



Scrutiny Review Terms of Reference Document

Scrutiny Review	Scrutiny Review of Becoming a Carbon Neutral Council
Responsible Committee	Place Scrutiny Committee
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Background

At the meeting held on 11 June 2019, the Place Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Scoping Board to explore undertaking a scrutiny review of climate change, and in particular the actions the Council is taking to reduce its CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions. This was in response to increasing public concern linked to the publication of the IPCC report which highlighted that urgent action is needed to address climate change.

On the 15 October 2019 East Sussex County Council unanimously agreed a Motion on climate change. In agreeing the Motion, the Council declared a climate emergency and agreed to:

- *set a target of achieving carbon neutrality from its activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050, in line with the new target for the UK agreed by Parliament in 2019.*
- *build upon the work we have undertaken to date, will commit resources where possible and will align our policies to address the Climate Emergency.*
- *set out a clear plan of action to reduce our carbon emissions.*
- *report annually at the May County Council Meeting on its progress towards the target.*
- *investigate all possible sources of external funding and match funding to support this commitment, as well as writing to central government with respect to the emergency to request funding to implement swift appropriate actions”.*
- *use our Environment Strategy to provide a strong unified voice in lobbying for support to address this emergency, sharing best practice across East Sussex and more widely through other partners”.*

The Scrutiny Committee held a Scoping Board meeting on 4 November 2019 and agreed to recommend that a scrutiny review be undertaken of the actions needed for the Council to achieve carbon neutrality in its own operations by 2050 or earlier if possible.

The Scoping Board considered that it will be difficult for the Council to show leadership and to advise or influence others without addressing work to reduce its own carbon emissions. Therefore, the review should focus first on how the Council is going to achieve carbon neutrality in its own operations and the gaps in our knowledge, before working on wider issues.

The Scoping Board also agreed that the scope of the review should include acting as a reference group to work with officers, the Executive and others to comment on and have input into the development of a plan or 'road map' for the Council to achieve carbon neutrality in its operations.

Scope of the Review

The scope of the review will focus initially on what actions are needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve carbon neutrality from the Council's:

- building energy use;
- staff business travel; and
- own fleet vehicles.

The review will then look at where there are gaps in our knowledge of the emissions for the Council's:

- supply chain and purchasing decisions;
- staff commuting; and
- waste disposal.

The review will also consider the training and support that Councillors will need on climate change in order to support them in their community leadership role, and the measures that will be necessary to mitigate emissions and then offset any unavoidable carbon emissions.

In considering the categories of emissions listed in the scope of the review (above), the Review Board may need to consider ways of engaging with staff on these issues.

Outcomes

- To have a better understanding of the actions, costs, benefits and timescales for achieving carbon neutrality, as well as the choices that may be involved.
- To contribute to the development of a 'road map' or plan of actions to reduce the Council's carbon emissions.
- To identify 'easy wins' and priorities for investment in carbon reduction in the next 5 years.
- To enhance Member understanding of the issues to equip them for their role as community leaders.

Outside the scope of the review.

Divesting the East Sussex Pension Fund of fossil fuel investments. This issue is being addressed by the Pension Committee and is outside the remit of the Place Scrutiny Committee.

Measures to make the whole county of East Sussex carbon neutral.

Review methods

It is anticipated that the Review Board will review documentary evidence, question witnesses and undertake research in order to gather evidence to inform its recommendations.

The following list is not exhaustive and will change and develop as the review progresses. As part of the review the Board members will:

Building energy use

Take evidence from Property Services to examine the work undertaken so far to reduce energy use and explore the options to achieve carbon neutrality across the Council's operational buildings and maintained schools. This will include building utilisation and agile working; the use of renewables and alternative energy sources; the replacement of gas/gas oil heating systems; energy efficiency measures and the scale of any likely need to offset unavoidable emissions.

Staff business travel

Examine current business travel patterns and carbon emissions. Explore changes needed to reduce emissions from leased vehicles for personal business use, essential users, and casual users who may claim vehicle mileage (both staff and councillors). Examine the use of public transport and the measures that may be needed to reduce or offset unavoidable emissions. This may require taking evidence from officers who compile the current emissions data; finance teams involved in processing travel claims; and Human Resources and Organisational Development staff on current staff travel policies and entitlements.

