



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT COVER SHEET

Title of Report:	Climate Change and Nature Action Plan – Interim Review of Progress 2022/23	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
Meeting of:	Corporate Management Team - 18 th Oct 2022	X
	Leader and Deputy Leaders - 24 th Oct 2022	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group / Independent Alliance Advisory Group - 2 nd & 3 rd Nov 2022	X
	Cabinet - 15 th Nov 2022	
	Scrutiny Audit and Value for Money Council Services Committee [DATE] / Scrutiny Community Regeneration, Environment and Health and Well Being Committee [DATE]	



Is this an Executive Decision:	YES	Is this a Key Decision:	YES
Is this in the Forward Plan:	YES	Is the Report Confidential:	NO
If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:	[NA]		

Essential Signatories:

ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE

Interim Monitoring Officer: **John Teasdale**

Date Signature

Chief Finance Officer: **Sal Khan**

Date Signature

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Cabinet

Date: 15th Nov 2022

REPORT TITLE: **Climate Change and Nature Action Plan – Interim Review of Progress 2022/23**

PORTFOLIO: **Cllr Faulkner – Environment and Climate Change**

HEAD OF SERVICE: **Mark Rizk**

CONTACT OFFICER: **Mark Jeffcote Ext. No. x1134**

WARD(S) AFFECTED: **All Wards**

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present interim progress on the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan midway through the 2022/23 financial year. This is an extraordinary progress report to accommodate the change of reporting period from calendar to financial year.
- 1.2. The report also contains the latest CO₂ emissions for the Borough and the council.
- 1.3. The report recommends additional actions to meet the requirements of the Nature Recovery motion approved by Council on March 7th 2022. The revised Climate Change and Nature Action Plan including the additional actions is included as Appendix 1.
- 1.4. Finally, the report presents the East Staffordshire Borough Council Climate Change and Nature Strategy (Appendix 2).

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. East Staffordshire Borough Council declared a ‘Climate Emergency’ in August 2020 with a pledge to make the Council’s operations and activities carbon neutral by 2040 and an aspiration to make the Borough carbon neutral by 2040. The initial Climate Change and Nature Action Plan containing 57 actions was developed.

- 2.2. This interim Climate Change and Nature Action Plan progress report was requested to accommodate the change of reporting period from calendar to financial year.
- 2.3. The latest CO₂ emissions for the Borough show a reduction of 35.1% between 2005 and 2019 from 1066.4 kilotonnes CO₂ to 692.5 kilotonnes CO₂.
- 2.4. The latest CO₂ emissions for the council show a reduction of 40.2% between 2009/10 and 2021/22 from 3547 tonnes of CO₂e to 2122 tonnes (provisional figure)¹.
- 2.5. The progress of each individual action in the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan has been assessed and given a RAG rating (RED, AMBER, GREEN). Actions shaded in GREY have not yet started. Progress can be summarised as follows:
 - GREEN – 42 actions (34 on-track and 8 achieved)
 - AMBER – 0 actions
 - RED – 1 actions
 - GREY – 14 actions
- 2.6. One of the actions RAG rated as Green is the refresh of the Climate Change Strategy. The original Strategy was published in 2013 and ran until 2020. The refreshed Strategy was completed in October and then approved by EDR.
- 2.7. The refreshed ESBC Strategy includes a target for the Borough to become carbon neutral by 2050 rather than 2040 as stated in the original Climate Emergency pledge. This is primarily in response to the publication of the government's Net Zero Strategy. The actions contained in the Net Zero Strategy will need to be delivered for East Staffordshire to become net zero. This means a target date before 2050 for the Borough is unrealistic. In addition, adjusting the date for the Borough to be carbon neutral by 2050 will align East Staffordshire with the county council who have also set a target to become net zero by 2050.
- 2.8. In March, the Council approved a Nature Recovery motion presented by the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust that required a number of additional actions to be included in the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan (see Appendix 1).
- 2.9. The Climate Change and Nature Action Plan progress will be reported again following the conclusion of the financial year.

3. **Background**

- 3.1. East Staffordshire Borough Council declared a 'Climate Emergency' in August 2020. The 'declaration' seeks to make the Council's activities carbon neutral by 2040 and aspires to make the Borough carbon neutral by 2040. The initial Climate Change and Nature Action Plan containing 57 actions was developed.

