 gave more power and responsibilities to Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) to plan flood risk mitigation.

- 2.3** Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of extreme weather events such as flooding and drought. Cheltenham will likely experience wetter winters and hotter summers. Summers are expected to be drier with regards to total rainfall, but high intensity convective storms are likely to become more frequent. These are the storms that pose greatest flood risk to the small, urbanised Cheltenham catchments (flash flooding). Cheltenham is identified nationally as a flood risk area *“because the risk of flooding from surface water is significant nationally for people, the economy or the environment (including cultural heritage).”* The River Chelt through Charlton Kings has been designated as a rapid response catchment by the Environment Agency as it has the potential to cause flash flooding which poses a threat to life¹.
- 2.4** As an RMA, the local planning authority, and a significant land/asset owner in the Borough, CBC have a significant role in flood risk mitigation. This is discussed in more detail within this paper.

3. Flood risk management strategies and plans.

- 3.1** Following the 2007 floods the government asked Sir Michael Pitt to undertake a review of the lessons to be learned. Amongst the recommendations of the Pitt review was an update to legislation to address all sources of flooding, include a wider brief for the Environment Agency (EA), and give more power and responsibilities to councils to protect communities through robust building and planning controls. The implementation of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 was one of the actions taken by parliament following the review. Under the Act the EA has a strategic overview role and Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) were established. The Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) flood risk management team are the LLFA for Gloucestershire and they delegate some of their responsibilities to CBC. The Act places a duty on all RMAs to co-operate with each other especially as flood issues can often be from multiple sources. In 2023 the UK government announced their commitment to implement schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act. Full details are yet to be announced but it is likely that LLFAs will become sustainable drainage approval bodies, responsible for approving and adopting drainage systems on new developments. GCC may require further support from CBC depending on the scope of the process. Currently the LLFA and CBC flooding function as consultees in the planning process.
- 3.2** Strategies and plans relevant to CBC flooding are summarised in Table 1. This list is not exhaustive and there are other strategies, risk assessments, plans and Acts that are relevant to flood risk management. Under the Flood and Water Management Act, the EA and LLFA are required to develop, maintain, apply, and monitor flood risk management strategies at national and local scale, respectively. CBC must act in a manner consistent with national and local strategies when exercising its flood risk management functions. The CBC flooding strategy is presented in Figure 1 and section 5 of this paper details the current workplan. The appendix of this paper shows measures from the local strategies and plans linked to works undertaken by CBC flooding.

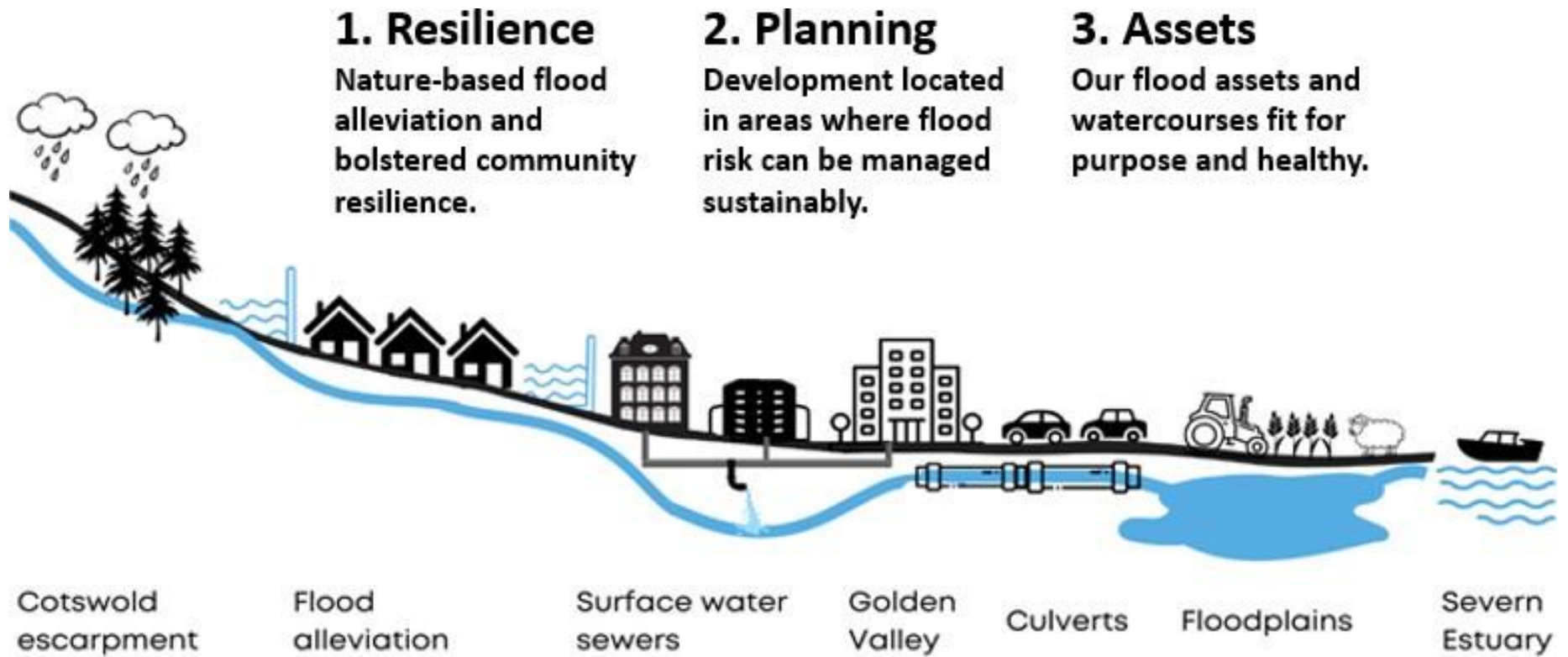
¹ [Severn River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021 to 2027](#)

3.3 Table 1: Flood risk management strategies and plans

Strategies		
Flood risk management	National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England	<p>Core ambitions are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Climate resilient places. 2. Growth and infrastructure resilient to climate change. 3. A nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding. <p>Describes what needs to be done by all RMA's but also highlights need for collaboration with individuals, communities, the third sector, businesses, farmers, land managers and infrastructure providers.</p>
	LLFA Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	<p>Outlines how the LLFA provides leadership and coordinates flood risk management in Gloucestershire. The strategy objectives with links to flood risk management works undertaken by CBC is presented in Appendix A.</p>
Planning	National Planning Policy Framework	<p>CBC are the local planning authority and are responsible for preparing local plans. The Cheltenham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is used as a guide by the authority and developers to locate development in lower flood risk areas. The EA, LLFA, and CBC flooding are consultees to the planning authority depending on the location and type of development. Involvement in the planning process is described in more detail in section 6 of this paper.</p>
	CBC Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	
	The Joint Core Strategy and Strategic Local Plan	
Climate adaption	CBC Climate Emergency Action Plan: Pathway to Net Zero	<p>CBC climate obligations include developing resilience. This includes flood mitigation, adaptation, planning natural space for people and environment and water resource management.</p>

Plans		
Catchment plans	Severn River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021 to 2027	Catchment scale flood risk management plans, produced by the EA and RMA partners are high-level planning tools that set out objectives for each river catchment. Within this plan Cheltenham is identified as a flood risk area. CBC are the responsible authority for three of the Cheltenham measures and objectives within the plan which are listed in Appendix B.
	Cheltenham Surface Water Management Plan	Produced by the LLFA. Provides a framework for RMAs to understand the causes of surface water flooding and agree the most cost-effective way of managing that risk. The purpose of the plan is to make sustainable surface water management decisions that are evidence based, risk based, future proofed and inclusive of stakeholder views. Numerous flood alleviation schemes have been delivered (or are in progress) using the SWMP, refer to section 4 of this paper for more details.
Emergency response plans	<p>CBC emergency response plan</p> <p>Multi-Agency Flood Plan (MAFP)</p> <p>CBC flood response plan (Annex A MAFP)</p> <p>Charlton Kings Rapid Response Plan</p>	<p>The Local Resilience Forum includes CBC, who are category 1 responders for emergencies. CBC flood plans are coordinated by the emergency planning team, but the CBC flooding team have tasks delegated within the plans.</p> <p>The Charlton Kings catchment also has a rapid response plan to accompany the CBC flood plan, as it is designated as a rapid response catchment by the Environment Agency.</p>

3.4 Figure 1: CBC flooding strategy



4. Progress on mitigations since 2007.

4.1 Mitigations described in this section include Flood Alleviation Schemes (FAS), maintenance, improved understanding of risk, community resilience, appropriate development, and infrastructure.

4.2 Flood Alleviation Schemes (FAS):

Figure 2 highlights FAS that have been implemented since 2007. The River Chelt FAS was in place in 2007 but has had improvements made since. The figure highlights the lead authority for each scheme but in almost all cases these schemes have been delivered and funded through partnerships. Sewer capacity improvements made by Severn Trent Water are not shown on the map but there has been over £7 million invested across Cheltenham² and there continues to be significant investment made. GCC Highways drainage improvements are also not shown, of which there are numerous. CBC also coordinated the implementation of individual property flood resilience measures at a total of 45 properties across Whaddon and Charlton Kings using government funding.

Figure 2 also shows drainage improvement schemes implemented by CBC to reduce flood risk since 2007. This includes upgrading culvert capacity, debris screens (to mitigate culvert blockages) and retrofit of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) into the urban environment. An example being the Priors Farm Estate in Oakley (shown below) where retrofit SUDS provide water quality, biodiversity, and amenity benefits as well as flood risk management³.



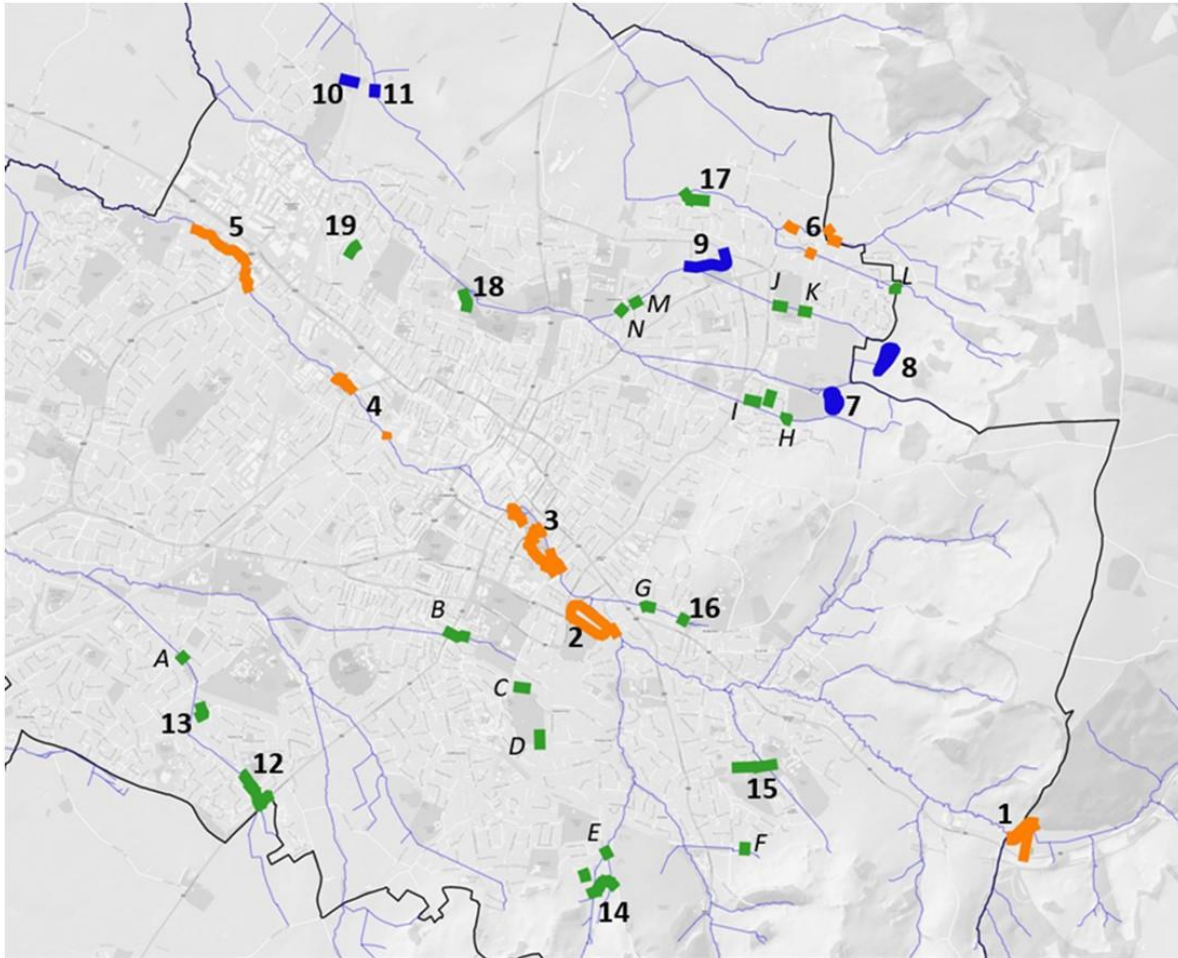
In addition to completed schemes, the current schemes are at either a feasibility or design stage:

1. Cromwell road SUDS retrofit, GCC.
2. Warden Hill SUDS retrofit, GWT/CBC.
3. Natural Flood Management feasibility at Upper Hearne Brook, CBC/GCC.

² Severn River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021 to 2027.

³ Images from project case study: https://www.susdrain.org/case-studies/pdfs/suds_awards/007_18_03_29_susdrain_suds_awards_priors_farm_estate_suds_retrofitting_project_cheltenham.pdf

4.3 Figure 2: Flood alleviation schemes (FAS) and drainage improvements implemented.



- █ EA scheme
- █ GCC scheme
- █ CBC scheme
- River network
- Borough boundary

Flood alleviation schemes

1. Dowdeswell reservoir
2. Cox's Meadow
3. Sandford Park
4. Flood Walls
5. Keirle Walk Flood Wall
6. Prestbury
7. Whaddon Priors
8. Whaddon Noverton
9. New Barn Close
10. Swindon Village School
11. Hyde Lane Culvert
12. Warden Hill Farmfield
13. Warden Hill Weavers
14. Southfield Brook
15. Beeches
16. St Edwards School
17. Apple Orchard Linden Close
18. Leisure Centre
19. Stanwick Gardens

Drainage improvements and SUDS retrofit

- A. Alma road debris screen
- B. Naunton parade culvert
- C. Naunton park SUDS
- D. Asquith Allotments
- E. Sandy Lane debris screen
- F. Timbercombe gate debris screen
- G. Oak Avenue culver upgrade
- H. Imjin Road debris screen
- I. Priors Farm estate SUDS
- J. St Marys School debris screen
- K. Fawley Drive debris screen
- L. Noverton Brook debris screen
- M. Oakland Avenue debris screen
- N. Overbrook Drive debris screen

4.4 Maintenance of watercourses and assets

It is vital that flood risk management assets remain 'fit for purpose.' Section 5 describes the operational responsibilities of RMA in Cheltenham. The EA maintains an asset condition database⁴ on 'Main Rivers.' CBC have maintained watercourses and assets we are responsible for and have also used permissive powers to carry out maintenance to reduce flood risk in watercourses where riparian landowners cannot be identified.

In 2023 the CBC flood officer obtained EA asset inspection accreditation and the flooding team have developed a maintenance plan to catalogue all CBC watercourses and flood assets and make informed risk-based decisions on maintenance. Natural Flood Management (NFM) has been successful in the UK and is becoming increasingly popular. Through mimicking nature's own methods, downstream impacts of flooding can be reduced through a wide range of land and watercourse management techniques to slow the flow and hold back water, where appropriate to do so. Obstructions, whether natural or human-caused, may have a positive effect by slowing flows and reducing flood risk downstream whilst creating habitat. Consideration therefore needs to be given to the implications of both removing obstructions and leaving them in situ. This will depend on location within the catchment (with upstream areas usually being more strategic areas to hold back water) and the adjacent receptors at risk. Within the maintenance plan, some reaches of watercourse are therefore identified with a natural based approach to maintenance. This aligns with CBC aspirations for improving biodiversity and reducing carbon emissions. Next steps for the maintenance plan are to include long term asset costs and incorporate the plan into the CBC risk framework.

The LLFA maintain the Whaddon FAS and provide a waterside living leaflet for riparian watercourse landowners. GCC highways have developed a risk-based approach to their gully cleaning programme⁵.

