

Merton's Framework Climate Action Plan (2020-2050) - Outline

15th October 2019

What is the role of the climate emergency working group in the formation of the action plan?

Annex A sets out the main steps to forming the climate action plan. The Climate Emergency Working Group forms an important part of this process, by identifying and developing actions, and connecting with others in the borough. We anticipate that the Climate Emergency Working Group will play a particularly important role in identifying actions for the 2050 target where the Council has traditionally had less influence. Other Merton groups and members of the public will also make an important contribution through the public consultation and groups already engaged with the Council.

Where the Council is expected to lead actions, Officers will have a key role to play in establishing what actions can be taken using existing/ developing Council strategies, policies and programmes. To date, no new funding has been identified, so actions that require Council support will need to be within the existing means. Any shortfall in necessary action will be identified and where possible a strategy to resource it will be suggested.

As well as the 2050 borough-wide target, the Council will consider how it can be a carbon neutral borough by 2030. A work programme has already been instigated to consider this.

Each action identified must go through a process which is as transparent and evidence-based as possible. **Annex B** sets out the key questions that will need to be addressed to establish why the actions in the plan have been chosen. We anticipate that the Climate Emergency Working Group, the Sustainable Communities and Transport Partnership and Senior Council Officers will play a key role in prioritising these actions. Consultants providing technical support will check whether the sum of the prioritised actions matches the pace and scale of change needed to reach the Council and borough targets. The intention is get as much consensus around key actions as possible at this stage, prior to formal drafting.

We anticipate that climate change officers steered by Councillor Byers will hold the pen on drafting and be responsible for its clearance through the main Council processes. It is their responsibility to ensure that draft reflects the priorities identified.

Suggested discussion points for the meeting:

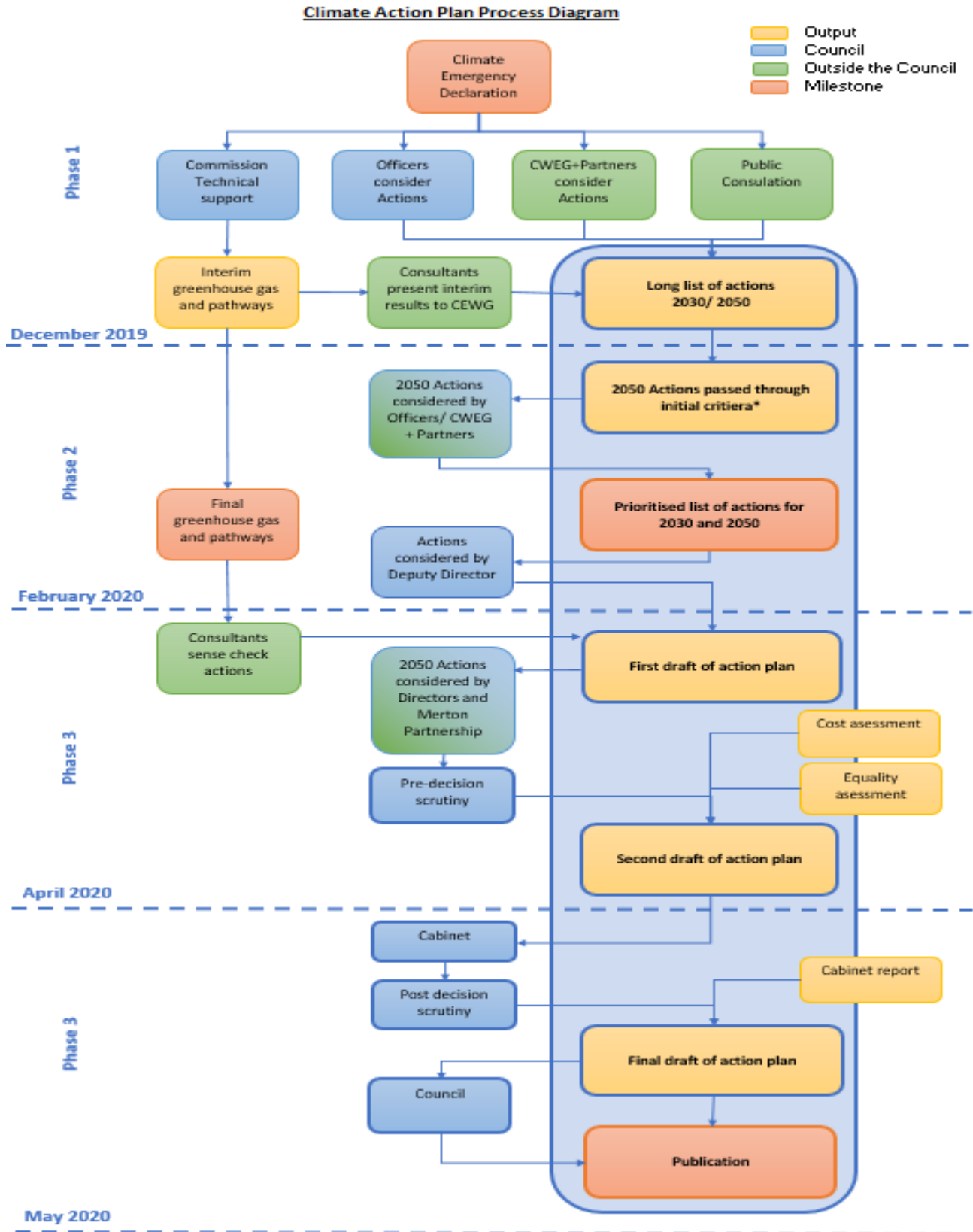
- Is the Climate Emergency Working Group able to work effectively with the Council?
- Should the Climate Emergency Working Group develop actions by addressing the key questions set out in Annex B?
- Do the Climate Emergency Working Group wish to be involved in Council processes such as Cabinet and Scrutiny meetings?