The Council's own vehicle fleet

Take evidence from the Council's Fleet Management Team/Transport Hub on the options to reduce emissions from vehicles for service staff and the transport fleet used for Adult Social Care and Children's Services. This will include the use of electric vehicles and the likely feasibility/costs of replacing the fleet with low emission or zero emission vehicles.

Supply chain and purchasing decisions

Explore the evidence available on the carbon footprint of the Council's existing supply chain, including major contracts. Examine how the procurement of goods and services can be used to reduce the Council's carbon emissions and how the Council can use its purchasing power to influence suppliers. Take evidence from the Council's Procurement Team on existing environmental and social value provisions in contracts and explore how procurement can support the achievement of carbon neutrality in all the Council's operations. This will include feasibility, costs and timescales of introducing measures to support the Council's aspirations, such as carbon reporting and carbon neutral contracts.

Staff commuting

Undertake work to understand current staff commuting patterns and incentives to use public transport and low carbon modes of transport. Explore staff attitudes towards making changes in their commuting and working patterns (e.g. working from home). This may involve work to gather evidence from staff if not available from other sources.

Waste disposal from direct Council operations (excluding contracted out services)

Take evidence from the Council's Facilities Management Team on waste from operational buildings and maintained schools (e.g. do we know how much waste is collected and recycled, and what is the existing carbon footprint of this waste). Engage with managers and staff to explore ideas for waste minimisation strategies to reduce carbon emissions.

Development of Road Map and support for Councillors

The likely Review Board activity in this area will include taking evidence/receiving briefings from experts on the development of a road map, commenting on the proposed plan, and assessing Councillors' training and support needs.

For all of the above it will be important for the Review Board to examine any best practice and build on the experience of others in tackling these issues. It will be particularly relevant to be aware of the work being undertaken in this area by other East Sussex local authorities such as the District and Borough Councils.

Documents and research:

To be identified.

Reporting

Given the scope of the review, the Review Board may wish to consider reporting in stages as the work on the review progresses.

Review Organisation and Responsibilities

Review Board

The Review Board is comprised of: *To be agreed by the Place Scrutiny Committee*
The Chair of the Review Board is: *To be agreed by the Place Scrutiny Committee*

The Review Board is responsible for:

- Making decisions regarding the scope and direction of the review;
- Monitoring and control of the overall progress of the review;
- Agreeing where Board members will undertake evidence gathering activities as required by the review;
- Considering and providing challenge to all evidence presented to it; and

- Developing and agreeing the final report, including the findings and recommendations of the review.

Scrutiny Review Support

Support for the review will be provided by the Member Services Team to:

- Manage the review process;
- Undertake research as agreed by the Board;
- Draft the final report

The Lead Officer who will support the review from the Member Services Team is Martin Jenks, Senior Democratic Services Adviser. Their role is to manage the review, ensuring its aims and objectives are met and that the final report is delivered to the Place Scrutiny Committee within the agreed timescales.

Scrutiny Review Completion

When the review has been completed the Lead Officer will co-ordinate the production of a final report outlining the findings and recommendations for agreement by the Review Board. Once agreed, the Review Board will present this to the Place Scrutiny Committee for it to agree the recommendations.

The report will then be presented to Cabinet for comment and County Council for approval. Progress updates on how the recommendations are being implemented by the department will be presented to the Place Scrutiny Committee in due course (usually six and twelve months after the review has been approved by County Council). In this instance, progress may also be incorporated in the annual report to Full Council.

Review Timetable

Based on the initial scoping of the review, the Review Board aims to submit the final report to the Place Scrutiny Committee at the meeting to be held on [*date(s) to be agreed*].

An initial timetable of the meetings and activities required to complete the review is outlined below. [*To be completed. The number of review board meetings is not fixed and there can be more or less depending on the nature of the review. The Review Board should agree the number and content of the meetings and review activity*].

Activity	Timescale/Date
<u>Review Board Meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider initial evidence • Review lines of enquiry/terms of reference • Agree further evidence gathering/requirements. 	To be agreed
<u>Review Board Activity/Meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be agreed. 	To be agreed
<u>Review Board Activity/Meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be agreed. 	To be agreed
Draft scrutiny review report and finalise findings and recommendations of the review.	To be agreed
<u>Final Review Board Meeting to agree Report</u> Review Board meeting to agree draft report, findings and recommendations with input from key officers.	To be agreed
Deadline for Report Dispatch	To be agreed
<u>Report to Place Scrutiny Committee for agreement</u>	To be agreed
Report to Cabinet	To be agreed
Report to Council	To be agreed