4.5 Improved understanding of risk

Technological advances have significantly improved flood modelling and mapping of flood risk. The LLFA maintain a Flood Online Reporting Tool (FORT)⁶. CBC use risk maps published by the EA and FORT to make informed decisions across planning, maintenance, investigations, and feasibility for alleviation schemes.

The EA and Met office created the national flood forecasting centre in 2009 and the UK is now considered amongst the world leaders in flood forecasting. There are now nine live river level gauges in Cheltenham and CBC uses this data, daily Flood Guidance Statements, and the EA's flood warning service to inform decisions regarding emergency planning and post-event investigations.

Understanding risk is an area of continuous improvement and there is still much progress to be made, particularly in surface water flood risk mapping and forecasting under different climate scenarios.

⁴ <https://environment.data.gov.uk/asset-management/>

⁵ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/roads/flooding-drainage-and-gullies/>

⁶ <https://swim.geowessex.com/glos/>

4.6 Community resilience

The EA maintain a flood alert and warning service within Cheltenham and the LLFA and local resilience forum provide an online *Flood Guide*⁷ and an *Are you ready?*⁸ guide for residents, respectively. The flood guide includes property level flood protection guidance for home/business owners.

CBC flooding attend community events, update website guidance, produce infographics and coordinate a network of twelve flood wardens who provide additional resilience to their communities before, during and after events.

The Local Resilience Forum includes CBC, who are category 1 responders for emergencies. CBC flood plans were updated in 2021 and are coordinated by the emergency planning team, but the CBC flooding team have responsibilities delegated within the plans. before, during and after flood events, which are summarised below:

Before: Inspect and maintain CBC flood assets and watercourses. Monitor warnings and river levels.

During: Liaison with partners, incident logging, inspection, and reactive maintenance (where safe to do so).

After: Post-event inspection and maintenance, investigation and reporting, liaison with partners.

4.7 Infrastructure mitigations

Following the 2007 floods, Severn Trent Water have mitigated water supply security by investing in flood defences at the Mythe water treatment works and a 17km long bypass water main to improve overall network resilience.

National grid instigated a flood resilience programme to ensure that its electricity substations are protected and remain operational during extreme flood events. This included construction of a new flood wall at the Walham substation.

⁷ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/flood-risk-management/flooding-information/>

⁸ <https://glosprepared.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Are-you-ready-booklet-Web-version.pdf>

5. CBC role in flood mitigation

5.1 The CBC flooding team work collaboratively with other departments and RMA partners to build resilience through a range of work streams, described in Table 2. Involvement in planning has increased in recent years as sustainable drainage (SUDS) is advocated at new developments. Whilst this is a positive development with regards to mitigation, an increase in these review duties alongside staff turnover, funding, and recent prioritisation of establishing a maintenance plan (to ensure existing schemes remain fit for purpose) has meant limited resource availability to progress new CBC-led flood alleviation schemes. This is mirrored countywide according to the latest strategy update by the LLFA⁹:

“District flooding officers continue to be an essential part of the wider / external team and provide a crucial role in flood response and investigation, consenting and enforcing work on ordinary watercourses and community liaison. Quite simply we could not achieve what we do without them, and likewise they depend on our support to carry out their indispensable work, but an increase in reactive duties matched by changes in staff structure has meant that their ability to engage with and initiate flood alleviation schemes has been impacted”.

CBC flooding are exploring options to streamline reactive duties to enable resource to deliver more nature-based solutions (examples below¹⁰). Some existing schemes provide habitat and a balance between flood risk management, amenity, and recreation. For example, the Oakley SUDS retrofit and the Cox’s Meadow and Beeches FAS. There is almost unlimited potential in Cheltenham to implement more SUDS retrofit and RMAs/planners should push for these to be considered at the forefront of any transport and built environment project. Rural Natural Flood Management (NFM) has been successful in the Stroud District and although Cheltenham has less rural land there are still appropriate sites upstream of the urban area. CBC plan to work closely with the new Gloucestershire NFM delivery group to implement NFM in the most effective areas.



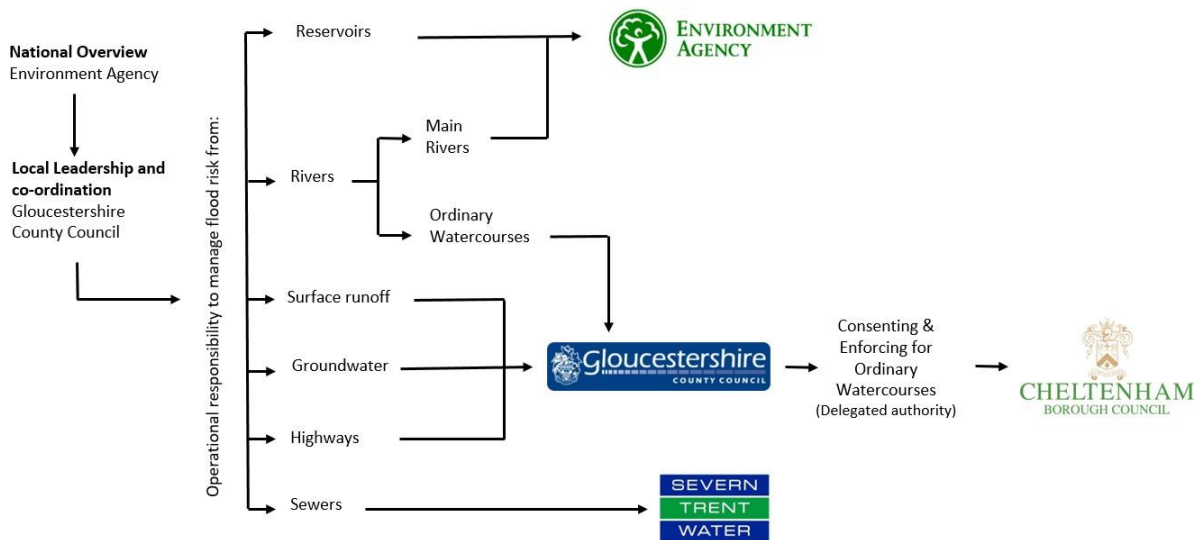
⁹ GCC LFRMS [Annual Progress and Implementation Plan \(22/23-23/24\)](#)

¹⁰ Clockwise from top left: 1. NFM image from Stroud District Council, 2 to 4 rain gardens in highway, public space, and schools (Images from Susdrain case studies)

5.2 The LLFA coordinate quarterly Gloucestershire RMA partnership meetings and Flood Risk Management delivery group meetings which CBC attend. CBC also coordinate a local flood risk management group in Warden Hill which is attended by RMAs and councillors. CBC work in partnership with the LLFA to deliver alleviation schemes and are part of the Gloucestershire NFM delivery group and Severn Vale Catchment Partnership.



5.3 Figure 3 shows the operational responsibilities of RMAs in Cheltenham. For rivers, the relevant RMA has permissive powers, but not a duty, to carry out maintenance and improvement works. Maintenance is usually the responsibility of riparian landowners unless recognised formally as an asset managed by an RMA. CBC are the riparian owner for numerous reaches of watercourse and assets in Cheltenham. Larger rivers are designated as 'Main River,' and these are shown on the Main River Map¹¹. All other rivers, streams, drainage channels and ditches are known as Ordinary Watercourses.

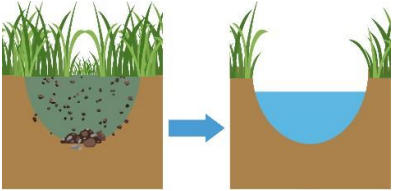

5.4 *Figure 3: Overview of RMA operational responsibilities to manage flood risk in Cheltenham.*






¹¹ [Main River Map](#)

5.5 Table 2: CBC flooding current workplan.

Strategy	Workstream	Description	Summary of works 2023	Planned activities 2024-2025
Planning	Consultation	<p>Consultee for non-major developments to ensure flood risk and sustainable drainage design is incorporated.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical review and commentary on 90 consultations. All comments were provided within consultation deadline. • Technical support provided on selected major developments including Golden Valley. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with planning to identify gaps in the consultation process and <i>Strategic and Local Plan</i> policies on flooding and sustainable drainage. Aim to increase influence on SUDS that also incorporate biodiversity improvements. • Work with planning and RMAs to identify need for updated SFRA as part of the <i>Strategic and Local Plan</i>. • Training for support officer to improve capability and resilience of the team.
	Consenting and enforcement	<p>LLFA delegate consenting and enforcement duties on ordinary watercourses to CBC flooding</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 69 enforcement cases. Mainly the removal of debris causing either a flood or environmental risk. • 6 land drainage consents for new watercourse structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAU. Contract extended to 2026 with an increased payment to CBC to continue these works.

Strategy	Workstream	Description	Summary of works 2023	Planned activities 2024-2025
Assets	Watercourse and asset management	<p>CBC owned / maintained land includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17km of watercourse (including culverts), • 21 debris screens, • 8 flood alleviation schemes (each consisting of multiple assets). • 10 Sustainable drainage systems (each consisting of multiple assets). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Version 1 of maintenance plan completed which catalogues watercourses and assets and a plan for their future maintenance. Primarily focusses on flood risk but also incorporates habitat value and carbon emission reduction where possible by identifying reaches where a NFM approach can be adopted. • Inspection of all watercourses and assets and commission of any necessary maintenance. Risk-based inspection schedule incorporated into maintenance plan. • CBC flood officer obtained EA T98 asset inspection accreditation. Relevant assets mapped in EA format and inspection programme started. • Invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam have been mitigated (see projects workstream for more detail). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Version 2 of maintenance plan to include T98 asset inspections and longer-term risks/lifetime asset costings. Incorporate risks and mitigations into CBC risk framework. • Consider tendering a maintenance contract based on the plan including feasibility of using UBICO. • Future versions of maintenance plan to include best practice habitat management where possible to further promote biodiversity on watercourse corridors.
Resilience	Community engagement	<p>Raising awareness of flooding and enabling communities to take their own actions towards building resilience.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvigorated CBC flood warden scheme with support from Gloucestershire Rural Community Council using a grant from the local resilience forum. New wardens recruited and meetings held every 6 months. • “Green your property to reduce flooding in your community” infographic created and distributed at engagement event in Warden Hill. 1000 copies distributed to houses in Warden Hill by parish council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase flood warden coverage geographically and drive recruitment in high-risk areas. • Infographic social media posts to raise community awareness of property level flood mitigation and water management. • Consider further community engagement events including schools.

Strategy	Workstream	Description	Summary of works 2023	Planned activities 2024-2025
Resilience	Projects / partnership schemes	Collaborating with partners to deliver nature-based solutions to flood risk management in the Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warden Hill flood risk management group looking to implement retrofit SUDS where feasible. Working collaboratively with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT) • Working collaboratively with GCC on potential SUDS retrofit on Cromwell Road and Natural Flood Management opportunities. • Collaboration with CBC Greenspaces to implement SUDS features in public parks (Naunton, Weavers and Benhall). • “<i>Reclaim the River</i>” Himalayan Balsam invasive species project in collaboration with greenspaces and climate emergency team. This has involved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 7 volunteer sessions to pull balsam. Approximately 4km of watercourse managed including litter removal. ○ Letter drops to 121 riparian owners to raise awareness of responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with relevant CBC teams and partners to further progress on implementing nature-based flood management solutions. • Research carbon sequestration potential for natural flood management schemes to support CBC net zero targets.
	Enquires, land charges and FOI	Responding to CON29 land charge enquires related to flooding and drainage and other public enquires regarding flooding and watercourses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All land charge CON29 questions answered on time (over 600 property searches). • All Enquiries and FOI requests responded to on time. • Flood issue investigations undertaken and reported through relevant channels / RMAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline and automate processes where possible to increase resource availability for projects.

Strategy	Workstream	Description	Summary of works 2023	Planned activities 2024-2025
Resilience	Emergency response and recovery	Supporting CBC emergency planning team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in the emergency response plan have been undertaken before and after events/forecasts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with emergency planning, parish councils and flood wardens to identify potential updates to the plan based on latest best practice guidance.

6. Involvement in the planning process

6.1 CBC flooding are consulted on non-major development at the discretion of planning officers. Typical consultations include:

1. Developments of 1 to 9 dwellings.
2. Buildings, structures or car parks with a site area < 1 ha and floor space < 0.1 ha.
3. Structures in areas of high flood risk.

The LLFA are statutory consultees for major development and the Environment Agency are consulted on both major and non-major development, depending on the site location with regards to flood zones and rivers. CBC flooding are also consulted on some major developments including Golden Valley. CBC flooding are not typically consulted on minor developments such as householder extensions and driveways as drainage matters for these developments are dealt with directly by planning officers and building control using defined guidance.

6.2 CBC flooding review of applications includes:

1. In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, ensuring that proposed development is appropriately located and designed to mitigate flood risk. Considering the vulnerability of its users and flood risk elsewhere throughout its lifetime.
2. Ensuring new development incorporates sustainable drainage design to mitigate flood risk and water quality issues elsewhere in the catchment.

6.3 Applications are required to produce flood risk assessments for all development within EA flood zones 2, 3 or 3b (areas at risk of flooding from rivers). In flood zone 1, CBC flooding request flood risk assessments if the site is at risk from other sources of flooding (usually surface water flooding). CBC request revisions to the flood risk assessment, site layout, or mitigations where required during the review process.

6.4 Sustainable drainage strategies must follow the SUDS hierarchy (which promotes infiltration and avoids discharge to sewers wherever possible) and aim to reduce post-development flows to the 'greenfield runoff rate' for rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 (including a 40% increase applied to design rainfall for climate change based on current guidance). Water quality mitigations are also required where relevant. CBC also request that drainage strategies include biodiversity and amenity benefits as these also make up the four pillars of SUDS and rainwater collection/re-use which is recommended in the Climate Change Supplementary Planning document¹². We plan to explore options to make these aspects of the design more enforceable as they are often overlooked by developers and rules are less defined compared to flooding and water quality aspects.

¹² [Climate change supplementary planning document](#)

7. Conclusions

CBC play a key role in flood risk management in the Borough which is managed by numerous RMA's. Notably CBC are the only RMA that operate solely within Cheltenham. As a significant landowner, the local planning authority, an RMA, and a provider of services such as housing and refuse collection, CBC have a significant influence on the land use activities that impact flooding and waterway health.

In addition to statutory works, CBC and partners should continue to deliver schemes and bolster community resilience to ensure the future well-being and prosperity of the town in the face of climate change. Considerable progress has been made since 2007 and the town is now better defended and prepared, but people and property remain at risk. Due to cost and practicality, alleviation schemes can only be designed to hold back a specific amount of water and therefore further nature-based solutions with holistic benefits to the environment can complement existing alleviation schemes and provide mitigation to undefended areas by slowing the flow of runoff through the Cheltenham catchments.

There also needs to be an understanding that there may not be cost-effective alleviation solutions at a communal scale for all areas. Effective community engagement is therefore also vital to ensure our communities understand their risk, prepare, and consider property-level resilience measures where required.

Background Documents

[National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England](#)

[Severn River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021 to 2027](#)

[GCC Local Flood Risk Management Strategy](#)

[Cheltenham Surface Water Management Plan](#)

[CBC Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#)

[CBC Climate Emergency Action Plan: Pathway to Net Zero](#)

Contact Officer

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Accountability

Cllr Alisha Lewis, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency

Appendix A: LLFA Local flood risk management strategy objectives

Breakdown of objectives	Outcome	CBC workstream	Planned activities
Strategic objective 1: Improve our understanding of local flood risk			
Identify hotspots of flooding across Gloucestershire using historic and predicted flood risk data	Highest priority locations will be identified which will inform prioritisation and resource allocation	Projects/ partnership schemes and emergency response	Log reported incidents on FORT, collaborative with RMAs to identify locations
Undertake further studies in areas of greatest flood risk (e.g., GCC or district/borough-led studies)	An improved understanding of flooding and an assessment of potential mitigation measures		Lead and support flood investigations, working collaboratively with RMAs.
Establish and maintain a register of assets and designate assets which have a significant effect on flood risk	An improved understanding of assets and their impact on flood risk. Assets which have a significant effect on flood risk will be protected	Asset maintenance	Update maintenance plan and share up to date asset data with LLFA
Map flood incidents and investigate incidents which are 'locally significant'	Better capture of historic flood incident data will improve decision-making due to better understanding of flooding	Emergency response	Log reported incidents on FORT and support LLFA with investigations.
Strategic objective 2: Put in place plans to manage these risks			
Identify and plan local investment needs in flood risk management in Gloucestershire on an annual basis, in partnership with other RMAs	Investment will be co-ordinated, targeted and planned on an annual basis, which will be used to identify funding requirements annually	Projects/ partnership schemes	Support and input into LLFA plan
Ensure local flood risk management achieves wider benefits for local communities & the environment, works with natural processes, and contributes to achieving environmental objectives (e.g., Water Framework Directive)	Flood risk management measures will consider wider potential benefits to local communities and work with natural processes to achieve multiple benefits, leading to social, economic and environmental benefits. Flood risk management activities will seek to improve the natural and built environment		Work collaboratively to deliver more nature-based solutions
Ensure new capital schemes have appropriate maintenance regimes in place which are adhered to.	Flood risks schemes will be adequately maintained, ensuring the function as designed	Asset maintenance	Update and implement asset maintenance plan.