What the action plan will look like?

The action plan will be a short (max 30page) document which sets out at the main activities that are needed to deliver a carbon neutral borough and Council. These will be high level but where possible will be costed. Key gaps in resource or other barriers (such as national legislation) which may prevent full delivery will be identified. The outline structure is set out in **Annex C** may be subject to change depending on the outcome of the consultation, prioritisation or new evidence.

All other considerations will be captured in supporting documents in the form of technical reports from the consultants, and papers provided to the working group, scrutiny and cabinet.

Annex A – The action plan process



Annex B - Key questions that need to be addressed in order to identify actions for the plan:

For each section of the action plan, the following questions will be considered.

For each action

1. What is the proposed action?
2. How will the action help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
3. Who will take primary responsibility for delivering this action?
4. How much will it cost?/ where is the funding coming from?
5. How long will it take?/ When might the action start?
6. How will it be delivered?
7. Are there key risks/ barriers/ dependencies?

For the section as a whole

8. Do the sum of the proposed actions meet the pace and scale of change required to decarbonise Merton by 2050?
9. Should actions be prioritised?
10. Do some actions need to be ruled out?
11. Should actions be phased?

Annex C – Outline Structure

Main sections

Foreword

Executive Summary

1. Our Vision
2. Our approach to forming the action plan (including progress to date/ what to expect next/ what you can do)
3. Merton's Carbon Emissions (set new baseline)
 - 2050 target for the borough
 - 2030 target for the Council
4. The Action Plan [see more detail below]
 - 2050 target for the borough
 - 2030 target for the Council [potentially in a separate document?]
5. Tracking progress
6. End

Approach to the action plan for the 2050 target

The action plan will have an overview which sets the scene, followed by one or more high-level commitments that the Council/ others will follow up on through policies, programmes or projects. The following headings identify all of the core elements that would be needed to make a complete transformation into a low carbon Merton. These may change to better suit the actions identified once these become apparent:

Energy and buildings

1. Adaptation of existing energy infrastructure: will address how to achieve an increase in electricity supply by around 50GWh, a 1TWh reduction in gas use or conversion of the gas grid to hydrogen.
2. Expanding local energy supply: will be about encouraging new on-site renewable energy, mainly solar PV on roofs and district heating.
3. Improving the flexibility, resilience and affordability of low carbon energy: will focus on encouraging the use of green electricity tariffs, and initiating more energy storage and smart solutions.
4. Zero carbon new-builds: will consider whether new standards on new builds beyond current policies are needed and what these should be.
5. Instigating a revolution in retrofit: will set out how we will encourage those who are able to pay to make changes to their homes and businesses to increase energy efficiency, replace boilers with efficient electric heating and increase on-site renewable energy. It could also set out what levers we have to encourage the private rented sector to make further investments in their properties, including key social housing sectors.
6. Reducing cost barriers for consumers: will set out any actions relating to supporting vulnerable groups (e.g. fuel poor), accessing funding or (if appropriate) consider a Council-run Energy service Company to help people who want to improve their homes the means to do so.

Transport

7. Facilitating new transport infrastructure: will talk about how we can consider Merton's major regenerations and structural activities, encourage walking and cycling, and enable an increase in electric vehicles through more charging points.

8. Maximising the benefits of sustainable and healthy travel: links into actions that others including public health and air quality are doing to encourage active travel.
9. Greening the vehicle fleet: focusses on discouraging the use of petrol and diesel vehicles, if there are additional actions over and above those in sections 7 and 8.

Other important aspects which the Council has less control over

10. Encouraging a circular economy: will identify what actions are required to reduce the indirect impacts of greenhouse gas emissions relating to the purchase of products and the use of packaging and prevent waste. It will also address actions which encourage re-use and recycling.
11. Sustainable investments: there may be actions which persuade individuals or individuals to invest their responsibly.
12. Maximising green spaces for carbon offset: will seek to accelerate existing increases in tree already being undertaken by the Council and on private land.
13. Empowering individuals and communities: will set out actions additional or linked to the community plan that will direct the groundswell of concern for climate change into positive local action.

Approach to the action plan for the 2030 target

Sections will be subject to final agreement of the scope of the 2030 target, but are likely to include the following areas:

1. Decarbonising and maximising the low carbon energy potential from the Council's building stock
2. Waste, products and transport that result from operational buildings.
3. Greenhouse gas emissions from major procurements
4. Influencing major service delivery partners in the borough (e.g. police, TFL, health and social care, housing, schools - if not covered in the 2050 actions)
5. Services dependent on transport
6. Greening the public realm (if not covered in the 2050 actions)
7. Responsible investments