¹ The emissions data for the Borough and the emissions data for the council's own operations and estate have different base years because the data for the Borough is provided by the Government whereas the council data is calculated internally

3.2. In February 2022, Cabinet agreed to extend the ‘Climate Emergency’ declaration to a ‘Climate & Ecological Emergency’ declaration to acknowledge the global, national and local loss of biodiversity. In March, Council approved a Nature Recovery motion presented by the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust that required a number of additional actions to be included in the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan.

4. Contribution to Corporate Priorities

4.1. Protecting the climate, adapting to the future consequences of climate change and supporting nature’s recovery will contribute to the Council’s priorities of Community Regeneration and Environment, Health & Wellbeing.

4.2. This report meets the requirement of the Corporate Plan 2022/23 target EHW07 to provide an interim report on ‘in year’ progress with the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan.

5. CO₂ Emissions for the Borough and the Council

5.1. CO₂ emissions for East Staffordshire

5.1.1. In 2019, data provided by BEIS² showed that the total CO₂ emissions for the Borough were 692.5 kilotonnes. This represents a 35.1% reduction from 1066.4 kilotonnes in 2005 (see Figure 1).

5.1.2. A more detailed analysis of the GHG emissions for 2019 by sector has been provided using the SCATTER tool³ (Table 1). When ranked according to emissions residential buildings, road transport and industrial buildings represent approximately 60% in equal proportions. Commercial buildings represent another 9% and institutional buildings another 3.9%. This means that buildings and road transport represent over 70% of all emissions. Livestock represent another 11.2% and aviation 6.6%.

5.1.3. There are actions in the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan (Appendix 1) to address the various sources of emissions. They include actions to address emissions from residential buildings and road transport, and across several sectors through the Local Plan. The Action Plan also makes a commitment to develop partnerships with businesses and other organisations to progress climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Action Plan will be revised after the end of the financial year to include more actions and better reflect the sources listed in Table 1.

² www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics

³ scattercities.com

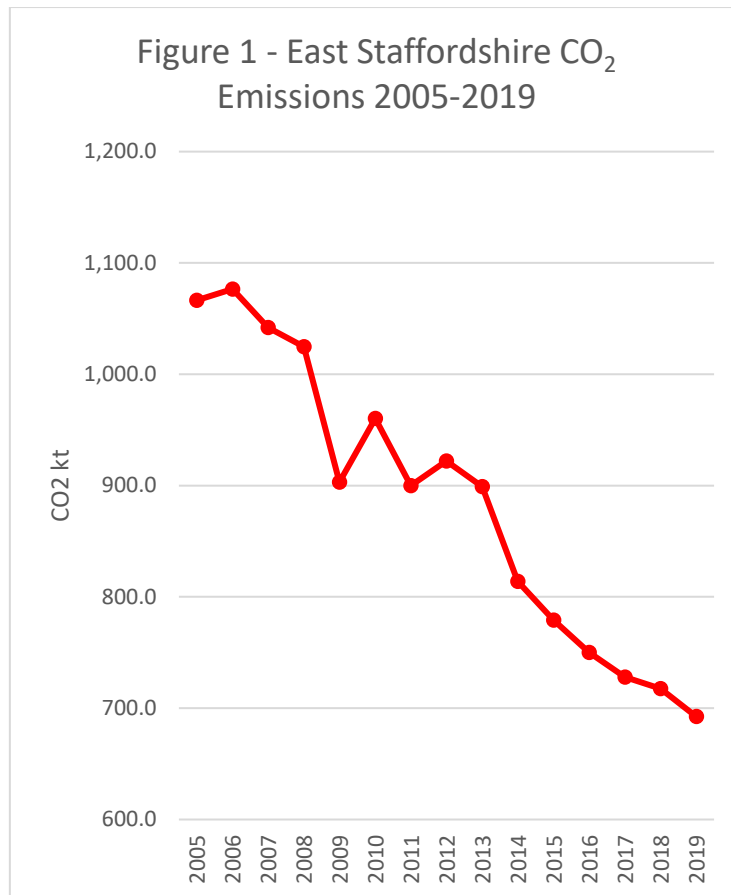


Table 1 – East Staffordshire CO₂ Emissions for 2019 by Sector

Sector	tCO_{2e}	%
Residential buildings	203,767	21.5%
Road transport	197,748	19.9%
Industrial buildings	190,713	19.2%
Livestock	110,971	11.2%
Commercial buildings	89,365	9%
Aviation	65,792	6.6%
Industrial processes	57,540	5.8%
Institutional buildings	39,003	3.9%
Agriculture	17,331	1.7%