Breakdown of objectives	Outcome	CBC workstream	Planned activities
Strategic objective 3: Avoid inappropriate development and ensure that new development does not increase flooding elsewhere			
Ensure local planning authorities use the 'Locally Agreed Surface Water Information (including ordinary watercourses) to support spatial planning	Local planning authorities will use the best available information on local flood risk to inform spatial planning	Planning	Ensure latest available flood risk data is used
Work closely with County and District planners (including other organisations where relevant) to avoid inappropriate development in areas of flood risk and ensure development does not increase risk elsewhere	Local planning policy will take account of local flood risk in allocating development. Development will be safe and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere		Ensure latest available flood risk data is used and input to Strategic and Local Plan.
Ensure the design, construction, operation and maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems in new developments and redevelopments meet national standards	New developments will have surface water drainage which meets national standards, ensuring adequate drainage provision is in place		Ensure sustainable drainage systems are incorporated to new developments during the consultation process
Seek earlier consultation with developers to ensure they are cognisant of drainage requirements at an early stage of site master planning	Drainage will be considered at an earlier stage of the development process, helping to ensure a more optimal drainage strategy for development sites		Engage with developers at early stage to promote best practice sustainable drainage systems.
Strategic objective 4: Increase public awareness of flooding and encourage communities to take action			
Work in partnership with communities to build awareness of local flood risks	Communities will be better informed of their vulnerability to flooding	Community engagement	Build flood risk awareness through events, comms, and flood warden scheme. Support and provide input to local resilience forum and community plans
Work with communities to develop an understanding of how they can adapt to change and better protect their properties	Communities will know what action they can take to reduce their vulnerability to flooding		
Work with communities to be actively involved in local flood risk management, e.g., through the role of flood wardens	Communities will play an active role in local flood risk management.		

Breakdown of objectives	Outcome	CBC workstream	Planned activities
Strategic objective 5: Ensure close partnership working and co-ordination with other risk management authorities and the public			
Ensure that all risk management authorities' roles and responsibilities are clarified and that there is ongoing partnership working to realise these roles and responsibilities and to maximise joint working and funding opportunities	Risk management activities will be well co-ordinated, with all partners having clarity about their responsibility, whilst ensuring close working relationships between risk management authorities	All	Continued collaboration with RMAs, build relationships and share information.
Establish and develop mechanisms to facilitate effective sharing of information between risk management authorities	Relevant information will be shared between risk management authorities to assist in local flood risk management, wherever possible		
Improve co-ordination and partnership working with local communities, through parish/town councils and local flood action groups	Local communities will be more involved in flood risk management, making best use of local knowledge and expertise	Community engagement	Build relationships with local communities. Share and enable knowledge and expertise.
Strategic objective 6: Support response to, and recovery from, flooding incidents			
Encourage the formation of local flood action groups and volunteer community flood warden schemes to assist in planning local responses to flooding	Local communities will be better prepared for flooding, which will enable a quicker response should a flooding incident occur	Community engagement	Continue to grow flood warden scheme and support local flood action groups where established.
Encourage local communities to sign up to flood warnings where available	Local communities will have advance warning of likely flooding, which will help them to respond and recover more quickly		Build flood risk awareness through events, comms, and flood warden scheme.
Support communities and individuals in the event of floods and recovery thereafter	Local communities will recover more quickly in the event of a flooding incident	Emergency response	Support communities and local resilience forum in event recovery

Appendix B: River Severn FRMP Cheltenham flood risk area measures

Measure	Responsible authority	Description	CBC status / planned activity
Engage with heritage stakeholders and partners to identify opportunities to increase the flood resilience of heritage assets in Cheltenham	Gloucestershire County Council	By 2024, Gloucestershire County Council and Cheltenham Borough Council and the Environment Agency will engage with heritage stakeholders and partners to identify opportunities to increase the flood resilience of heritage assets in Cheltenham to inform works that stakeholders can carry out themselves and/or any future bids for public funding in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Work collaboratively with GCC
Expand the flood warning service to areas at risk which are not currently covered, and encourage sign up in Cheltenham	Environment Agency	Between 2021 and 2027, the Environment Agency will expand the flood warning service to areas at risk which are not currently covered and encourage sign up in Cheltenham to reduce the impact of flooding in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Community engagement when EA expand service
Investigate and if viable progress a flood risk management scheme in Charlton Kings	Environment Agency	Between 2021 and 2027, the Environment Agency will investigate and if viable progress a flood risk management scheme in Charlton Kings to reduce flood risk in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Work collaboratively with EA
Investigate and, if viable, carry out works at Sandy Lane in Cheltenham	Cheltenham Borough Council	By 2027, Cheltenham Borough Council will investigate and, if viable, carry out works at Sandy Lane in Cheltenham to reduce flood risk in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Southfield Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme delivered and operational
Investigate flood risk, and if viable, carry out works in Pilley in Cheltenham	Cheltenham Borough Council	By 2027, Cheltenham Borough Council will investigate flood risk, and if viable, carry out works in Pilley in Cheltenham to reduce flood risk in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Feasibility study showed flood alleviation scheme unlikely to be cost-effective. Property level flood resilience and/or alternative interventions (natural flood management in upper catchment and/or urban SUDS retrofit) to be explored.
Investigate the feasibility, and if viable progress implementation, of surface water attenuation on Upper Hearne Brook in Cheltenham	Cheltenham Borough Council	By 2027, Cheltenham Borough Council will investigate the feasibility, and if viable progress implementation, of surface water attenuation on Upper Hearne Brook in Cheltenham to reduce flood risk in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Alleviation scheme proposed but no longer considered feasible due to potential adverse impacts. Feasibility of alternative natural flood management measures being investigated.

Measure	Responsible authority	Description	CBC status / planned activity
Maintain schemes delivered as an outcome of the Surface Water Management Plan (including the Priors and Oakley FAS) in Cheltenham	Gloucestershire County Council	By 2027, Gloucestershire County Council will maintain schemes delivered as an outcome of the Surface Water Management Plan (including the Priors and Oakley FAS) in Cheltenham to reduce the risk of flooding in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Ongoing maintenance of existing alleviation schemes
Understand the potential impact of climate change and develop adaptive pathways for flood risk management in Cheltenham	Gloucestershire County Council	By 2027, Gloucestershire County Council will understand the potential impact of climate change and develop adaptive pathways for flood risk management in Cheltenham to improve flood resilience in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Work collaboratively with GCC
Work closely with communities and partners to identify and deliver preferred option(s) for a capital scheme in Pittville	Gloucestershire County Council	By 2025, Gloucestershire County Council will work closely with communities and partners to identify and deliver preferred option(s) for a capital scheme in Pittville to reduce the risk of flooding in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Scheme in progress
Work with key service and infrastructure providers to raise awareness of flood risk to their assets and to encourage them to develop plans in Cheltenham	Gloucestershire County Council	Between 2021 and 2027, Gloucestershire County Council and Cheltenham Borough Council and the Environment Agency will work with key service and infrastructure providers to raise awareness of flood risk to their assets and to encourage them to develop plans in Cheltenham to increase preparedness and manage flood risk in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area.	Work collaboratively with GCC
Work with partners to engage with communities, increase preparedness and plan to address flooding issues in Cheltenham, including in the rapid response catchment of Charlton Kings	Gloucestershire County Council	Between 2021 and 2027, Gloucestershire County Council and Cheltenham Borough Council and the Environment Agency will work with partners to engage with communities, increase preparedness and plan to address flooding issues in Cheltenham, including in the rapid response catchment of Charlton Kings, to reduce current and future surface water and fluvial flood risk in the Cheltenham, Severn Flood Risk Area	Continuous improvement to flood plans and community engagement including through the flood warden scheme

Information/Discussion Paper

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25th March, 2024

Climate Emergency Overview

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed.

1) Why has this come to scrutiny?

On 4th September, the Climate Emergency team presented its work to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to provide an oversight of work undertaken since the previous presentation to O&S in 2022. The current review has been scheduled to brief the Committee on the progress made and actions taken in response to the LGA recommendations.

2) Summary of the Issue

In July 2023, LGA Peer Report recommended that the Climate Action Plan be revised to include performance measures and milestones, alongside suggesting a broader implementation of targets.

The prior report submitted to Overview and Scrutiny in September 2023 underlined the:

- i) need for far greater understanding around the inherent challenges involved reaching net zero internally and borough-wide;
- ii) criticality of the full council engaging in actions to deliver against the climate agenda;
- iii) need to deliver a cultural shift to ensure all decisions take climate implications seriously into consideration;
- iv) scale and significance of the shift required in partnership from those living and working in Cheltenham, as well as businesses.

To this we need to add highlight the independencies with Gloucestershire wide policies and Central Government legislation.

3) Summary of evidence/information

Since previously presenting its work to the Overview and Scrutiny Community on 4th September 2023, the authority has continued to make strides towards the Council's net zero ambitions. Together with a review of the resources required for the team has also undertaken a review of the Climate Emergency Action Plan. This has been done to focus on key actions that will enable deliver against internal net zero targets, with more concerted action focused on the key areas of emissions boroughwide, to inform specific targets/milestones for 2024/5, alongside a review of the roadmap beyond this.

These are summarised in the attached appendix document:

- i) the update of performance against the existing goals outlined in the Climate Emergency Action Plan to date, at the end of the 1st phase of the Action Plan at the end of 2023 that it is envisaged should be shared more widely.
- ii) A review of key goals looking forwards to deliver against the 2030 target;

- iii) an updated suite of targets for the Climate Emergency Action Plan, including actions for 2024/5 that can be incorporated into departmental and individual goals.

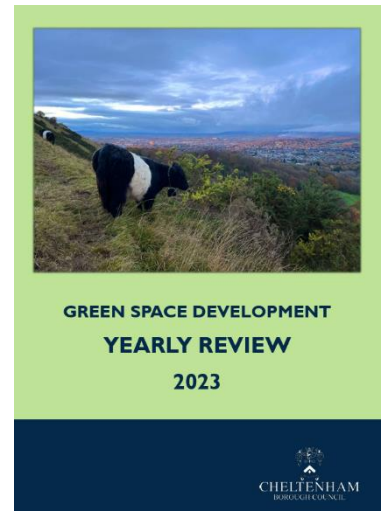
Beyond this review, there have been the following areas of progress during the last 6 months:

- i) **CBC Carbon Footprint:** In December, the CBC Carbon Footprint was produced. To build understanding around progress and challenges, the carbon footprint has been shared with Councillors and internally within leadership, during whole staff calls and at the staff wide climate forum, which meets monthly.
- ii) **Major Asset Decarbonisation Plans:** The solar appraisal in respect of our major operational properties, completed in 2023 is being incorporated into a costed emission reduction plan being formulated for the Council's key assets; Cheltenham Leisure Centre, Prince of Wales Stadium, Municipal Offices, Pittville Pump Room and Swindon Road.
- iii) **Heat Networks:** Following on from the Heat Network Zones Pilot CBC took part in to inform forward looking policy enshrined within the Energy Bill, work has now commenced on a detailed feasibility study, to explore the potential to develop heat networks at the Golden Valley Development site and in the Town Centre. Heat networks generally avoid the need for individual boilers or electric heaters in every building and are able to use local sources of low carbon heat which would otherwise go to waste. This technology is not entirely new and has been successfully deployed in Europe and in the UK. It is envisaged that these networks could save up to 20,000 tonnes CO2 boroughwide.
- iv) **Cheltenham Borough Homes:** Retrofit is challenging, requiring long-term planning. Cheltenham Borough Homes has produced a costed carbon reduction action plan; a programme of planned investment to deliver and exceed governmental efficiency targets by 2030. During 2023, £800k Wave 1 funding delivered fabric improvements to 34 homes and fabric improvements together with installation of ground source heat pumps (GSHP) for space heating at a 25 unit sheltered scheme. Wave 2.1 will deliver £2.2m grant funding over 2 years between 2023/24 towards the fabric improvement of 175 homes with a further 12 homes identified to receive ASHPs. Delivering Net Zero retrofit across the 4,500 houses will cost approximately 4 times the available funding, so retrofit will be accelerated as funding becomes available.
- v) **CBC & Ubico Vehicle Emission Reduction:** Use of HVO alongside a small number of electric vehicles has reduced emissions by 278 tonnes of CO2 over the year.
- vi) **Cheltenham Zero initiative:** delivered in tandem the local Vision 21 charity, membership has exceeded 164 local businesses and community groups committed to working together to help propel the town towards zero emissions by 2030. Moving into the delivery phase, 64 businesses now have an active carbon reduction plan on the Zellar platform. Alongside Zellar, practical mentoring support is being provided both via consultants and through the Growth Hub.
- vii) **Business & Community Grants:** Industrial, Commercial and Public Sector Emissions Currently make up 34% of the borough wide emissions tracked within government's greenhouse gas index. The current focus is on delivering £100,000 of grant funding alongside practical support and tools to help SMEs and community groups across the borough to reduce their emissions via the Cheltenham Zero initiative and a six-month programme of face to face and

social media engagement and publicity around the programme.

<https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/chelt-zero-business-fund> We are using this programme of support to inform our strategy to deliver improve energy efficiency and drive down carbon emissions to meet our 2030 target.

- viii) **Climate Impact Assessment Tool (CIAT):** Developed in conjunction with West Oxfordshire District Council and applied within our decision-making process to help ensure that new projects and policies are aligned with the Council's commitment to climate action. The tool, already been shared with 22 Councils, has been widely acclaimed. It been successfully used to improve sustainability of the Ice Rink, where emissions were reduced by 98.7%. The tool is currently being reviewed to:
- Evaluate its impact
 - Identify how it can be better used across the Council
 - deliver a suite of improvements
- ix) Alongside active social media profile, Green Spaces Team have produced and published an excellent yearly review to communicate their activities.
- x) **Increasing Treecover:** 1000 trees have been planted during 2023 and support has been secured from GCC to plant a further 600 looking forwards. These were a mix of native and non-native species, large and small, short- and long-lived, with both insect and wind pollinated species and include the restoration of Weavers Field Orchard. Increasing the diversity of tree species grown in Cheltenham is a key adaptation strategy for building resilience to climate change-related threats.
- xi) **Managing Council Owned Land to Increase Biodiversity:** CBC is recruiting an ecologist to support the development of the Council's approach to BNG, alongside its inclusion within the Strategic Local Plan and work being undertaken to develop habitat banks to support this activity.
- xii) **Central Cycle Hub:** UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) is being used to develop a central cycle hub to securely store their bikes which should be completed during 2024.
- xiii) **Climate Changemakers:** An 8 month project with Planet Cheltenham and GCC supported 11 Cheltenham residents over 8 months to put their sustainability ideas into action to make their part of Cheltenham better for both people and planet.
- xiv) **Climate SPD and Development of the Strategic Local Plan.** The effectiveness of the Climate SPD is currently being reviewed, to inform both the development of policies required within the forthcoming Strategic Local Plan and any training or development needs that arise from this.



4) Next Steps

Internal Emission Reduction: In order to make major inroads into emission reduction, there is a need:

- i) For a costed plan to drive energy efficiency and decarbonisation for each major asset to be integrated into an overarching long term proactive maintenance plan for existing assets, (including consideration of how CBH plan can be integrated with CBC's footprint and trajectory).
- ii) To consider the need for a long term 10-15 year capital plan to enable the requisite planning to replace major assets reaching end of life, or that are unable to accommodate the infrastructure necessary to support net zero technologies.
- iii) To implement the strategy and plan to deliver net zero for scope 3 supply chain emissions.

Borough Wide Emission Reduction:

- i) Transport: working in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council via Climate Leadership Group to deliver the identified strategy.
- ii) Domestic Heat Emissions: The need to leverage the pilot project to develop a coherent strategy, recognising the large proportion of historic buildings across Cheltenham alongside the absence of established community energy groups.
- iii) Business, Industry and Community Groups: Roll out of the segmented strategy to address emissions from business, industry and community groups across the borough. This is being considered at the moment via a restructure of the Cheltenham Zero initiative.

