

# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 21 MARCH 2024

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>2030 Annual Report</b>			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To present the 2030 (Climate Change and Sustainability) Annual Report for 2023-24 for approval.			
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>The Committee RESOLVES to approve the 2030 (Climate Change and Sustainability) Annual Report for 2023-24 for publication.</b>			
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	The draft report has had the input of managers and core delivery staff across SDC. This report is a reflective document to celebrate the progress on the 2030 strategy, and some community voices are represented through the various case studies. If approved, this report will be published through SDC website and press release. No prior formal consultation has been deemed necessary.			
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<b>Options</b>	This report of annual progress is focused on 12 months, dated March 2023 – February 2024, of the 2030 masterplan. It reviews progress on the key priorities and commitments and a forward look describes key areas for next steps in our roles as exemplar, enabler and encourager. The committee's options are: to approve the report; to ask officers to consider amendments or, to reject the report.			
<b>Background Papers</b>	None			
<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix A – 2030 Strategy Annual Report 2023			
<b>Implications (further details at the end of the report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

### 1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 The formal adoption of the 2030 Strategy and Masterplan in February 2021 followed on from the climate emergency declaration in 2018. 7 key priorities were identified and commitments were made against those priorities, which we now report against annually. This report does not replace performance indicators, but rather acts as a summary of work in the district that falls within those 7 priorities, as well as providing forward plans for 2024.

### 2. Main Points

- 2.1 This report is not overly statistical as we have embedded KPI's through the Council Plan which will be publicly reported. There is great progress across all 7 themes of the strategy, with just some of these actions highlighted in the below table.

Theme	Highlight
Built Environment	<p>Exemplar: £1.7m government grant funding for retrofitting 250 SDC homes to EPC C minimum.</p> <p>Enabler: Action research project 'Low Carbon Communities' funded by UKSPF and MCSCF to support up to 75 private homeowners in the district with a retrofit assessment from Severn Wye Energy Agency and opportunities to mix and support each other through retrofit decisions.</p> <p>Encourager: Development Management approving planning permission of nearly 100,000 solar PV and attending Wotton Area Climate Action Network's meeting to discuss solar panels.</p>
Energy	<p>Exemplar: Work has begun on The Pulse, Stratford Park LC and Museum in the Park to replace ageing boilers with air source heat pumps. Scope 1 emissions are down by 21% compared to 2022.</p> <p>Enabler: Southwest Net Zero Hub's funding opportunity has been shared with community networks including the new community energy group 'Stroud Area Community Energy Group' (SACEN)</p> <p>Encourager: SDC continues to signpost people via our website, social media and 'The Retrofit Centre' website to 'Warm and Well', with HUG2 scheme providing funding for energy efficiency and renewable heating in the most vulnerable of households in the district.</p>
Natural Environment	<p>Exemplar: Leading on the production of Biodiversity Net Gain guidance for developers and planners throughout Gloucestershire.</p> <p>Enabler: 187 new Natural Flood Management interventions and 2.8 hectares of new wetland created</p> <p>Encourager: SDC hosted the first meeting of a Stroud Farmer group, to help farmers support each other and provide some guidance on the various agri-environment schemes available and the funding options associated with such schemes</p>
Mobility	<p>Exemplar: Facebook and Instagram posts about the Natural Flood Management officer Chris Uttley covering nearly 1,000 work miles on his electric work bike.</p> <p>Enabler: Work begun on introducing EV charge points at all but one of Stroud District Councils public car parks.</p> <p>Encourager: Limiting the renewal of taxi licences for vehicles over 10 years old, with a move towards Euro 6 compliance, and a whole range of social media posts to promote Cycle September</p>
Economy	<p>Exemplar: As part of the transition of Stratford Park Leisure Centre into a core council service, we will be fully appraising our catering options with sustainability and reduced food miles at the heart of our decision making.</p>