5.2. CO₂ emissions for the Council

5.2.1. In 2009/10, the council produced a total of 3547 tonnes of CO₂e. In 2021/22, that amount had reduced to 2122 tonnes of CO₂e (provisional figure). This represents a welcome 40.2% reduction (Figure 2).

5.2.2. The council's emissions are broken down in Figure 3. The council's vehicle fleet accounted for 38% of the emissions and energy use in corporate buildings (gas and electric) approximately 15%. The council's outsourced services accounted for the majority of emissions, another 46%. The outsourced services included in the figure are the leisure facilities at Meadowside, Uttoxeter and Shobnall and the fuel used by the landscape contractor's (I D Verde) vehicle fleet. The leisure facilities alone accounted for 41% of the total emissions, so are clearly the largest emitter.

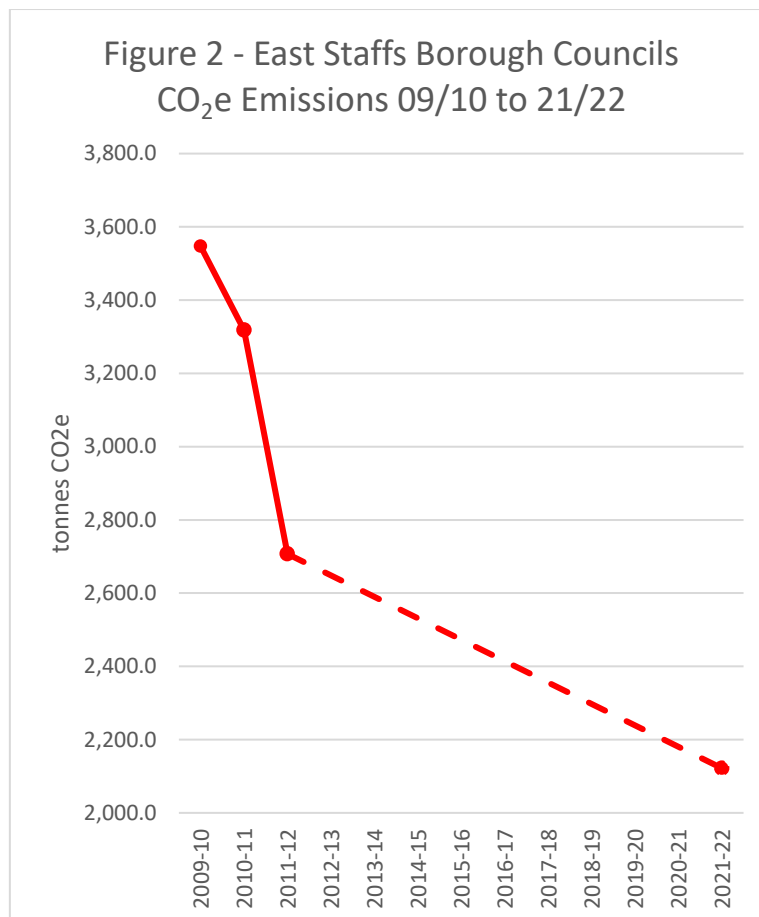
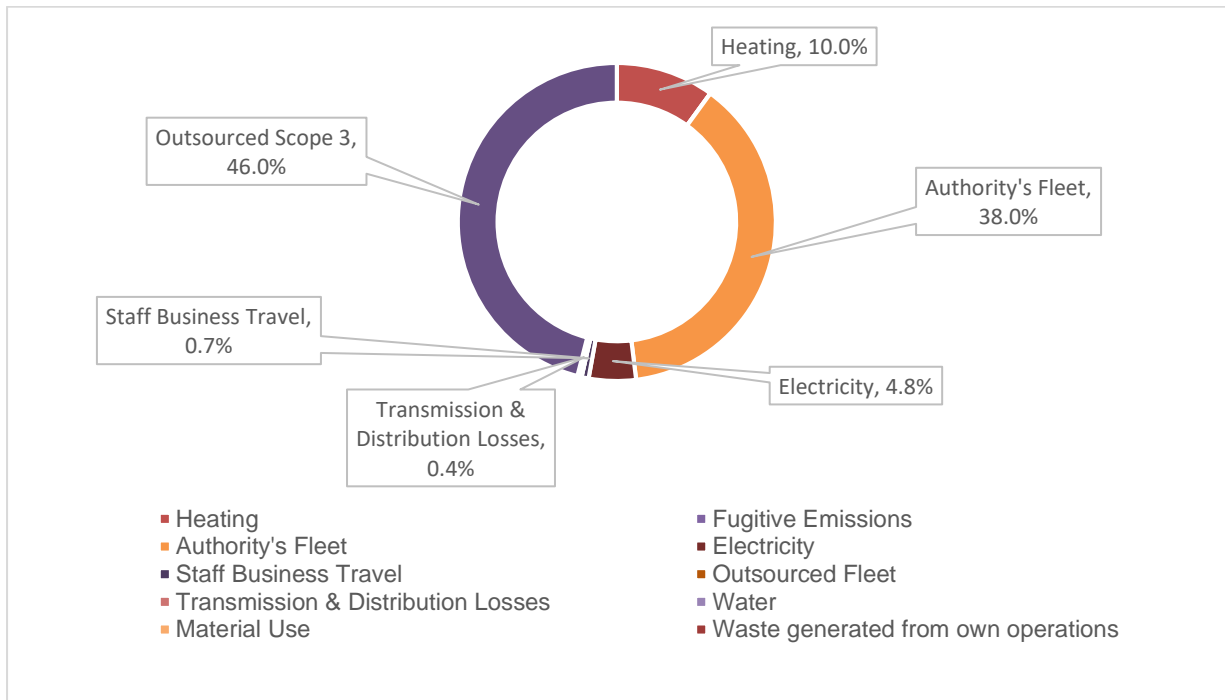


