
Climate Change Strategy 2026-2031

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sue Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Wills
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Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	The green thread
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND that:-

- 1) The Council's Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 be approved**
- 2) an annual review of the Climate Change Strategy be reported to Council.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Bromsgrove District Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to place climate considerations at the centre of decision-making. The proposed Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 updates and replaces the previous Carbon Reduction Action Plan and sets out the pathway to Net Zero by 2040 for the Council's own operations, with a 50% reduction by 2030.
- 2.2 The Strategy aligns with the UK statutory target of Net Zero by 2050 and international commitments under the Paris Agreement; it also reflects the Council Plan's green thread, embedding climate action across services.
- 2.3 The Strategy focuses on priority themes where the Council has direct control or significant influence:
 - **Buildings – council estate** (energy efficiency & renewables),

- **Residential buildings** (retrofit & fuel poverty),
- **Transport** (fleet decarbonisation, EV infrastructure, active travel),
- **Planning & land use** (policies, Future Homes Standard readiness, district heat network feasibility),
- **Biodiversity** (BNG delivery, parks, nature recovery),
- **Waste & food** (recycling, weekly food waste collections, Anaerobic Digestion feasibility),
- **Collaboration & engagement** (partners, businesses, communities), and
- **Governance & finance** (training, procurement, reporting).

2.4 **Evidence base highlights (baseline & progress):**

- **Domestic retrofit:** £284,430 invested since 2019; a further c. £285,123 anticipated via Warm Homes Local Grant over three years (subject to eligibility and take-up).
- **Public EV charging:** installation programme underway (including 10 taxi chargers and additional units in 2025); chargers on BDC car parks have dispensed 612,986 kWh, saving an estimated ~479 tCO₂ for EV users to date.
- **Council energy:** estate-wide purchased energy shows a downward trend since 2021 solar PV at the Depot and further PV at BSLC are reducing purchased energy and costs.
- **Area emissions context:** DESNZ local authority GHG statistics (2005–2023) provide the latest official picture for Bromsgrove and Worcestershire.

3. **OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

3.1 **Delivery approach.** A cross-service programme will coordinate actions and contribute to delivering on the strategies milestones and outcomes, overseen by the Climate Change Manager. The Climate Change team also provide services with the expertise and guidance is required.

3.2 **Governance.** The Strategy will be embedded in the Council's performance framework with annual Cabinet reporting. Climate implications are already a standard section in committee reports; options to introduce a simple climate impact assessment tool for officers to utilise.

To ensure the Strategy moves from high-level ambition to operational reality, Service-specific SMART actions and milestones will be embedded directly into the relevant Service Business Plans. This ensures that Assistant Directors and Service Managers maintain full ownership over the delivery methods required to meet the Climate Change Strategies outcomes.

The Climate Change Manager will act as the central corporate auditor, responsible for the annual monitoring and reporting of these milestones to Cabinet. By aligning these targets within departmental business plans, the Council ensures that accountability is held at the point of delivery, while the Climate Strategy serves as the overarching framework for progress and risk escalation.

Furthermore, to support tracking progress with the strategies milestones and outcomes a dashboard is being developed to allow the council to see the impact of these actions in terms of carbon savings and impacts on our residents.

- 3.3 **Partnerships.** Continued collaboration with Worcestershire County Council (e.g., LEVI on-street charging), Everyone Active, BDHT/Registered Providers, Act On Energy, Midland Net Zero Hub, Worcestershire Regulatory Services, will maximise delivery capacity and funding leverage.
- 3.4 **Current Activity.** Key operational programmes include PV at Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre and lighting upgrades across the estate; Warm Homes retrofit; expansion of EV charging (including support to WCC's LEVI rollout); preparation for separate weekly food waste collections; and biodiversity improvements (mowing regimes, equipment electrification).

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Strategy will be delivered through a mix of existing revenue budgets, invest-to-save business cases, Capital Programme bids, and external funding as required by service areas
- 4.2 Officers will work with Finance to profile costs, savings, and funding sources through the Medium-Term Financial Plan, ensuring robust whole-life business cases. Officers will explore funding opportunities and partnerships with both public and private sectors to attract investment into the borough where possible to deliver climate change projects.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).** Under the Environment Act 2021, a mandatory minimum 10% BNG applies to qualifying planning applications (major developments from 12 February 2024; small sites from 2 April 2024). The Strategy supports implementation through development management and local plan policy.
- 5.2 **Waste & recycling reforms.** The Government's Simpler Recycling requirements standardise collections nationally; separate household

food waste collections are required by 31 March 2026, subject to transitional provisions. Preparatory work is underway to ensure operational readiness (collection system, communications, and processing).

- 5.3 **Procurement & contracts.** Delivery will align with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and proposed sustainable procurement updates, incorporating whole-life carbon and social value where proportionate and lawful.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 Any structural changes will be monitored. Programme sequencing (e.g., fleet transition and depot infrastructure) will be reviewed to minimise stranded costs, maintain service continuity, and align with any future operating model.
- 6.2 The strategy is constructed in a way that will allow it to be adapted to the new unitary authority.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The Strategy gives effect to the green thread within the Council Plan by reducing emissions, improving resilience, lowering energy costs, and supporting a greener local economy.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 Approval will enable the Council's primary framework to reduce operational and area-wide emissions, improve air quality, and support adaptation and nature recovery.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 Actions are designed to reduce fuel poverty and improve health outcomes (e.g., domestic retrofit, air quality). Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for major programmes to ensure fair access and mitigate unintended impacts.
- 6.5 All documents will be produced accessibly in line with the Council's corporate accessibility guidance.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 **Funding availability & affordability** – *Mitigation:* phased delivery, external grant maximisation, robust invest-to-save business cases.
Market capacity & supply chain constraints – *Mitigation:* early engagement, framework procurement, regional collaboration (e.g., Midlands Connect / MNZH).
Operational disruption during works – *Mitigation:* programme planning around service needs, contractor management, stakeholder communications.
Policy & regulatory change – *Mitigation:* horizon scanning, flexible delivery plans, governance oversight.
Data quality & benefits realisation – *Mitigation:* climate dashboard, baselines and KPIs; regular monitoring and reporting.

8. **APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1 – Climate Change Strategy 2026 - 2031

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet
2026

20th April

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sue Baxter	19/02/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Wills	12/02/2026
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	12/02/2026
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	14/01/2026