Adaptation:

Work required locally to undertake a Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment, alongside the work being undertaken at County level, to inform the Risk Framework and strategic local plan priorities.

Background Documents
Contact Officer
Accountability

[Climate Emergency Action Plan: Pathway to Net Zero](#)

Maizy McCann, Climate Officer.

Cllr Alisha Lewis, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency

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DRAFT



CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL'S

Climate Emergency Action Plan

Pathway to Net Zero

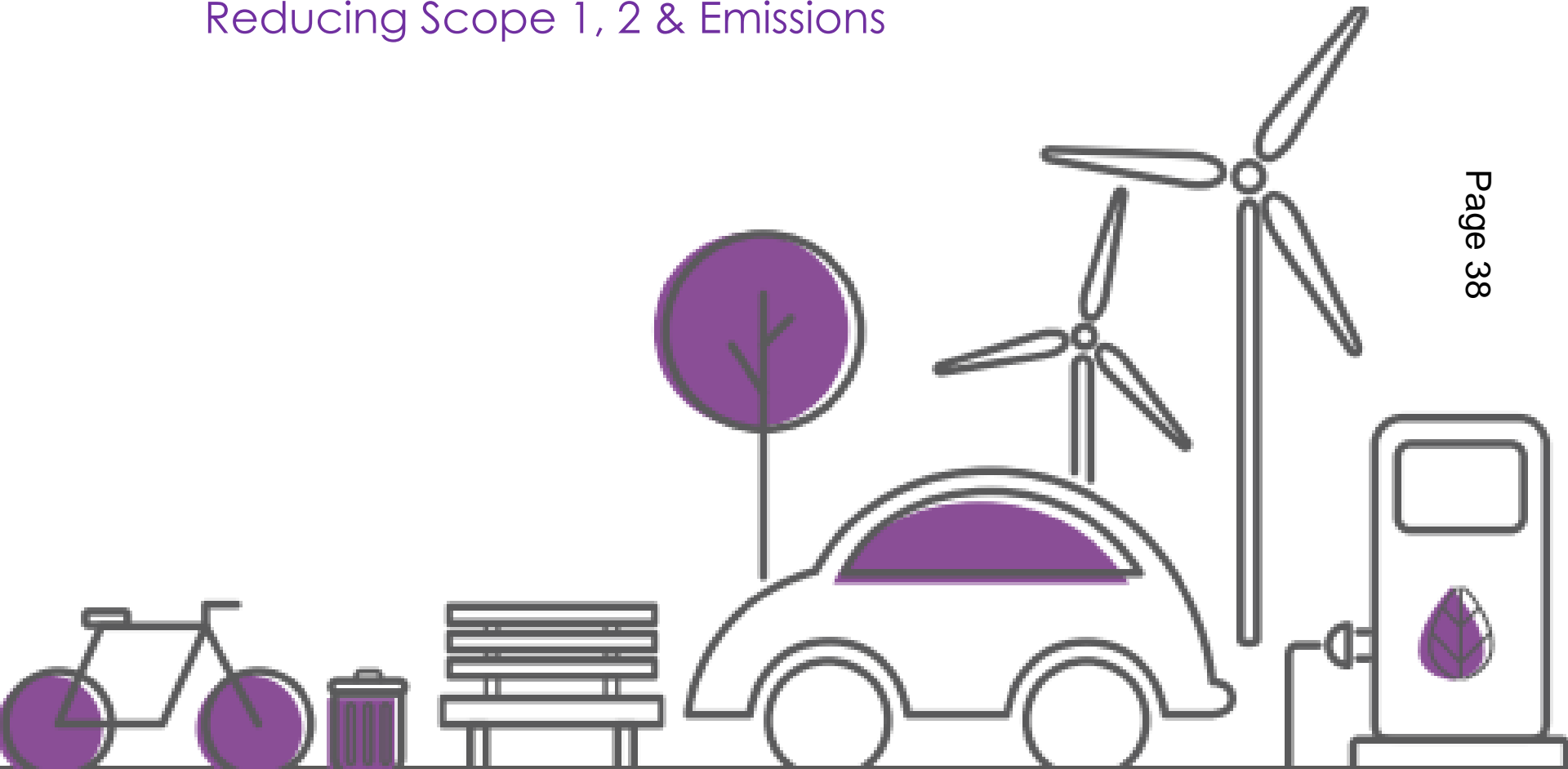
Our 2030 action framework to become a net zero
Council and Borough

Page 37



LEADING THE WAY ACROSS OUR OWN OPERATIONS

Reducing Scope 1, 2 & Emissions



CARBON EMISSION REDUCTION PLAN

Our last report published in December, demonstrates that, against our established baseline, we currently remain on track for 2030 target. However, as we increase our precision, we find new areas to include, so the emissions we count have increased overall.

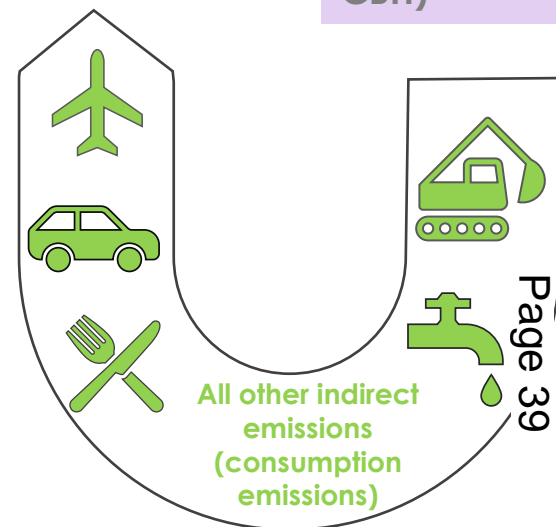
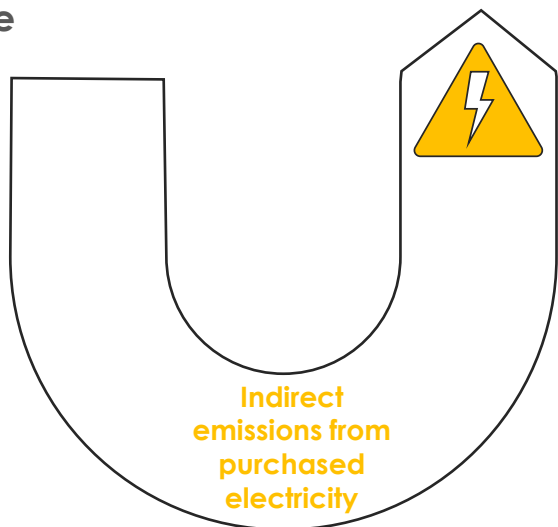
Emissions Measured as CO₂e - equivalent to tonnes of carbon dioxide

Scope 2 Emissions
781.8

Scope 1 Emissions
1400.3

Scope 3 Emissions
7772.1

Total Emissions
9954.2 (excl CBH)



Metered Electricity use for Council, Ubico, Cheltenham Trust Sites & other properties

Gas usage in the Council, Ubico, Cheltenham Trust Sites & other vehicle gas/fuel use

Emissions from purchased goods, commuting/ business travel, water usage, transmission & distribution of electricity. (CBH are currently counted separately.)

Little Changed

Reduced by 40%

Down 10%

Emission reduction becomes harder to deliver over time, so a costed plan to 2030 and beyond, aligned to proactive maintenance and capital plans is essential.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Overview

CBC strongly believes that in order to ask others to make the necessary changes to their organisations and lives, we must be seen to be leading on making these changes ourselves. By seeking to set ever higher standards, we can offer advice and share best practice to make it easier for others to follow, signposting to other leaders along the way.

Proposed Actions

2020-2023

Report our carbon footprint annually and encourage others to follow suit. Endeavour to be more thorough and precise over time and include more of our impact year on year. (Internal)

Commit to lobbying higher levels of government for stronger climate action and greater support to local authorities to help facilitate them making a difference. (Internal)

Introduce compulsory 'Carbon Literacy Training' to the Council and partners and commit to 100% of the Council's officers, staff and elected members gaining a Carbon Literacy certification. (Internal)

Develop case studies to share our experience in implementing climate initiatives, learnings and success stories, to help others learn from our actions, replicate, or ideally, do better. (Internal)

2024-2026

Leverage our position as 'The Festival Town' to drive change through the development of a more sustainable and carbon friendly events strategy. (External)

Delivery Update & Future Areas of Focus

Carbon Footprint & Emission Reduction Pathway

Scope & accuracy continue to improve which has tended to increase the emissions that we count. However, the 2022/23 report demonstrates a continued progress towards our internal targets for scope 1,2 & 3 emissions against an agreed baseline.

Looking Ahead: Maintaining the current trajectory will become increasingly challenging over time. A costed plan with deliverables and milestones to address internal emissions is essential to drive delivery. Plans are being developed for each of the Council's key buildings as a essential first step during 2024.

Training

In 2022, Carbon Literacy training was introduced across CBC including Councillors with good attendance. CBC Directors attended a Senior Leaders training event and Learning & Development have delivered a range of training sessions to a cross section of officers.

Looking Ahead: Working with Learning & Development, it is proposed that climate change is included at induction and targeted training interventions/modules are provided to officers and elected members when gaps are identified.

Best Practice Case Studies

Using our own impact assessment to prioritise and focus on sustainability, the CO2e emissions associated with the Ice Rink event were reduced by 98.7%.

Looking Ahead: The Cheltenham Events Strategy is being developed to deliver improved sustainability of festivals and events held across the Borough.





Climate Impact Assessment Tool

In 2022 Cheltenham developed and deployed a Climate Impact Assessment to be used within internal decision-making processes to ensure new projects and policies are aligned with the Council's commitment to climate action. The tool is designed to enable officers and decision-makers to easily evaluate the environmental and social impacts of projects and policies from the very start of decision-making and project development processes¹. To date this has been shared with 22 other Councils.

Developed from this, Donut Assessment Tool for Events (DATE) was launched in March 2023. It provides local authorities with a free-to-use, simple tool kit to assess an event's community, accessibility and environmental sustainability impact. The DATE model has become a best practice benchmark that sits at the heart of a 12-month pilot with ten local authorities including Cheltenham Festivals, alongside Manchester, Bristol and Reading, to test how the Green Events Code of Practice (GECOP) can be used to embed sustainability within local authority processes.

1. <https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/cheltenham-borough-council-climate-impact-assessment-tool>

DECISION MAKING, POLICIES, PLANS & STRATEGIES

Overview

We know there is a need for the climate agenda to be a strong policy thread across the council. Without climate being a focus for all our officers and members, woven through each of our departments, we will fail to embed a Net Zero culture. Thus, we will ensure all our decisions help to meet national and local net zero carbon targets, improve air quality and protect and restore nature.

Proposed Actions

2020-2023

Identify both a councillor at cabinet level and a lead officer as Climate Champions, who are required to publish an annual public report on progress against meeting the targets set out in the CEAP. (Internal)

Issue a new climate-focused Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to set a new 'Cheltenham Standard' for developers and aid our planners in their decision making. The SPD may include the necessity to develop using Natural Flood Management (NFM) techniques, the requirement to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain, installing sustainable energy solutions, driving adoption of the 'Building with Nature' benchmark and the use of Passivhaus standards. (External)

Introduce a tool to ensure that climate implications are adequately considered at the early stages of each project, initiative or decision. This tool should be used to develop initiatives that the lowest possible impact on the environment whilst still meeting the needs of the Council. (Internal)

2024-2026

Annually review the existing and additional workforce needed to deliver the actions set out in this pathway and swiftly prioritise the decisions and investment needed to recruit the necessary capacity and expertise. (Internal)

Align our council statutory and non-statutory plans, policies and guidance with our climate, nature and green economy goals, including corporate areas such as procurement and infrastructure development (Internal)

Delivery Update & Future Areas of Focus

Leadership & Accountability

A Councillor at cabinet level been in place since 2020, with a lead officer in place since 2021.

Looking Ahead: The organisation structure and expertise required to deliver against the emission reduction targets is currently being reviewed. Specific climate objectives will be set across service delivery teams to support delivery.

Climate SPD

The Climate SPD was implemented in 2022 and has delivered early results. Because of the SPD, an additional 265 houses will be built using low carbon heat technologies, rather than gas boilers.

Looking Ahead: We are reviewing the effectiveness of the Climate SPD to date, to improve effectiveness and support development of effective Net Zero planning policies within the Strategic Local Plan. We are increasingly monitoring Council's own regeneration investment through this lens.

Climate Impact Assessment

The Climate Tool is routinely used to inform major decisions in the Council. It has been used as best practice case study by the Local Government Association.

Looking Ahead: The Climate Impact Assessment is being reviewed to maximise effectiveness and inform further development of the tool.



FINANCE, FUNDING & PROCUREMENT

Overview

Both public and private investment is crucial to the success of reaching our targets for 2030. Our purchasing decisions across the borough can have a significant benefit, both in reducing our own scope 3 supply chain emissions, alongside reducing borough wide emissions.

Proposed Actions

2020-2023

Develop a Climate Investment Strategy known as 'Cheltenham's Green Deal' that approves and enables money to be raised for investment in green projects, using various means such as grants, bonds, or Community Municipal Investments (CMIs) to speed up carbon emission reductions and increase resilience to climate change and to support the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). (Internal & External)

Introduce an annual 'Climate Community Fund' that helps to finance smaller scale, community climate initiatives and projects, which can be used as best practice exemplars to encourage the take up of similar schemes. (External)

Ensure all future investment decisions take into account our climate emergency objectives. As the Council recovers from the impact from the pandemic, we will look at the earliest opportunity to review our modest investment portfolio, as part of our commitment of divestment from funds which support the burning or extraction of fossil fuels. (Internal)

2024-2026

Encourage suppliers to measure and report on their Scope 1 and 2 emissions, to help improve the level of detail of our Scope 3 emissions reporting, focusing first on the highest expenditure areas of repair and construction. (External)

Review our Procurement Policy to ensure all purchases properly consider climate-related impacts and add greater weight to purchasing from sustainable local businesses and those which add social value. (Internal)

Look to invest in low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure that reap multiple environmental benefits wherever possible. This may range from small Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and rain gardens, to solar farms and green roofs. (External)

2027-2030

Work with other authorities and organisations in Gloucestershire to rapidly grow the green economy, by investing in economic activities that promote reduced carbon emissions and pollution, enhanced energy efficiency and prevention of the loss of biodiversity. (External)

Use legal and planning mechanisms, such as Section 106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and others to help fund climate actions and nature restoration projects. (External)

While acknowledging that the County Council is the lead transport authority, explore opportunities to introduce economic nudge mechanisms to help disincentivise car use, particularly for shorter journeys. Further encourage the County Council to use such mechanisms to enable and encourage sustainable transport, particularly measures that allow people to use active and collective forms of transport to travel to work, such as segregated cycle ways and public transport. (External).

FINANCE, FUNDING & PROCUREMENT

Delivery Update & Future Areas of Focus

Cheltenham's Green Deal

We published our Climate Change Investment Strategy, known as Cheltenham's Green Deal, in the summer of 2022. The Green Deal enables the Council to invest up to £10m climate related projects providing they meet certain investment criteria. Officers have used the Strategy to deliver £170k investment to drive emission reduction. The Green Deal ensures the Council is well placed to take forward the decarbonisation opportunities that are identified and provides a vital tool in supporting the wider objective for a clean and green borough.

Looking Ahead: Plans are being developed for each of the Council's key buildings as an essential first step during Q1 2024 and these will likely use the Green Deal to deliver emission reduction.

Climate Community Fund

The Climate Community Fund has made £100,000 available to support decarbonisation across the borough over 2 financial years.

Looking Ahead: During 2024 we will continue to make funds available to support Community decarbonisation projects.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Projects

Funding has been provided for climate related projects through the community CIL board, including new planting in Pittville,

an air quality project in Benhall and some honey on the Honeybourne Line.

Procurement & Scope 3 Emissions

We have worked with colleagues in Finance and Procurement to analyse our expenditure to address scope 3 emissions and inform a proposed procurement strategy for the future.

Looking ahead: During 2024 we will analyse our top 10 areas of expenditure and seek to work with our key suppliers of infrastructure, goods and services to identify opportunities to reduce the emissions associated with our expenditure to inform our approach to inform our strategy.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Rain Gardens

Our Climate SPD requires developers to include these as part of their plans, to balance rainfall. Alongside providing flood risk management, they have amenity and biodiversity value.

Looking ahead: We will monitor planning applications to ensure that these sustainable flood management measures are being implemented.