Figure 3 - East Staffs Borough Councils CO2e Emissions for 2021/22 by Source



6. Climate Change and Nature Action Plan

6.1. Progress with existing actions

6.1.1. The progress of each individual action in the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan has been assessed and given a RAG rating (RED, AMBER, GREEN). Actions shaded in GREY have not yet started. Progress against the action plan targets is presented in full in Appendix 1.

6.1.2. Progress can be summarised as follows:

- GREEN – 42 actions (34 on-track and 8 achieved)
- AMBER – 0 actions
- RED – 1 actions
- GREY – 14 actions

6.1.3. Notable progress since the last Action Plan monitoring report includes:

Action 1.1 – Climate Change and Nature Strategy

The refreshed Climate Change and Nature Strategy was completed in October and then approved by EDR. The Strategy is presented in full in Appendix 2.

The Strategy proposes four aims as follows:

- a. Protect climate from man-made climate change
- b. Adapt to the consequences of climate change

- c. Protect and enhance nature
- d. Use resources wisely, and minimise waste and pollution

For each of the four aims the Strategy explains why we need to act, what we have done so far and what we need to do next. It also covers stakeholder engagement, funding and the process of delivery.

The strategy also includes a target for the Borough to become carbon neutral by 2050 rather than 2040 as stated in the original Climate Emergency pledge. This is primarily in response to the publication of the government's Net Zero Strategy. The Net Zero Strategy sets out how the UK will become net zero by 2050. The actions contained in the Strategy will need to be delivered for East Staffordshire to become net zero. This means a target date before 2050 for the Borough is unrealistic. In addition, adjusting the date for the Borough to be carbon neutral by 2050 will align East Staffordshire with the County Council who have also set a target to become net zero by 2050.

Stakeholders will be given an opportunity to comment on the refreshed Strategy before final publication.

Action 3.1 – Eliminating single use plastics where possible

A Single Use Plastics (SUP) action plan has been developed and is being implemented with an initial focus on outward facing facilities such as the Brewhouse and Civic Function suite. Work has also taken place with Everyone Active in the leisure facilities. A video showing examples of action from across the council has been produced. Development of the action plan is ongoing to reflect new government policy and new SUP alternatives as they are made available through suppliers.