	<p>Enabler: In partnership with Climate Leadership Gloucestershire's partners, we have funding secured for a county-wide green skills coordinator to help meet the growing demands for future skills.</p> <p>Encourager: Launch of <i>Stroud District: The Natural place</i>, a prospectus aimed at attracting more investment, focusing on environmental technologies, engineering and manufacturing and creative industries.</p>
Waste and resources	<p>Exemplar: In-cab system introduced into waste vehicles to digitalise workflow and reduce mileage. Waste fleet replacement strategy devised to replaced ageing vehicles with Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO).</p> <p>Enabler: Promoting behaviour change through celebration of good recycling rates, with over 2,500 likes or comments of a range of posts.</p> <p>Encourager: Messaging through SDC social media re World Refill Day, plus promotion of local guided DIY bike repair opportunities.</p>
Community	<p>Exemplar: Opportunities for staff to increase their own active travel for work were offered through free bike maintenance sessions and bike bell giveaway, and motivation by a staff blog written by a staff member giving up her car for September and contributed to by other staff members to build adoption of reducing use of private car.</p> <p>Enabler: Stroud District Youth Council have attended intergenerational events, been regularly represented at the 2030 Community Engagement Board, have supported outreach opportunities for local students to engage with climate action, and have developed on skills to communicate with people who have different world views such as climate change denial.</p> <p>Encourager: The 2030 Community Engagement Board has embedded itself over its second year through 8 meetings with 12 regular attendees building their understanding of behaviour change and climate action, and how best the 2030CEB can best be used to support local climate action projects through mentoring and connecting.</p>

- 2.2 The 2030 Strategy team itself has worked closely with colleagues across the council and under direct line management from the Director of Place. The 2030 Strategy Manager post has been vacant since June 2023. The Low Carbon Communities Project Manager has been on long term compassionate leave since June 2023 so the project management of this retrofit project has been shared in house by the remaining 2030 team, and with the contractors Severn Wye Energy Agency.
- 2.3 This year we have once again completed Climate Disclosure Project assessment giving external verification to our efforts this year to 'B' Grade.
- 2.4 The draft Local Plan remains at examination; therefore, some of the policy plans will not be adopted this calendar year.
- 2.5 The 2030 team continue to work as part of the Community Connections workstream of the Fit for the Future programme to support the development of these principles.

- 2.6 Direct carbon emissions from our own facilities and vehicles (Scope 1) and indirect emissions from assets we own but do not control (Scope 3) have decreased by over 20% each. Our indirect emissions from electricity we purchase (Scope 2) has marginally increased by 1%, reflective of slightly more usage from some SDC buildings. Data is compared to 2022. Overall, we estimate that SDC has reduced 329 tonnes of CO2 in 2023 compared to 2022.
- 2.7 SDC have continued as Retrofit theme lead for Climate Leadership Gloucestershire (CLG), a strategic group of public authorities in the county. We have continued to report on activities across the county on retrofit, presenting to the CLG recommendations for Local Authority endorsed retrofit support for households across the county. This is goes hand-in-hand with a recommendation in the CLG Economy theme for a Green Skills Co-ordinator to increase training provision with local providers to meet the need of future skills, particularly retrofitting skills.
- 2.8 Members are asked to note that minor editorial changes and additions to the Annual Report (Appendix A) will continue to be made prior to final publication.

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1 Action on the 2030 Strategy and Masterplan has been broad across many areas of the council, from Tenant's Services to Development Management, through Waste Management and Community Services, and beyond. It's been a pleasure to collect all this good news from across the council's own operations, in its partnerships and with community voices. As we look ahead to 2024-25, the 2030 team are planning a series of projects designed to make climate and sustainability behaviour changes more accessible to people, aided particularly by the allocated budget for the year. Towards the end of the report, there is a forward look where we have highlighted just some of these projects which will be in addition to programming commitments made in the council plan.

### **4. Implications**

#### **4.1 Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this recommendation.

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#### **4.2 Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications arising from the content of this report.

One Legal

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#### **4.3 Equality Implications**

An EIA is not required because there are no recommended actions as a direct result of this report

#### **4.4 Environmental Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category. Actions and decisions arising from the implementation of the strategy may have environmental implications, which will need to be considered at the relevant time. Delivery of targets within strategy will make a

significant positive contribution to: reducing the impacts of the changing climate; recovering nature and, achieving carbon neutrality for the district. Delivering of the targets within the strategy will also make significant contribution to the whole district contribution to meeting the Paris Conference carbon emission reduction targets and National Government targets for net zero 2050.