Working with Gloucestershire County Council Climate Co-ordinators

Working closely with our fellow districts across Gloucestershire will key to enabling us to reach shared carbon reduction targets. To enable a shared programme of work to be delivered, an ongoing financial contribution has been made by CBC to support provision of the County-wide Climate Change Coordinators.

Looking ahead: CBC is supporting the workgroups and plans that have been developed alongside all of the Councils across Gloucestershire. During 2024, we will build on these plans to deliver our own borough wide emission goals.



BUILDING & ENERGY

Overview

Heating for homes and workspaces currently makes up almost a third of all UK carbon emissions and 42% of borough wide emissions, according to the UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory. Improvements drastically need to be made on improving the energy efficiency of housing and non-domestic properties, ensuring they require less energy to heat, making them cheaper to run and more comfortable to live and work in, whilst reducing our dependence on imported energy. This needs to apply to both new and existing housing stock. We aim to tackle fuel poverty and thereby improve the health and wellbeing of residents, particularly during the winter months.

Proposed Actions

2020-2023

Measure the energy usage of CBC owned properties and develop a heating and energy efficiency strategy to set out actions needed to actively reduce energy consumption and move away from the use of fossil fuels. Introduce behaviour change programmes to reduce energy consumption in council owned buildings. Support businesses and residents to similarly reduce their consumption. (Internal)

Retrofit council-owned social housing, focusing first on the homes most at risk of fuel poverty. (Internal in future)

Develop a new 'Sustainability Design Code' for the Golden Valley Development, as a vision for integrated living in West Cheltenham that promotes a low carbon lifestyle. Our aspiration is for this thinking to then be replicated across the town, or within other districts and regions. (External)

Explore the viability of a shared low-carbon heat network, to help reduce borough-wide emissions. (External)

2024-2026

Retrofit council-owned properties with sustainable, energy-efficient solutions where feasible. (Internal)

Help owner-occupiers to create more energy efficient homes. For example, by supporting energy companies to provide fuel-poor or vulnerable households with insulation, or by helping influence the retrofit market to ensure there is effective demand for energy efficient measures by those that are classified as "able to pay". This may include supporting the provision of skills-training for local workers, actively encouraging applications for new installations, and facilitating the applications of funding bids from home owners. (External)

Seek to invest in renewable energy generation by identifying suitable areas in the future Planning Policy documents, such as the Cheltenham Plan and Joint Core Strategy. Review the feasibility of alternative energy sources, new technologies and innovations and the potential to be a net contributor. (External)

Commit to using 100% renewable electricity across council owned assets, including those operated by key partners. (Internal)
Support businesses and residents to do the same. Encourage developers to commit to renewable energy by stipulating requirements in a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). (External)

2027-2030

Engage with landlords to improve energy efficiency of homes in the private rented sector and commercial properties and encourage them to achieve good insulation. (External)

Look for potential to align Conservation Area policies with climate emergency goals. (External)

BUILDING & ENERGY

Delivery Update & Future Areas of Focus

Energy Strategy & Emission Reduction Internally We have spent £130k across our own key buildings alongside wider programme of measures to improve efficient energy use.

Looking ahead: During 2024, we are putting together a costed emission reduction plan for key buildings and assets across CBC

Social Housing Retrofit

Retrofit is challenging, requiring long term planning. CBH already has a costed programme of planned investment to deliver and exceed governmental efficiency targets by 2030. During 2023, £800k Wave 1 funding delivered fabric improvements to 34 homes and fabric improvements together with installation of ground source heat pumps (GSHP) for space heating at a 25 unit sheltered scheme. Wave 2.1 will deliver £2.2m grant funding over 2 years between 2023/24 towards the fabric improvement of 175 homes with a further 12 homes identified to receive ASHPs.

Looking ahead: An outline decarbonisation plan has been drawn up but delivering Net Zero retrofit across the 4,500 houses will cost approximately 4 times the available funding, so retrofit will be accelerated as funding becomes available.

New Build Social Housing

CBC is working towards the delivery of Net Zero across its development portfolio, where technically and economically feasible.

Sustainability Design Code for Golden Valley

The Golden Valley SPD was also put in place to deliver high levels of sustainability.

Looking ahead: The development of the project against these stringent goals will continue to be reviewed alongside the regeneration team as the project is developed.

Supporting Retrofit for Homes Across Cheltenham

This year, CBC is planning a pilot project to deliver information and support around energy saving and retrofit in Cheltenham, empowering and enabling residents across 50 homes to act to future-proof their homes.

Looking ahead: This project will support development of the council's wider strategy around homes retrofit alongside the development of green skills.

Low Carbon Heat Network Development

CBC took part in governments heat networks zone pilot during 2023 to identify suitable locations for heating zones within Cheltenham, due for implementation in 2025.

Looking ahead: The Council is undertaking a detailed Heat Network feasibility study during 2024. Legislation is being put in place via Energy Act that will require connection to a network unless developers are able to demonstrate an alternative net zero option or exemptions apply.

Energy Generation:

The first of two studies has been produced for the Strategic Local Plan to identify suitable locations for renewable development.

The Council purchases 100% renewable energy across its key assets.

The Climate SPD provides a signal to developers to commit to renewable energy.

Looking ahead: To consider recruitment of an Energy Officer to support local area energy strategy and delivery.



TRANSPORT, TRAVEL & AIR QUALITY

Overview

A modal shift to more active transport can reduce emissions from privately owned vehicles. An estimated 70% of car journeys within Cheltenham are under 2km; many of these journeys could be made on foot or by bicycle. For those unable to make these journeys without a vehicle, public transport needs to become a more attractive option. Policies such as this will lead will help to improve Cheltenham's air quality with positive health impacts

Proposed Actions

2020-2023

Work with GCC to prioritise transport investment in cycling and walking, with a priority of installing segregated cycleways, increasing space for pedestrians and introducing a 20mph speed limit in urban areas. Seek to safeguard routes for a future mass transport system to enhance and improve the sustainability of Cheltenham's public transport offering. (External)

Introduce new 'safe cycle hubs' across the town, working with businesses to help facilitate these, as well as installing more cycle racks, wherever it is suitable and safe to do so. (External)

Enable a shift to electric vehicles by installing electric vehicle charging points within Council owned car parks and support GCC with the delivery of their Local Transport Plan (LTP). (External)

Deliver a policy that will require all taxis to be electric, or another form of zero carbon as technology evolves, and support the provision of required infrastructure. (External)

2024-2027

Transition the council's own fleet to electric vehicles. Explore interim measures such as the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel in place of traditional diesel in instances where electrification is not yet a viable option, particularly for the Council's heavy goods vehicles delivering environmental services across the borough. (Internal)

Reduce the use of private vehicles used for commuting by council officers through a reinvigorated green staff travel strategy, including progressive flexible and home-working options. (Internal)

Reduce car use through measures available to the Borough such as promoting car-sharing schemes, supporting the continuation of the county e-scooter trial, introducing staff incentive schemes such as 'Cycle to Work' and reducing or removing direct car parking benefits. (Internal & External)

Work with GCC to develop and implement a "last mile" strategy that encourages greener deliveries across the area by setting up an area-wide distribution centre. This will help remove large delivery vehicles from the central road network and facilitate the introduction of efficient cargo bikes to Cheltenham, whilst creating new jobs and economic growth. (External)

Review our existing car parking strategy. We will continue to explore ways to ensure alternative travel options to car use are viable and seen to be more favourable than driving. Town centre parking charges will need to reflect this policy choice. Repurposing some car parking spaces (i.e. by creating urban gardens or for car share schemes) will be necessary to demonstrate the council's ambition to remove priority for privately-owned vehicles and to amplify services and support for active travellers. (External)

2028-2030

Reduce the need to own and use a car by requiring that the location and design of new developments means they are demonstrably accessible by safe cycling, walking routes and good quality public transport and situated close to essential services.

TRANSPORT, TRAVEL & AIR QUALITY

Delivery Update & Future Areas of Focus

Safe Cycle Hubs

£100k funding has been secured to invest in creating a safe and secure cycle hub within the town centre during 2024.

Electric Car Charging

We are currently working through the implementation of phase 1 of the Council's own EV Charging plan to install approximately 40 chargers across 5 car parks during 2024.

Looking ahead: The aim would be to deliver over 200 chargers by 2029, within an incremental annual programme.

Taxi Policy

In April 2023, a policy was put in place implementing the ambition of the authority to operate a fully net zero carbon fleet by 2030 in stages, focusing on phasing out the most polluting vehicles as an essential first step.

Vehicle Decarbonisation Transition Plan

Starting with Ubico, the Council is working towards replacing all vehicles in its fleet under 3.5 tonnes with electric over time, subject to the charging infrastructure being available. The grounds maintenance team and the facilities cleaning team have been using 2 electric vehicles for over 18 months.

See the waste section for further detail on Ubico vehicle decarbonisation.

Sustainable Work and Travel Policies Internally

Alongside the Cycle to Work Scheme and Car Sharing Initiative, the Council has a fully flexible home working policy and provides bicycles that officers can use, where practical to carry out their roles.

Looking ahead: The number of electric bikes will be increased.

GCC and Countywide Action

Alongside continuation of the E-scooter trial to 2026, in January 2023 all seven Gloucestershire authorities signing a Statement of Shared Intent (SoSI) to work together to reduce Gloucestershire transport related carbon emissions. As the lead authority, GCC is co-ordinating efforts enable sustainable neighbourhoods, deliver a modal shift and reduce road related emissions.

Planning Policy and Enabling Sustainable Transport

The Climate SPD includes measures to ensure that new developments consider and enable active transport and provide s bike storage for residents.

Looking ahead: SLP provides an opportunity to support this approach more widely and has within its core objectives 'Prioritising sustainable transport and active travel.

Air Quality Action Plan

The link between air quality and health is clear. There is simply no safe level of pollution, so our aim is to go beyond legal targets where we can. Consequently, in 2023 CBC put in place a comprehensive Air Quality Action Plan to address this issue.

Looking ahead: CBC will strive to meet the actions outlined in its Action Plan by 2030, working closely with GCC in their role as lead Transport Authority.



NATURE & BIODIVERSITY

Overview

We are experiencing an ecological crisis, alongside climate change. Our wildlife, biodiversity and ecosystems are at risk if action is not taken. Planting more trees to provide shade, protecting and extending wild spaces for nature, increasing biodiversity, restoring our land to sequester carbon and building our resilience to flooding, will all contribute to mitigating climate change impacts. There are also health and wellbeing benefits derived from improving the quality of our natural spaces across the borough.

Proposed Actions

2020-2023

Update local planning strategies and work closely with other authorities, including GCC, to significantly increase tree cover across the borough and ensure existing trees are properly protected, in order to store carbon, support nature, aid flood protection and deliver health and wellbeing benefits. Increased canopy cover can also provide shade for people and buildings, cooling the air and ground temperatures in extreme heat. (External)

Manage council-owned land to increase biodiversity and reduce carbon pollution, i.e. through reduced pesticide use and mowing and increased planting of wildflowers and perennials. (Internal)

2024-2027

Focus on nature-based solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation. For example, work with a range of partners to develop opportunities for Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes across the borough to help mitigate flooding and adapt to climate change, using nature to hold and slow water run-off. (External)

Seek to actively restore and expand ecosystems in line with the Environment Act 2021, with a focus on enhancing biodiversity and natural carbon sinks. This could be through market based mechanisms that improve and safeguard our natural environment, for example the development of a habitat bank for biodiversity net gain credits. (Internal & External)

Work with the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership and their Natural Capital Mapping project to help identify nature and ecosystem restoration opportunities across Cheltenham, to reverse and restore habitats, support species and promote ecosystem quality and function. (External)

2028-2030

Encourage and influence the uptake of green roofs on roof-top with green roof potential to help support urban greening in the community. (External)

Identify demand for allotments with a view to increasing allotment utilisation and developing land for community spaces and provide opportunities for those that may not have access to their own garden. (External)



NATURE & BIODIVERSITY

Delivery Update & Future Areas of Focus

Increasing Treecover

1000 trees were planted during 2023 and support has been secured from GCC to plant a further 600 looking forwards. These were a mix of native and non-native species, large and small, short- and long-lived, with both insect and wind pollinated species. Increasing the diversity of tree species grown in Cheltenham is a key adaptation strategy for building resilience to climate change-related threats.

Looking ahead: we will evaluate the contribution our tree-planting makes to offsetting our carbon emissions in a robust and rigorous way.

Managing Council Owned Land to Increase Biodiversity

The Green spaces team provide a comprehensive annual summary to pick out the wide range of activities undertaken to improve biodiversity across the borough during 2023, this has included the implementation of no-mow May policy across a range of site, alongside perennials/ wildflower planting and work to reduce invasive Himalayan balsam.

A seedbank of local wildflower species has been collected from North-facing grassland on Leckhampton Hill, to support wider replanting schemes across the borough.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (GLNP)

The Council worked with GLNP on their natural capital mapping project and are developing CBC's approach to BNG.

Looking ahead: CBC is recruiting an ecologist to support the development of the Council's approach to BNG, alongside its inclusion within the Strategic Local Plan and work being undertaken to develop habitat banks

Natural Flood Management (NFM)

Cheltenham Borough Council are working collaboratively with the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to implement Natural Flood Management at Naunton Park (Swale completed and now operational). The GWT are also undertaking a scheme at Warden Hill (roof and roadside raingardens in design phase). These devices will slow the flow of surface water runoff and alleviate overloading of drainage networks and rivers downstream. The devices also improve water quality by allowing contaminants to breakdown naturally before they enter watercourses and improve biodiversity.

Looking ahead: Cheltenham Borough Council are also working with Gloucestershire County Council on their scheme to install roadside raingardens in Oakley and are part of the new Gloucestershire NFM delivery group, which is envisaged will enable more opportunity to deliver rural NFM schemes upstream of the urban area.

Allotments & Community Green Spaces

Existing allotments are being actively managed to ensure that these are being utilised. Additional sites have been identified in new developments such as Elms Park and in the West of Cheltenham.

Looking ahead: The team will actively identify new sites and ensure that greenspace commitments are honoured through the planning processes.

Urban Greening

The EU funding secured in 2019 was spent on a range of urban greening projects. The green space team have built on these projects across the borough to improve the quality of urban spaces.

Looking ahead: The development of SLP policies will provide further opportunity to encourage urban greening.



Weavers Field Orchard

With the help of the Gloucestershire Orchard Trust and the local community, work has commenced on the restoration of an old orchard at Weavers Field in Warden Hill. The site which has largely naturalised over many years, has been brought back to life and supplemented with new trees, becoming a focal point for community activity and a hot spot for local biodiversity. Fruit trees are particularly good habitats for wildlife because they are “early senescent”. This means they get old relatively quickly and develop veteran features such as hollow trunks, rot holes, dead wood and sap runs. These features are important for over 400 species of saproxylic invertebrates that live on decaying wood.

Water & Waste

Overview

Water is often a forgotten limited resource in the UK, with easy access via our taps for a seemingly endless supply as and when we need it. However, climate change affects water management in multiple ways, including changes to seasonal and annual patterns of floods and droughts which can affect water quality and availability. This can have related impacts on our health, economic activities and on freshwater dependent ecosystems. Discarded plastic and other pollutants, along with an over-use of herbicides and pesticides, are also damaging the environment and reducing biodiversity across land and sea. The Environment Act 2021 is driving new business behaviour for waste and recycling. CBC will continue to work with the business community and residents to move towards a circular economy and improved resource efficiency.

Proposed Actions

2020-2023

Continue to work with communities and businesses to promote food waste reduction, local food sourcing, sharing of unwanted good to eat food within the community. Continue to promote home composting and sustainable food waste. (External)

Promote community sharing and reuse to reduce waste and unnecessary consumption, including water. (External)

Develop an incentive strategy for all staff, including our partners, to help drive down energy consumption and waste across our buildings. (Internal)

Reduce the use of single-use plastic in council offices and premises and work with local businesses to help influence reduction in their plastic use and waste. (Internal)

Encourage businesses and other organisations within the borough to seek waste and recycling solutions which send zero waste to landfill. (External)

2024-2027

Following the new requirements set out within the Environment Act 2021, ensure adequate recycling and food waste facilities are provided across all Council-owned and operated buildings and community centres. Support small businesses to recycle, as well as seeking to expand the 'on the go' recycling bin provision across our public realm. (External)

Reduce water consumption at CBC owned sites. (Internal)

Leverage the new climate-focused Supplementary Planning Document to encourage the provision of better waste and recycling facilities in developments. Continue to look to the future for innovative ways of dealing with our waste collections such as underground bins to maximise land use and provide more opportunities for biodiversity. (External)

2028-2030

Adopt circular-economy waste policies in relevant plans and contracts. (Internal)

Work with Gloucestershire County Council and other partners to increase the uptake of water butts and grey water recycling in new and existing homes and non-domestic properties as well as continue to promote sustainable food waste disposal across the county as part of Gloucestershire County Council's contract arrangement for anaerobic digestion. (External)

WASTE & WATER

Delivery Update & Future Areas of Focus

Food Waste

Home composting is promoted on CBC's website and the Council has continued to promote food waste reduction on vehicles, and across its communication with residents, alongside working with the BID and the Chamber of Commerce to encourage food waste reduction in businesses. The new material sales contract donates food items to food banks in Cheltenham linked to our recycling rate and continues to promote food banks. Food waste is disposed of sustainably via GCC contract with Andigestion locally.