Action 3.2 - LED lighting & recycling bins on parks and open spaces

LED lighting has been introduced on car parks, double recycling bins continue to be introduced on a case by case basis subject to budgets.

Action 5.4 – Electric vehicle charging points in staff car parks

EV charging points were successfully installed for operational use at Millers Lane and Stapenhill Cemetary staff car parks in April/May of 2022. They will be used by the council's new electric vans purchased for the vehicle fleet.

Action 6.1 – Green Flag Awards for parks

Both Stapenhill Gardens and Bramshall Park have achieved the Green Flag standard.

Action 6.5 - Washlands Enhancement Project

Delivery is expected to be undertaken during 2023.

Action 7.1 – Electric vehicle charging points in council car parks

A Staffordshire wide EV strategy will be published early in 2023. When it has been published it will be used to determine key locations for EV charging points to be installed. Three dual floor mounted charging points are currently being procured and will be installed in Coopers Square Car Park by March 2023.

Action 9.4 – Household waste reduction through education

A campaign to highlight the change in the recycling service to fibre separate was carried out from March to June 2022. A video about the service is also being produced which will be used on the council website to highlight the importance of recycling correctly. The new service has resulted in a significant increase in the amount of fibre collected separately from other materials, thus helping to maintain quality. The amount of contamination found in the blue wheelie bins has also reduced which helps to maximise the income paid to the Council for this material.

Action 11.1 – Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document

The Local Plan contains several policies that will help mitigate climate change and also ensure that development adapts to the consequences of climate change. These policies include Green Infrastructure (SP23), Climate Change, Water Body Management & Flooding (SP27), Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (SP28), Accessibility & Sustainable Transport (SP35) and Designing in Sustainable Construction (DP2). A Climate Change SPD was adopted in August 2022 that takes each policy topic and provides guidance on how the policy requirements can be met.

6.1.4. One action in the Action Plan has been rated as Red:

Actions 8.3 – Air Quality Management Plan developed and implemented

Air quality is closely linked with transport emissions. A draft Air Quality Management Plan is being developed, however this has been delayed whilst the Integrated Transport Plan is produced by County Highways. The Integrated Transport Plan forms a significant part of the action plan which cannot be submitted to DEFRA for approval until it is complete. The County Council have not provided a date for the completion of the Integrated Transport Plan.

6.2. New Nature Recovery Actions

6.2.1. In March, the Council approved a Nature Recovery motion presented by the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust that required a number of additional actions to be included in the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan.

6.2.2. The actions will need to be delivered mainly by the Planning Service, Community & Open Spaces, the Climate Change Officer located in Environmental Health and through Procurement.

6.2.3. The Planning Service already requires biodiversity to be considered as part of the planning process. These requirements have recently been strengthened in the Environment Act (2021) which will require mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain for new developments from 2023. Guidance for planning applicants on Biodiversity Net Gain has been prepared and in anticipation of the new requirement the Planning Service are requesting Net Gain where possible and raising awareness amongst the development industry. The Service is also mapping Nature Recovery Networks in the Borough as part of a contribution to the new county-wide Nature Recovery Strategy that is being led by the county council and have already had discussions on possible schemes where

off site Biodiversity Net Gain could take place, also fulfilling the Nature Recovery Strategy. Along with other Staffordshire authorities the council has since January 2022 held a district license for the Great Crested Newt. This allows a more strategic approach to the conservation of the rare and legally protected Great Crested Newt offering land-landscape scale conservation and long-term certainty over habitat.

- 6.2.4. Community & Open Spaces already provide public access to nature, maintain sites for biodiversity, plant trees, manage invasive non-native species, avoid the use of peat and chemicals, adopt relaxed mowing regimes and prioritise native and pollinator plant species. The Nature Recovery motion will require a continuation of these practices. The Tree Policy is also being updated to guide the increased levels of tree planting necessary as a result of climate change. Additional tree planting will then take place through the establishment of formal Carbon Capture Areas. Relaxed mowing regimes will be expanded through the establishment of Biodiversity Enhancement Areas.
- 6.2.5. The Climate Change Officer located in Environmental Health will establish the carbon sequestration opportunities available on council-owned land. The Officer will also review strategic policies, plans and projects on an ongoing basis to identify opportunities to protect and enhance nature.
- 6.2.6. The Council's procurement activity also has an impact on the natural world. The Council's current Procurement Policy already contains a commitment to consider climate change and sustainability and a commitment to ethical procurement. Contracts should be required to avoid the use of peat. The Council's procurement activity also has an impact outside of the Borough. For example, there are many products on the market such as timber, food (eg. coffee, chocolate) and other products that contain palm oil. By using certification schemes (eg. Forest Stewardship Council, Fairtrade) it is possible to ensure that products are more likely to be from sources/forests that are legal and sustainably managed.

