

## COUNCIL – 17TH JANUARY 2022

### Report of the Chief Executive

#### Part A

#### ITEM 9 MOTION ON NOTICE: TOWARDS CARBON NEUTRALITY IN CHARNWOOD

##### Purpose of Report

To allow Council to consider those elements of a motion on notice that was referred for further consideration at the full Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 that relate to Council responsibilities.

##### Recommendation

That Council determines what, if any, action to take in response to the following resolutions that were included within the motion on notice, taking into account the officer advice on the relevant implications as set out in Part B of this report:

- (a) Introduce obligatory Carbon Literacy training for ALL Members.
- (b) Commit to a minimum annual budget for carbon neutral projects for the next five years at least, to ensure progress doesn't stall due to lack of financial commitment.

##### Reason

To ensure that those elements of the motion on notice as referred by full Council that relate to Council responsibilities are given informed consideration.

##### Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

At the full Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 the following motion on notice was referred so that the relevant elements could be further considered by Council and by Cabinet, as appropriate, with the benefit of officer advice on the associated implications:

##### ***This Council notes that:***

*This year marks the 26th COP summit, taking place 1-12 November 2021 in the UK. The spotlight is now firmly on the UK to provide a level of global leadership that raises ambition and turns promises into desperately needed action to tackle the climate crisis.*

##### ***This Council believes that:***

*Local authorities have their part to play in showing this leadership, by acknowledging the urgent need for action on climate change, taking steps to reduce their own carbon footprint, and encouraging and supporting local businesses and residents to do the same.*

***This Council resolves to:***

- 1) Appoint a dedicated member of staff to oversee the progress of the council towards its goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2025, ensure it is kept on track, and that any available external funding identified is applied for.*
- 2) Ensure that the CBC Carbon Neutral Project Board is a democratic and politically balanced entity, comprising members from across the political spectrum. The climate crisis affects us all.*
- 3) Introduce obligatory Carbon Literacy training for ALL officers and councillors.*
- 4) Commit to a minimum annual budget for carbon neutral projects for the next five years at least, to ensure progress doesn't stall due to lack of financial commitment.*
- 5) Establish a Charnwood Climate Committee made up of knowledgeable representatives in the relevant fields of business & industry, research and academia and community, to look at ways businesses and residents in the borough of Charnwood can be supported and encouraged to reduce their carbon footprint.*

The Monitoring Officer has determined that the proposed resolution 4) relates to Council responsibilities and is therefore for Council to consider.

In relation to 3), Member training is a Council function, overseen by the Member Development Member Reference Group, and officer training is an executive function. The Member training element is therefore considered within this report.

The resolutions which relate to Cabinet functions, i.e., the part of 3) which relates to officer training, and 1), 2) and 5) were considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

Any decisions made by Council would come into effect at such times as they may determine to be appropriate.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

*Financial Implications*

As set out in Part B.

*Risk Management*

Any risks associated with the proposed resolutions are set out in Part B.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: None

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## Part B

### Resolution (a): Introduce obligatory Carbon Literacy training for ALL Members.

1. Carbon literacy bronze accreditation training specifically for Members has been organised with an external facilitator. The training, which requires a relatively significant time commitment from those Members who participate, is for fifteen Members on a politically representative basis, and all those attending have committed to 3 training sessions on 25th January, 1st February, and 8th February 2022.
2. Council could recommend to the Member Development Member Reference Group that obligatory carbon literacy training should be provided to all Members, subject to any costs being within the available member training budget. This would not necessarily need to be at the full bronze accreditation level, but could instead be more basic awareness training.
3. If the training were to be made obligatory, Council would need to consider what steps would be taken in respect of any Members who did not participate.

### Resolution (b): Commit to a minimum annual budget for carbon neutral projects for the next five years at least, to ensure progress doesn't stall due to lack of financial commitment.

4. This is a matter for the budget and capital plan setting process, which will ultimately come to Council for approval in February 2022.
5. The budget process will need to balance a large number of competing demands, but given the Council's constrained finances funding for carbon neutral or sustainability issues may require reductions or withholding funding from other priorities.