Looking ahead: We are exploring the case to roll out communal food waste scheme to communal properties alongside Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH).

Community Reuse and sharing

Frengle is active in the area alongside Vision 21 Reclaim and Reuse initiatives.

Looking ahead: greater promotion of reuse planned for 24/25 in conjunction with CBH.

Enacting Environment Act Provisions For Recycling

Council offices, including CBH, have improved the range of recycling available and food waste will be home composted by a hot bin at the Swindon Road depot for the Council itself, CBH and Ubico staff by April 2024.

Looking ahead: The potential to expand on the go recycling with the replacement of existing town centre litter bins is being explored.

Leveraging Supplementary Planning Documents Around Waste

Both the Golden Valley SPD and the Climate SPD do cover waste and planning proposals are assessed against these benchmarks, though they don't provide the requisite level of detail.

Looking ahead: Potential for a separate Waste SPD is being explored.

Ubico Vehicle Decarbonisation and Swindon Road Infrastructure

Alternative fuels for the heavy goods vehicles have been put in place. As a transitional option, the majority of HGV's within Ubico have now been operating on HVO for over a year with significant emission benefits. A long-term fuel solution is required, as technology develops. Our 3.5T and under fleet is gradually being replaced by electric vehicles, where operationally and financially viable.

Looking ahead: A long term decarbonisation costed plan is needed both to support vehicle transition and essential enabling infrastructure within the depot for CBH and Ubico particularly. A new depot, operated by Ubico, to enable this infrastructure is likely a key enabler to this transition and GCC, CBC and TBC are currently working closely together to deliver this within available resources.



Collective Action

Overview

The council knows it cannot achieve the 2030 target alone. By working in partnership with organisations and residents across the borough, we can have greater power to bring about the necessary changes and action needed to achieve our collective global goal.

Proposed Actions

2020-2023

Drive the wider adoption of the CheltenhamZero Partnership across businesses, communities and residents, influencing behaviour change, collaboration and the sharing information and best practice.

Establish 'Climate Champions' among our communities, schools and businesses – building capacity for local people to be involved in helping meet our climate targets, inspiring communities and enterprises to find and implement solutions. Climate Champions will also be established within CBC and our key partner organisations to drive change from within.

Through mechanisms such as the CheltenhamZero Partnership, provide support to small and medium-sized enterprises, working closely with partners such as GFirst LEP, to access funds and expertise, so that they are able to contribute to carbon reduction and nature restoration plans.

Explore partnership opportunities for setting up 'zero carbon hubs' – decentralised futureproof centres promoting zero emission lifestyles, that help to educate, inform and advise on 'all things climate' for individuals and communities.

Regularly update the council's web content to ensure the most relevant and up to date information is available to the public.

Create or signpost to toolkits available for businesses, community groups, individuals and families, relating to topics such as energy, transport, waste reduction and children's climate education activities.

Work closely with the University of Gloucestershire to help support local climate-based research, which not only helps to identify opportunities for the Council and the Borough, but also develops the skills needed for our future workforce, enhancing student experience and employability.

Use influence with others, such as schools and other private businesses and organisations, to help ensure their buildings are zero carbon, purchasing is green and the environment they supports nature wherever possible.

2026-2028

Work with businesses to seek to introduce local incentive schemes that may help enable more sustainable lifestyles, such as walking and cycling, reduced waste and healthier eating.

COLLECTIVE ACTION

Delivery Update & Future Areas of Focus

Cheltenham Zero

The Cheltenham Zero initiative is our main vehicle for addressing borough wide business and community group emissions. It now has 164 members and over 60 active carbon reduction plans included on the zellar platform designed to support businesses in calculating emissions and putting in place plans to reduce these. Further practical energy efficiency and emission reduction support is available via the Growth Hub.

We have made £100k available to support emission reduction across community groups since 2021, supporting a range of projects to decarbonise.

Looking ahead: During 2024, we are focusing on delivering £100,000 of grant funding alongside practical support and tools to help business across the borough to reduce their emissions via the Cheltenham Zero initiative, working with Vision 21. We are using this programme of support to inform our strategy to deliver improve energy efficiency and drive down carbon emissions to meet our 2030 target.

Climate Champions

Working with Planet Cheltenham, our local zero carbon hub, we provided funding and support for the Climate Change Makers, bringing together 11 residents from across the town on a peer-led learning journey around Climate Change and local solutions with an aspiration to empower and enable people to act in their communities.

Looking ahead: We will work within our communities to support decarbonisation, particularly focused around driving down emissions associated with domestic heat and energy use to maximise the impact on borough wide emissions

Communication and Toolkits

Alongside the practical support we provide for businesses via Cheltenham Zero initiative, we have made toolkits available on our website for community groups, individuals and families and the actions they can take at a personal level to drive down energy bills, reduce waste, foster nature recovery and support emission reduction.

Wider Engagement & Education

Working with partners like Planet Cheltenham, we provide continue to outreach into schools and community groups to build understanding and insight around climate change and sustainability.

Looking ahead: As a festival town, we will use our events strategy to foster greater sustainability for the events in our borough.



LEADING THE WAY ACROSS OUR OWN OPERATIONS

Background 2024 Targets



Developing a Costed Plan To Address Emissions Across CBC Operations



Cheltenham Borough Council has set an ambitious 2030 net zero target. This requires development of a costed plan to reduce our Scope 1 and 2 emissions to almost nothing and to explore the viability of compensating for the remaining emissions through mechanisms such as carbon-offsetting.

Although we will address our Scope 3 emissions head on to reduce them, as far as possible, this may prove to be a longer process.

Scope 1 & 2 Emissions

- During first half of 2024 we will develop a costed plan for our most carbon intensive buildings, aligned to maintenance and capital plans, using the Green Deal amongst other funding strategies to support delivery of our plans.
- Over time, we will develop a costed, delivery plan and timeline to reduce emissions across all service areas, informed by our emission data, including a plan for our services from UBICO and Cheltenham Borough Homes.
- We will identify robust carbon-offsetting mechanisms to address residual emissions.

Scope 3 Emissions

To inform our procurement strategy to improve accuracy of our reporting and to address supply chain emissions, ensuring suppliers measure and report on their Scope 1 and 2 emissions, focusing first on the highest expenditure areas of expenditure.

- During 2024 we will analyse our top 10 areas of expenditure to inform our approach.
- We will encourage key developers to provide embodied carbon and lifetime carbon analysis to enable us to quantify Scope 3 emission impacts more accurately.
- We will continue to hone our Climate Impact Assessment to ensure we consider sustainability effectively within our decision-making across the Council.

Organisation Design & Governance to Deliver The Action Plan



Cheltenham Borough Council developed a Climate Team to meet its action plan and appointed a Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency.

The organisation structure and expertise required to deliver against the emission reduction targets will be regularly reviewed to ensure that the organisation has the skills and capabilities it requires and is structured to deliver against key targets.

However, success doesn't rest in the hands of the climate team, but across the organisation. To this end during 2024:

- 1. Organisation Design:** The Climate Team will be reviewed to ensure it has the skills and capabilities to deliver against key targets and is well placed within the organisation structure to enable it to deliver its action plan.
- 2. Climate Programme Board Review:** Leadership, membership and terms of reference will be reviewed to ensure key personnel are involved to deliver against identified goals and we put in place a funding plan to deliver against our targets.
- 3. Developing Climate Targets:** Specific climate objectives will be set across CBC's departments and teams to support delivery of the action plan.
- 4. Training & Development:** Working with the Learning & Development team, alongside our induction programme, key topics will identified around which training interventions are provided to officers and elected members.
- 5. Develop a Risk Framework:** this is required to cover risks against meeting our action plan alongside a more informed view of our own climate resilience and adaption risks.

REVISED ACTION PLAN TARGETS (Internal Emissions)

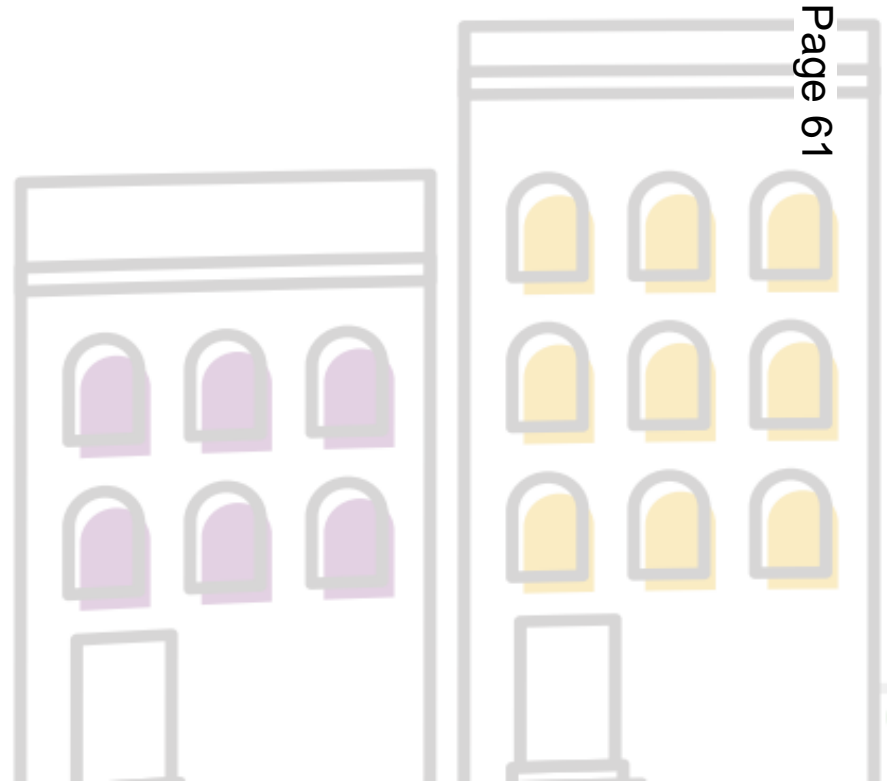


INTERNAL TARGETS - Scope 1 & 2 (Direct & Indirect Energy Emissions) & Scope 3 (Supply Chain Emissions)

Scope 1 & 2 Emissions (Direct & Indirect Energy & Fuel Emissions)		Scope 3 (Supply Chain Emissions)	
To devise costed plan for our most carbon intensive buildings, aligned to maintenance and capital plans, using the Green Deal amongst other funding strategies to support delivery of our plans.	Jun-24	Inform our procurement strategy to improve accuracy of our reporting and to address supply chain emissions and meet our 2030 target, alongside wider social value considerations, ensuring suppliers measure and report on their Scope 1 and 2 emissions, focusing first on the highest expenditure areas of expenditure.	2024 for scope 3 analysis. 2025 for roll out
To create a costed, delivery plan and timeline to reduce emissions across all service areas, informed by our emission data, including a plan for our services from UBICO and Cheltenham Borough Homes.	End 2024		
Our full asset portfolio	2025	To analyse our top 10 areas of expenditure and seek to work with our key suppliers of infrastructure, goods and services to identify opportunities to reduce the emissions associated with our expenditure to inform our strategic approach across various segments.	2024
Social Housing (retrofit)	Plan in place. Bring forward as funding is available.		
Development	Ongoing		
Ubico building, vehicles and operations	2024	Define Strategic Approach and Consider Implementation plan	2025
Green Spaces	2024	To encourage key developers to provide embodied carbon and lifetime carbon analysis to enable us to quantify Scope 3 emission impacts more accurately.	Ongoing (inclusion in Scope 3)
To identify and implement robust carbon-offsetting mechanisms to address residual emissions by 2030.	Approach identified 2025 & implemented to 2030		
Review and deliver a green staff travel strategy to reduce the use of private vehicles used for commuting by council officers, including home-working options, car sharing incentives & cycle to work scheme. To reduce work vehicle electrification and reduced vehicle use during work hours through provision of bikes/ebikes.	Ongoing	To hone our Climate Impact Assessment to ensure we consider sustainability effectively within our decision-making across the Council.	Review complete Q2 2024

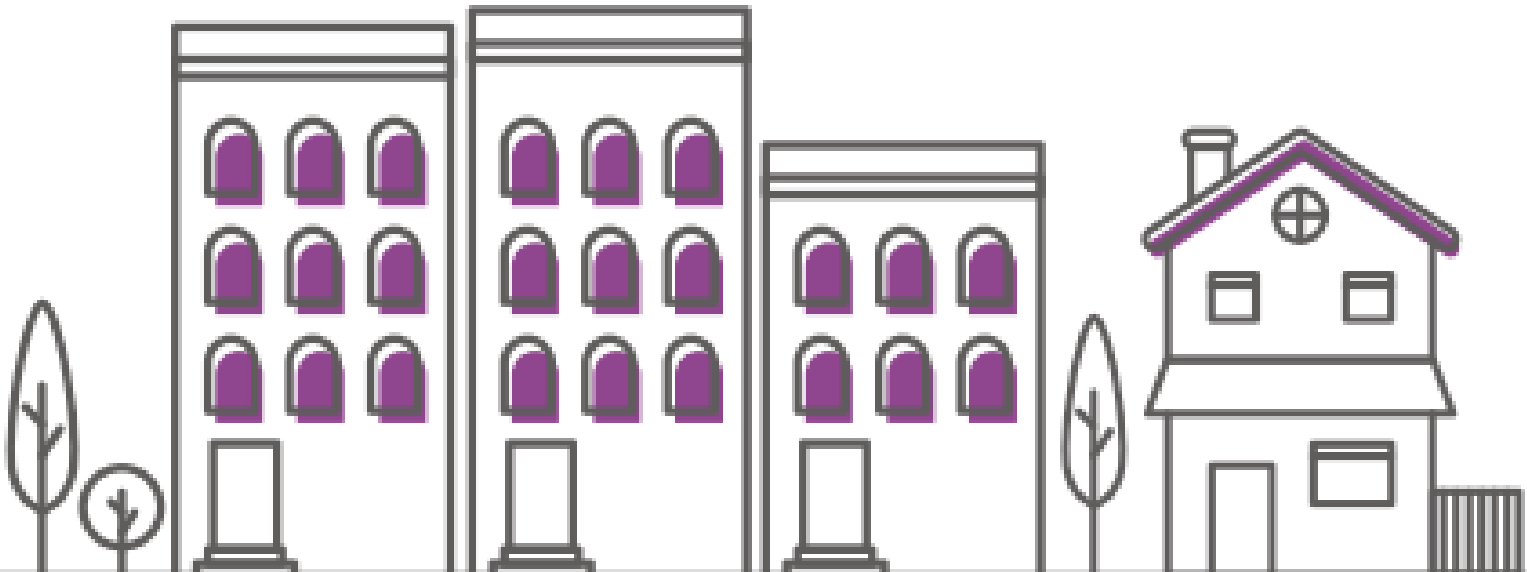
INTERNAL TARGETS - Governance

Organisation and Governance	
<p>Organisation Design: The Climate Team will be reviewed to ensure it has the skills and capabilities to deliver against key targets and is well placed within the organisation structure to enable it to deliver its action plan.</p>	Q1 2024
<p>Climate Programme Board Review: Leadership, membership and terms of reference will be reviewed to ensure key personnel are involved to deliver against identified goals and we put in place a funding plan to deliver against our targets.</p>	Q2 2024
<p>Developing Climate Targets: Specific climate objectives will be set across CBC's departments and teams to support delivery of the action plan.</p>	Q1 2024
<p>Training & Development: Working with Learning & Development, key topics will be identified around which training interventions are provided to officers and elected members.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Develop a Risk Framework: Identify risks associated with meeting our action plan</p>	Q2 2024
<p>Create report to identify resilience and adaptation risks and incorporate these into the risk framework, alongside an action plan to address them.</p>	End 2024 Report, Q1 2025 for Risk Review and Action Plan