6.2.7.

7. Financial Considerations

This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit: Lisa Turner

- 7.1. There are potentially significant financial issues arising from the proposals identified within the action plan. These are likely to have financial implications in the medium to long term. Where projects are underway, such as the EV charging points, provision has been made within the MTFs.
- 7.2. Going forward, each action will be costed on a case by case basis and affordability will be considered as part of the annual review of the MTFs /or funded using existing budgets, in accordance with financial regulations.

8. Risk Assessment and Management

- 8.1. There are numerous risks associated with actions detailed in the action plan, however these will be considered for each individual action. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:
- 8.2. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):
- 8.2.1. Reduced CO₂ emissions to protect climate from man-made climate change
 - 8.2.2. Possible financial benefits and energy security through energy conservation and/or self-sufficient energy generation
 - 8.2.3. Adaptation to the consequences of climate change
 - 8.2.4. Nature recovery
 - 8.2.5. Wise use of resources and reduced waste and pollution
- 8.3. **Negative** (Threats):
- 8.3.1. Insufficient capacity and funding to deliver the change necessary
 - 8.3.2. Profound consequences of climate change and biodiversity loss
- 8.4. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

9. **Legal Considerations**

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team:
John Teasdale*

- 9.1. In 2008, the government set a target for the UK to reduce its greenhouse emissions in 2050 by 80% compared with 1990 levels (the Climate Change Act 2008) and, in June 2019, government passed legislation committing it to achieving 'net zero' greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019).
- 9.2. The individual actions detailed within the action plan may have their own legal implications and will therefore be considered as part of the approval process for each action.

10. **Equalities and Health**

- 10.1. **Equality impacts:** The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required at this stage but may be needed for specific policies and actions undertaken as part of the action plan.

10.2. **Health impacts:** The actions outlined in the Action Plan will result in improved health outcomes. Assessments will be completed on a case by case basis. An equality and health impact assessment is not required at this stage.

11. **Data Protection Implications – Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)**

11.1. A DPIA must be completed where there are plans to:

- use systematic and extensive profiling with significant effects;
- process special category or criminal offence data on a large scale; or
- systematically monitor publicly accessible places on a large scale
- use new technologies;
- use profiling or special category data to decide on access to services;
- profile individuals on a large scale;
- process biometric data;
- process genetic data;
- match data or combine datasets from different sources;
- collect personal data from a source other than the individual without providing them with a privacy notice ('invisible processing');
- track individuals' location or behaviour;
- profile children or target marketing or online services at them; or
- process data that might endanger the individual's physical health or safety in the event of a security breach

11.2 Following consideration of the above, there are no Data Protection implications arising from this report which would require a DPIA.

12. **Human Rights**

12.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

13. **Sustainability** (including climate change and change adaptation measures)

13.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) Yes- Reduced CO₂ emissions and nature recovery.

14. **Recommendation(s)**

14.1. The report makes the following recommendations:

- a) Overall positive progress with the implementation of the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan is noted.
- b) The continued downward trend in annual CO₂ emissions for both the Borough and the council are noted.
- c) The Climate Change and Nature Action Plan is revised to include the new nature recovery actions.
- d) Note that the Climate Change and Nature Strategy was completed in October and approved by EDR.

15. **Background Papers**

- Climate Change Declaration and Action Plan, Cabinet 17th Aug 2020
- Climate Change and Nature Action Plan – 1st Year Review of Progress, Cabinet 14th Feb 2022
- Nature Recovery motion approved by Council, March 7th 2022

16. **Appendices**

Appendix 1: The Climate Change and Nature Action Plan Progress

Appendix 2: The East Staffordshire Borough Council Climate Change and Nature Strategy