

CABINET

28 MARCH 2024

WORCESTERSHIRE ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023

Relevant Cabinet Member

Mr R. Morris Cabinet Member for Environment

Relevant Chief Officer

Mr J Hobbs Director for Economy and Infrastructure

Recommendation

- 1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for the Environment recommends that Cabinet:**
 - a) approves the Worcestershire Environment Improvement Plan (EIP) 2023.**
 - b) agrees that an annual progress report be returned to cabinet.**
 - c) agrees the council will liaise with partners to gain feedback on the Environment Improvement Plan with the aim being to collaborate, and work together to deliver positive environmental impact in line with the EIP.**
 - d) Approve the inclusion of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy once it has been adopted by Cabinet which is expected to be March 2025**

Background

- 2. The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Environment has requested that a plan is developed and approved by Cabinet which clearly illustrates how we are working towards the Corporate Plan Objective – Protecting the Environment. which aims to deliver:**
 - A greener future;**
 - Our commitment to achieve Net Zero by 2050,**
 - A resilient transport network and**
 - Reducing our waste**

Worcestershire Environment Improvement Plan

- 3. The Environment Plan brings together the key strategies under eight priorities which support positive impact on our environment and will deliver our ambition of becoming Net Zero by 2050, by focusing on the improvement of our environment, promoting clean growth and the development of a low carbon economy, the council**

can support the creation of a healthier environment that both accelerates the transition to Net Zero whilst improving Worcestershire's resilience for the future. The eight key priorities are :

- Natural Environment
- Energy
- Resources and Waste
- Transport
- Net Zero Council
- The Green Economy
- Reducing the impact of Climate Change (Flooding)
- Communities and Wellbeing

4. The Environment Improvement Plan 2023 has been developed to bring together the key work areas and strategies impacting on the Environment. The plan will:

- Showcase how the key strategies interrelate for the benefit of the environment.
- How we work with partners and how businesses and local communities can contribute
- To facilitate clear effective communication with communities, businesses, partners and stakeholders.

5. The Council recognises that it cannot improve the local environment and tackle climate change alone, collaboration and working together with partners in national and local government, alongside communities and businesses is key. By working together, the council will aim foster a sense of collective responsibility drawing on combined resources, expertise, and enthusiasm to drive positive impact.

6. Under each priority the plan will highlight what has already been achieved, the key objectives, planned actions and work streams, how the council will work effectively with partners, how performance will be measured and what actions local businesses and residents can take to support the priorities.

7. If the Environment Improvement Plan is approved by cabinet, the sustainability team will work closely with the communications unit to improve the website content, , making it easier for residents and businesses to navigate and to access information on how they can contribute to protecting the county's environment, to easily identify the actions the council is taking to support the corporate plan priority, and to ensure that residents and businesses can clearly see the actions that have been taken by the council.

8. The Environment Improvement Plan will be monitored using the following key indicators:

- a) The number of trees planted
- b) Hectares of biodiversity gain
- c) Reduction of county carbon emissions
- d) Reducing waste produced (per head resident)
- e) Active travel improvements
- f) New or Improved Cycleway
- g) Worcestershire County Council carbon emissions
- h) Growth of the county's green economy

- i) Homes and Businesses protected from flooding
- j) Homes benefitting from energy advice and grant programmes.
- k) Homes supported through the home energy upgrade scheme
- l) Healthy walks across Worcestershire

9. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is currently out for consultation and is expected to be presented to cabinet for adoption in March 2025, Once the council have adopted the new strategy, the EIP will be amended to include the LNRS.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

10. Financial implications:

There are no financial implications for the Environment Improvement plan as the work programme and funding for each priority is agreed separately outside of this process.

11. Legal Implications

The plan sets out how the Council will meet its corporate plan objective of Protecting the Environment. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Council has general powers of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 enabling it to do anything which an individual can do, save where there is specific legislation preventing this.

Joint Equality, Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessments

A **joint impact assessment (JIA)** screening (and any full impact assessments – if screening indicates that they are required) **must** have been completed before the cabinet report is submitted.

The JIA screening has not been carried out in respect of these recommendations. As each of the related strategies have already been through the Joint Impact Assessment process as required by Worcestershire County Council.

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 - Draft Worcestershire Environment Improvement Plan 2023

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points
County Council: 01905 763763

Specific Contact Points for this report

John Hobbs, Strategic Director of Economy and Infrastructure
Tel: 01905 844576 jhobbs@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Strategic Director for Economy & Infrastructure) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- [Worcestershire Energy Strategy 2019-2030](#)
- [Worcestershire County Council Net Zero Carbon Plan 2020](#)
- [Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan](#)
- [Worcestershire Pollinator Strategy](#)
- [Worcestershire Energy Strategy](#)
- [The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy](#)
- [The Local Transport Plan](#)
- [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans](#)
- [Net Zero Carbon Plan](#)
- [Worcestershire Green Skills Plan](#)
- [Worcestershire – A Plan for Growth](#)
- [Worcestershire Flood Risk Management Strategy](#)
- [Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing strategy](#)