Addressing Borough Wide Emissions

2024-2026 Targets

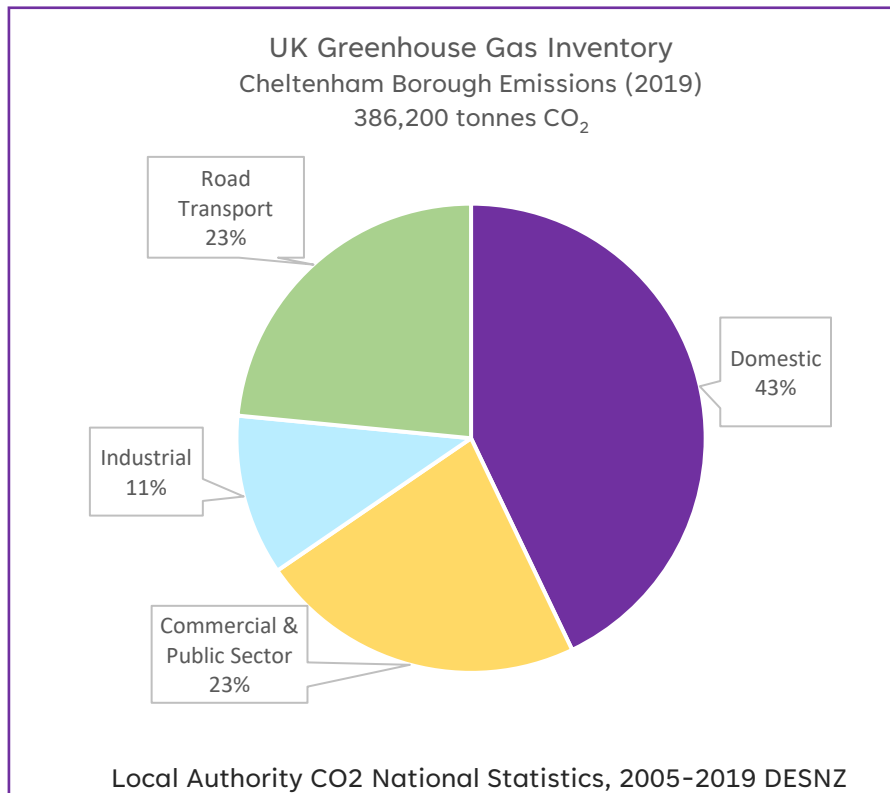


Developing Our Strategic Approach to Borough Wide Emissions



National figures from Greenhouse Gas Inventory estimated over 386kt CO₂ emissions across Cheltenham in 2019. Whilst the Council has a range of levers to address borough wide emissions, it doesn't have the same level of control to deliver against these targets as it does within its own internal operations. Swift and focused action is needed for us to ensure we don't exceed our share of the overall UK carbon budget. (see Appendix 1).

There are a number of areas where we have taken proactive action. However, in priority areas of emission reduction, however, we remain as still at an early stage. We are learning from our early round of projects to inform development of our wider strategic approach and to enable development of a more tangible emission reduction plan and timeline.



To drive down emissions we have to prioritise effort in 3 key strategic areas

- Housing
- Business & Industrial Emissions
- Transport

A critical enabler to driving down borough wide emissions in these three areas will be local area energy planning.

As Gloucestershire County Council are the Transport Authority, we will need to work closely with them alongside our neighbours in this key area.

To this we are adding adapting to the impacts of climate change across the borough, alongside our existing efforts around nature recovery, waste & water.

Evolving our Strategy to address Business & Industrial Emissions



CBC has taken a leading-edge approach and developed early action in this area. To date, the Cheltenham Zero initiative, delivered with Vision 21, has resulted in 164 businesses signing up to the Council's 2030 net zero targets, with 64 of these businesses having an active decarbonisation plan on the Zellar platform we have made available to them to use. In addition, further practical support to formulate decarbonisation plans specifically focused in the commercial sector is being delivered via the Growth Hub.

- **Delivery:** During 2024 we move into the delivery phase. £100k grant funding alongside additional practical support has been made available to deliver tangible energy efficiency and carbon reduction projects in place for SMEs by CBC.
- **Strategic Approach:** Looking forwards, our strategy will provide a segmented approach to support institutions, businesses and community groups across Cheltenham.
- **Impact & Focus:** Our next step is to identify and engage with our most substantial emitters across the borough to better understand their own carbon reduction journey, alongside their barriers and enablers to inform the support we can provide to help them drive down energy use and decarbonise operations, (such as via renewable energy generation or low carbon heat networks for example) alongside understanding any green skills & growth opportunities they may have.

Developing a strategy to address housing emissions



Domestic emissions currently account for up to 42% of borough wide emissions. High quality, energy efficient homes are important to ensure we have properties that are fit for the future as the net zero energy mix evolves.

Property retrofit is extremely challenging, as it has to be approached on a property by property basis. Within Cheltenham, we have a higher number of listed and historic properties which provide additional challenge and require particular focus.

We have a strategy that encompasses our approach to new build homes and a plan for our social housing, we should develop an approach to retrofit of existing homes including historic properties.

- **New Build:** The Climate SPD has provided a clear net zero benchmark for developers. We are evaluating how it has been utilised during the first 18 months to improve its effectiveness and inform development of policies to support the Strategic Local Plan.
- **Social Housing Retrofit:** Retrofit is challenging, requiring long term planning. CBH has a costed programme of planned investment that is being used to deliver and exceed governmental efficiency targets by 2030. However, delivering Net Zero retrofit across the 4,500 houses will cost approximately x4 the available funding, so retrofit will be accelerated as funding becomes available. For new build social housing, CBC is working towards the delivery of Net Zero across its development portfolio, where technically and economically feasible.
- **Property Retrofit:** Commencing in April, the neighbourhood community trial will deliver information and support around energy saving and retrofit, empowering and enabling residents across 50 homes to take action to future-proof their homes. Alongside best practice examples from other parts of the UK, this will be used to inform our strategic approach to domestic retrofit and green skills.
- Our approach to historic property retrofit will require specific focus to provide practical guidance, leveraging best practice approaches across other parts of the UK.

Transport



Cheltenham are responsible for parking and development planning whilst Gloucestershire County Council are the Transport Authority and hold the funding and decision-making power for transport planning, roads and public transport. During 2023, CBC have implemented an Air Quality Action Plan to 2030. As GCC are the lead authority regarding transport, we will also need to work very closely with them to address key actions, improve air quality and bring down transport emissions.

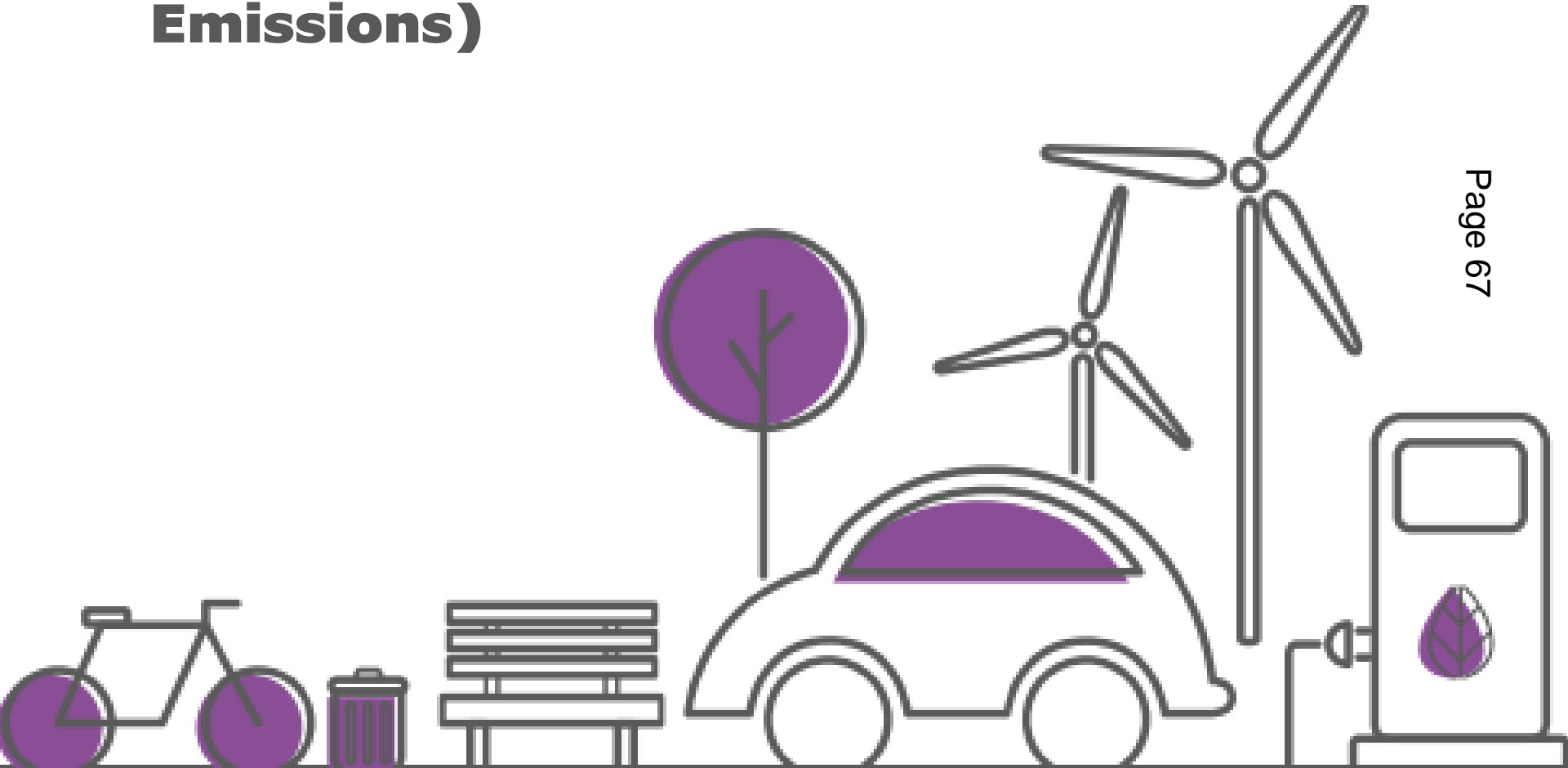
Borough Wide Action: £100k funding has been secured to invest in creating a **safe and secure cycle hub** within the town centre during 2024. CBC's **EV Charging plan** aims to deliver over 200 EV chargers by 2029, within an incremental annual plan. Phase 1 will install approximately 40 chargers across 5 CBC car parks during 2024.

Strategic Local Plan (SLP) : SLP provides an opportunity to enable sustainable transport and active travel opportunities across the borough by:

- enabling real options for healthy, accessible and walkable neighbourhoods;
- improving existing and providing new frequent public transport links and safe walking and cycling routes in all new developments;
- improving access to services in rural and urban areas through new development, improved integrated transport links and support to community led transport initiatives;
- integrating new development with existing networks and enhancing them where possible

Countywide Action - A groundbreaking agreement, signed by all 7 Councils, has been reached to work together on a Gloucestershire project to tackle transport decarbonisation and achieve net zero emissions by 2030. We will work closely with our neighbours to enable sustainable neighbourhoods, deliver a modal shift and reduce road related emissions

REVISED ACTION PLAN TARGETS (Borough Wide Emissions)



EXTERNAL TARGETS – Business & Housing Emissions

Housing Emissions		Business, Industrial, Institutional & Community Emissions	
<p>New Build: The Climate SPD has provided a clear net zero benchmark for developers. We are evaluating how it has been utilised during the first 18 months.</p>	Q1 2024 (Evaluation)	<p>Successfully Deliver £100k grant funding alongside additional practical support, to reduce carbon reduction for SME's across the successful projects.</p>	Q1 2025
<p>SLP Policy Development to enable Cheltenham to deliver against its 2030 net zero targets.</p>	2024-25	<p>Revise and tender for revised contract to deliver a segmented strategy to supporting institutions, businesses and community groups across Cheltenham to reduce their emissions in line with the 2030 target.</p>	Q2 to Devise. To deliver by 2030
<p>New Build Social Housing: CBC is working towards the delivery of Net Zero across its development portfolio, where technically and economically feasible.</p>	Ongoing	<p>During 2024, to identify and engage with our most substantial emitters across the borough to better understand their own carbon reduction journey, alongside their barriers and enablers to inform the support we can provide to help them drive down energy use and decarbonise operations, (such as via renewable energy generation or low carbon heat networks for example) alongside understanding any green skills & growth opportunities they may have.</p>	Q3 2024
<p>Social Housing Retrofit: CBH has a costed programme of planned investment that is being used to deliver and exceed governmental efficiency targets by 2030. However, delivering Net Zero retrofit across the 4,500 houses will cost approximately x4 the available funding, so retrofit will be accelerated as funding becomes available.</p>	Ongoing		
<p>Property Retrofit: Commencing in April, the neighbourhood community trial will deliver information and support around energy saving and retrofit, empowering and enabling residents across 50 homes to take action to future-proof their homes.</p>	To March 2025	<p>Use influence with others, such as schools and other private businesses and organisations, to help ensure their emission reduction plans are aligned with Cheltenham's targets, procurement is sustainable and nature recovery is considered where relevant.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Alongside best practice examples from other parts of the UK, this will be used to inform our strategic approach to domestic retrofit and green skills.</p>	Q4 2024	<p>The development of Golden Valley will continue to be evaluated against the stringent goals with the SPD alongside the regeneration team as the project is developed.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Our approach to historic property retrofit will require specific focus to provide practical guidance, leveraging best practice approaches across other parts of the UK.</p>	2024-25		

EXTERNAL TARGETS – Nature, Waste & Water

Nature and Biodiversity		Waste & Water	
Update local planning strategies and work closely with other authorities, including GCC, to significantly increase tree cover across the borough and ensure existing trees are properly protected, in order to store carbon, support nature, aid flood protection and to provide shade for people and buildings, cooling the air and ground temperatures in extreme heat.	2024-2030	Work with partner councils to provide a decarbonise future-proofed strategic waste site locally including depot and waste transfer facilities.	2024 onwards
Evaluate programme impact on greenhouse gas emissions against robust offsetting criteria.	2024	Implement the requirements within the Environment Act 2021, to ensure adequate recycling and food waste facilities are provided across all Council-owned and operated buildings and at kerbside, including carbons and flexible plastic packaing.	Ongoing
Develop opportunities for Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes across the borough to help mitigate flooding and adapt to climate change, using nature to hold and slow water run-off.	Ongoing	Signpost advice and support for support for small businesses/ community centres to recycle.	Ongoing
Seek to actively restore and expand ecosystems, with a focus on enhancing biodiversity and natural carbon sinks, including through market based mechanisms that improve and safeguard our natural environment, such as the development of a habitat bank for biodiversity net gain credits.	2024 Onwards	Review and where appropriate expand the on the go recycling bin provision across the borough.	2
To work with neighbours via the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership, ensuring nature and ecosystem restoration opportunities in Cheltenham are developed in tandem with broader regional strategies.	Ongoing	Continue to promote reuse, alongside food and residual waste reduction.	Ongoing
		Leverage the new climate-focused Supplementary Planning Document to encourage the provision of better waste and recycling facilities in developments. Consider the need for more detailed waste supplementary planning document including innovative ways of dealing with our future waste collections such as underground bins to maximise land use and provide more opportunities for biodiversity.	2024
		Adopt circular-economy waste policies in relevant plans and contracts.	2028-2030
		Work with Gloucestershire County Council and other partners to increase the uptake of water butts and grey water recycling in new and existing homes and non-domestic properties.	2028-2030

EXTERNAL TARGETS –Energy & Investment

Energy		Funding and Investment in Green Infrastructure/Green Growth	
<p>Low Carbon Heat Network Development: Complete Heat Network feasibility study to establish feasibility of networks in Golden Valley and in the centre of Cheltenham.</p>	Q3 2024	<p>Green Investment: Look to invest in low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure that reaps multiple environmental benefits wherever possible, developing a portfolio of green investment opportunities (aligned to the Strategic Local Plan where relevant).</p>	2024-2026
<p>Prepare for Heat Network zoning requirements that will require connection to a network unless developers are able to demonstrate an alternative net zero option or exemptions apply, including potential Heat Network Co-ordinator role (see below).</p>	2024- 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Net Gains • SUDS • Solar Farms, Energy Generation & Heat Networks • Battery Storage • Charging infrastructure 	
<p>Renewables Plan: The Climate SPD provides a signal to developers to commit to renewable energy. Ensure future SLP policies build on existing policy to ensure the potential for renewable energy is adequately covered within the Strategic Local Plan, including developing policies for renewable energy generation, heat networks, demand flexibility and battery storage; setting specific targets and location for renewable energy linked to the technical potential identified.</p>	2024-2025	<p>Green Growth: Work with Gloucestershire County Council Economic Development Team and other authorities and organisations to rapidly grow the green economy, by investing in economic activities that promote reduced carbon emissions and pollution, enhanced energy efficiency and prevention of the loss of biodiversity within the CLG. Understand local business community to better identify borough wide opportunities.</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 70</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Recruit an Energy Officer to support development of the local area energy strategy and delivery, including Heat Network Zoning requirements.</p>	Q2 2024	<p>Green Funding: Unlock legal and planning mechanisms, BNG, such as Section 106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and others to help fund climate actions and nature restoration projects.</p>	2024-2025
		<p>Use Green Investment Deal where appropriate to fund projects beyond CBC.</p>	Ongoing
		<p>Identify sources of external funding and collaborate around these.</p>	Ongoing

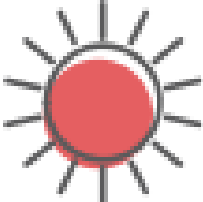
EXTERNAL TARGETS –Transport & Collective Action

Transport	
Borough Wide Action: Create a safe and secure cycle hub within the town centre during 2024.	16/07/1905
Implement CBC’s EV Charging plan aims to deliver over 200 EV chargers by 2029, within an incremental annual plan. Phase 1 will install approximately 40 chargers across 5 CBC car parks during 2024.	2024 - 2030
Strategic Local Plan (SLP) : Ensure the SLP delivers on its objectives to enable sustainable transport and active travel opportunities across the borough by: enabling real options for healthy, accessible and walkable neighbourhoods with local amenities; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improving existing and providing new frequent public transport links and safe walking and cycling routes in all new developments; - improving access to services in rural and urban areas through new development, improved integrated transport links and support to community led transport initiatives; - integrating new development with existing networks and enhancing them where possible. 	to 2026
Countywide Action - Implement the agreement to work together on a Gloucestershire project to tackle transport decarbonisation and achieve net zero emissions by 2030 via GCC workgroup to enable sustainable neighbourhoods, deliver a modal shift and reduce road related emissions	2024-2030

Collective Action	
Work with ‘Climate Champions’ among our communities, schools and businesses – building capacity for local people to be involved in helping meet our climate targets, inspiring communities and enterprises to find and implement solutions to key challenges.	Ongoing
Explore partnership opportunities for setting up ‘zero carbon hubs’ – decentralised futureproof centres that help to educate, inform and advise on ‘all things climate’ for individuals and communities.	Ongoing
Work closely with the University of Gloucestershire to help support local climate-based research, which not only helps to identify opportunities for the Borough, but also develops the skills needed for our future workforce, enhancing student experience and employability.	Ongoing

Appendix

2050 Carbon Budget Targets



Tyndall Carbon Budget Reports - Quantifying the implications of the United Nations Paris Agreement for Cheltenham

Pathway projections for Cheltenham

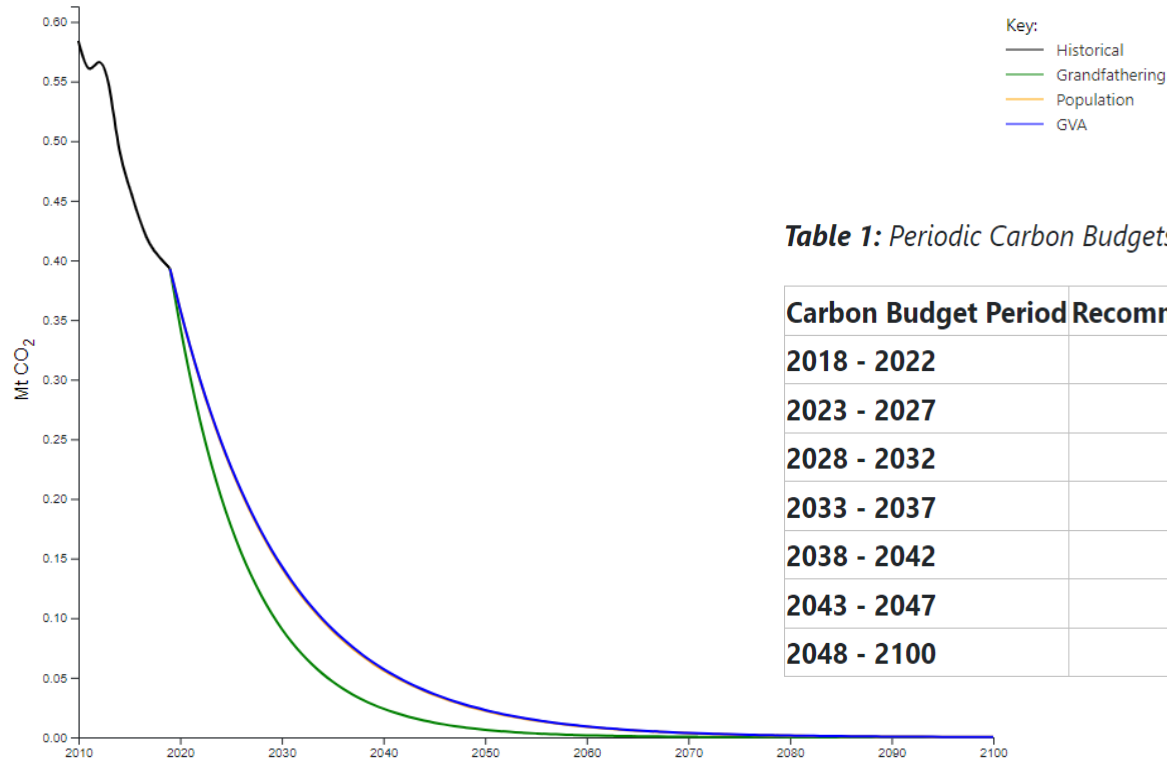


Table 1: Periodic Carbon Budgets for 2018 for Cheltenham.

Carbon Budget Period	Recommended Carbon Budget (Mt CO ₂)
2018 - 2022	1.7
2023 - 2027	0.9
2028 - 2032	0.5
2033 - 2037	0.2
2038 - 2042	0.1
2043 - 2047	0.1
2048 - 2100	0.1

For Cheltenham to make its ‘fair’ contribution towards the Paris Climate Change Agreement, Cheltenham should:

- Stay within a maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget of 2.8 million tonnes (MtCO₂) for the period of 2020 to 2100. At 2017 CO₂ emission levels, Cheltenham would use this entire budget within 7 years from 2020.
- Initiate an immediate programme of CO₂ mitigation to deliver cuts in emissions averaging a minimum of -12.5% per year to deliver a Paris aligned carbon budget, requiring national and local action.
- Reach zero or near zero carbon no later than 2043. At 2043 5% of the budget remains. This represents very low levels of residual CO₂ emissions by this time, or the Authority may opt to forgo these residual emissions and cut emissions to zero at this point. Earlier years for reaching zero CO₂ emissions are also within the recommended budget, provided that interim budgets with lower cumulative CO₂ emissions are also adopted.

It should be noted that the Pathway above does not achieve Cheltenham’s carbon neutrality ambition by 2030.

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Information / Discussion Paper

Overview and Scrutiny

25 March 2024

Physical activity and sport strategy for Cheltenham – Phase 2 – built facilities and playing pitch assessments

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed

1. Why has this come to scrutiny?

On 2 April, Cabinet will be asked to note the findings and recommendations from two important elements that will form the evidence base for our physical activity and sport strategy; assessments of the Cheltenham, built sporting facilities and its playing pitches. Cabinet will also be asked to oversee the development of an action plan that will set out what the Council can do in response to the recommendations.

Overview and Scrutiny has asked to receive an update on the physical activity and sports strategy in order that it can contribute to the discussion about how best to support physical activity in Cheltenham.

This report provides a brief overview of the process and the emerging findings. The cabinet report will provide more detailed information.

2. Summary of the Issue

In the Council's corporate plan 2023-2027, we set out our commitment to work with partner organisations to develop a sports strategy for Cheltenham in the expectation that this will improve sports provision and help improve health and wellbeing opportunities for local people.

The strategy is needed to help the council address some of the following challenges:

- Determining the longer-term future of Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales Stadium.
- Addressing long-term health inequalities within some of our communities

- Addressing inequalities in access to community-based physical activity opportunities

But also needed to harness some significant opportunities:

- How we support communities to meet their own ambitions to be physically active and help secure investment into improving local facilities;
- How we use sport and physical activity to support the longer-term growth ambitions of Cheltenham by ensuring people lead healthy, fulfilling and productive lives

In July, Cabinet agreed [agreed a draft vision](#) and outcomes for physical activity and sports which was the result of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders.

The draft vision is:

Cheltenham is a place where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from physical activity and sports, creating active, healthy and happy communities

The three outcomes are as follows:

- Cheltenham is a place where all our communities enjoy and benefit from physical activity;
- Our physical and community infrastructure is accessible and affordable but also high-quality and sustainable; and
- We will collaborate to create active and inclusive communities.

Cabinet also committed to updating its playing pitch and built facilities assessments. Together, these studies will provide a rich picture of our current infrastructure and how well it will meet the future needs in our communities, along with an action plan for how we secure funding to improve provision.

The assessments provide a technical evidence base to shape future investments within the context of:

- An up-to-date picture of our population;
- An up-to-date picture of current provision;
- An up-to-date assessment of future needs in respects of sports and recreation facilities, clearly identifying any under/over provision up to 2041.

The assessments also set out how the planning system, changes in policy and potential funding bids can deliver improvements to the physical infrastructure that underpins sports and physical activity.

This second phase of work was the subject of a procurement exercise and Max Associates was appointed to carry out both the playing pitch and built sports facilities assessments.

Work on the strategies commenced in July 2023 with work on the Built Facilities strategy concluding in January 2024 and the Playing Pitch strategy concluding in March 2024.

The two assessments will be presented to Cabinet and agreement sought to move to the third phase which will see an action plan created to support future investment into our sporting facilities and also to guide the Council's future work.

3. The Built Facilities assessment

The Built Facilities assessment looked at the following sports and leisure provision:

Athletics tracks
Bowls (indoor and outdoor)
Cycling facilities
Gym and fitness facilities
Gymnastics
Indoor cricket
Indoor football and futsal
Indoor Lacrosse
Indoor swimming pools (minimum size 160sqm)
Netball (indoor and outdoor)
Outdoor education type facilities
Sports halls 3+ courts size (badminton, basketball and volleyball)
Squash
Tennis (indoor and dedicated outdoor), plus padel and pickleball
Village halls/community halls and their role in providing sport and physical activity opportunities
Wheeled sports (ramps and facilities for BMX, skateboard, scooters)

Consultation was undertaken with national governing bodies, sports clubs, schools and parish councils and the assessment uses Sport England Tools such as Active Places Power and Active Lives data.

In addition, Sport England Facility Planning Models (FPM) were completed for sports halls and swimming pools in October-November 2023. These studies are a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access.

Key themes emerging from the built facilities assessment

- Future consideration of options for the future of Leisure at Cheltenham due to its importance as the only public facility in the borough, its extensive off-peak availability and its proximity to some of more deprived areas.
- Given dependence on educational sector in providing sports facilities (sports hall and swimming pools), CBC should continue to work in partnership with schools and

encourage investment/modernisation where community access is given and consider a communication plan to keep the various partners informed.

- The Council should also work with education providers to increase community access to sports halls, with increased secured community access provided through formal community use agreements.
- General theme of protecting existing sporting facilities through the local plan process and maintaining council-owned facilities.
- Cheltenham Borough Council to continue dialogue with NGBs to increase usage, financial sustainability and to identify if there are any possible club led opportunities for improved facilities.
- The Council should continue to build relationships with local sporting clubs to explore the potential of facilitating club-led improvements of their facilities.
- Many users of Cheltenham sporting facilities come from Tewkesbury Borough. It will be important to understand TBC's future plans with regards to facility strategies.
- Where appropriate, Cheltenham Borough Council should seek to secure developer contributions from strategic developments that could contribute towards the development of sporting facilities – either on-site or off-site.

4 The Playing pitch assessment

The Playing Pitch assessment looked at the following outdoor pitch sports:

- Football;
- Rugby Union;
- Rugby League;
- Lacrosse;
- Hockey;
- Cricket: and
- Other Sports (eg American Football)

Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) relevant to the sports noted above will also be captured, as will any ancillary provision that accompanies any pitches included with the agreed scope.

The PPS has been developed in line with Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy', which was published in October 2013.

Key themes emerging from the playing pitch assessment:

- Consider plans to improve the quality of pitches that are considered poor
- Consider plans to improve the security of tenure of sporting club use of school pitches
- Consider plans to improve the ancillary facilities which are identified as poor
- Consider plans to improve other associated infrastructure such as floodlighting to increase capacity
- Liaise with sport national governing bodies about possible 3G pitch provision at the following sites with the potential to be suitable for multi-sports, subject to further testing and feasibility studies:
 - Petersfield Park

- Leisure at Cheltenham/Prince of Wales Stadium;
- Consider 3G pitch provision at other sites assuming community use agreements in place
- Create additional capacity for other sports on existing artificial grass pitches when new 3G pitches are developed by encouraging the relocation of football training demand
- Secure new sporting pitches as part of the strategic developments at North West Cheltenham and West Cheltenham

4. Next Steps - possible next steps for the committee to consider

Cabinet are being requested to delegate authority to the Director of Community & Economic Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing, to finalise the playing pitch strategy and agree an action plan to deliver the Council’s physical activity and sporting ambitions.

The action plan will bring together the Council’s response to the findings and recommendations from the two assessments.

The council is also preparing to commission consultants to undertake an options appraisal of the future provision of Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales stadium to include indicative capital costs.

The committee are welcome to consider a further update on the development of the action plan.

Background Papers

Contact Officer

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Head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships
Richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk

Accountability

Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture,
Tourism and Wellbeing

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee work plan – 2024

Title	Objective	Format & expected date	Author
Monday 3rd June 2024			
THIS WILL BE A DEDICATED OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEMBER INDUCTION TRAINING SESSION			
Monday 1st July 2024 (deadline 19th June)			
Tackling Multiple Deprivation	Report back on progress on recommendations of the Scrutiny Task Group report submitted to Cabinet in July 2024	Discussion Paper	Richard Gibson, Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships
Culture Board	Consider its effectiveness, successes and difficulties faced	TBD	Tracey Birkinshaw, Director of Community and Economic Development Richard Gibson, Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships Chair of Culture Board

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Title	Objective	Format & expected date	Author
Planning Peer Review Update	To consider the progress made on the recommendations	Discussion paper	Tracey Birkinshaw, (Director of Community and Economic Development) Chris Gomm, Head of Development Management, Enforcement and Compliance
Corporate Strategy Update	To consider progress	Briefing note	Ann Wolstencroft, Head of Corporate Services

Items for future meetings (pending appointment of new committee)			
Title	Objective	Format and Expected Date	Author
Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	To monitor the transfer and delivery of housing from CBH-CBC	TBD	Claire Hughes, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer
Publica Review Update	To receive an update	TBD	Gareth Edmundson, Chief Executive

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Building Control	Overview and Performance including update on implementation of regulations	TBD	Building Control Manager
Enforcement	Update on challenges faced by CBC	TBD	
Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Panels	Cabinet Member to respond to questions on allocation decisions Impact of allocations made		Cabinet Member Customer and Regulatory Services Tracey Birkinshaw (Director of Community and Economic Development)
Cheltenham Business Improvement District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the effectiveness of the BID business plan as a partner To ensure there is active and positive engagement with those businesses in the BID Zone To ensure those paying the BID levy, including the Council, are receiving value for money 		Chief Executive of Cheltenham BID Tracey Birkinshaw (Director of Community and Economic Development)

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Annual Items		
Budget proposals for coming year	January	Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group
End of year performance review	July/September	Ann Wolstencroft (Head of Performance, Projects and Risk)
Gloucestershire Airport	June/July	GAL representatives
UBICO annual report	September	Karen Watson (Environmental Partnerships Manager), Cllr. Iain Dobie (Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling and Street Services), UBICO representative
Overview & Scrutiny annual report	September /October	Democracy Officer
Annual report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)	September	PCC
Publica annual report	October (after Publica AGM)	Managing Director
Climate Pathway	July/September	Climate Change Team, Cabinet Member Climate Emergency

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CIL Neighbourhood Panels	2024	Cllr. Martin Horwood (Cabinet Member Customer and Regulatory Services), Tracey Birkinshaw (Director of Community & Economic Development)
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