

Environment and Climate Change
Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD

Report of: Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

Meeting of: Executive

Date: 23 March 2023

Ward(s): all

Subject: Executive Response to the Scrutiny Review of the Net Zero Carbon Programme and Working Group on Waste Management

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. In April 2022 the Executive received a report from the Environment Scrutiny Committee about its scrutiny of the Net Zero Carbon Programme and Working Group on Waste Management. The report provided 24 recommendations for the Net Zero Carbon Programme.
- 1.2. This report outlines how these recommendations have been taken forward within the Net Zero Carbon Programme since the report was published.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. To agree the responses to recommendations made by the Environment Scrutiny Committee set out in Section 4 of this report.

3. Background

- 3.1. Islington Council declared a climate emergency on 27 June 2019, when a motion committing the council to working towards making Islington net zero carbon by 2030 was unanimously passed by a meeting of full council.

- 3.2. In 2020, the council published Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030. In this strategy we set out what the council could commit to immediately and the actions we would take, identified some potential commitments which required further investigation and highlighted what the council needed from others in order for the borough to achieve net zero, including funding, powers and legislation.
- 3.3. The net zero carbon programme was established in 2021. As a new, ambitious and high profile programme which requires the council to adopt different practices and innovative approaches to unprecedented challenges, we welcome the review process and the Environment Scrutiny Committee's recommendations which have provided a valuable steer for the development of the Programme.
- 3.4. The committee took evidence from June 2021 to January 2022, considering the following themes as part of the Net Zero Carbon review:
 - 3.4.1. Overview of the Council's 2030 Net Zero Carbon Programme
 - 3.4.2. Planning for Zero Carbon
 - 3.4.3. The Green Economy Work Stream
 - 3.4.4. Transport
 - 3.4.5. Engagement and Communication
 - 3.4.6. Housing (council, private owner occupied and rented housing)
 - 3.4.7. Buildings (commercial and infrastructure)
 - 3.4.8. Natural environment
 - 3.4.9. Waste reduction and recycling & circular economy
 - 3.4.10. Finance and investment
 - 3.4.11. Sustainable and affordable energy
- 3.5. Members of the Committee also held an Informal Working Group to review the council's waste management arrangements. Members considered the following issues:
 - 3.5.1. How the council can engage better with residents and other organisations on the Net Zero Carbon Programme and encourage their participation.
 - 3.5.2. Making our recycling services more effective and recycling more including garden waste.
 - 3.5.3. How to get residents more engaged in recycling services.
 - 3.5.4. How to reduce consumption, waste and carbon emissions.
 - 3.5.5. How to improve recycling by residents who live in flats above shops by introducing food waste collections.
 - 3.5.6. What else can we do on estates to encourage residents to recycle more.
 - 3.5.7. What else can the council and the North London Waste Authority do to reduce waste, increase recycling and phase out the incineration of waste.
- 3.6. Members of the Committee made a number of recommendations to make to the Executive.

4. Responses to the Recommendations

4.1. The committee set out 24 recommendations for the Net Zero Carbon Programme. We welcome all these recommendations and have worked ensure they are addressed within the programme as it develops. In some cases, we have re-focused some of our existing projects to address these immediately. In other cases, we have scheduled activity into future programme plans. The responses to each of the 24 recommendations are set out below.

4.2. Where possible we have also set out below our progress in delivery as a result of these recommendations. This is a challenging and ambitious programme, and the complex and long-term nature of the programme means that it will take more time to implement and demonstrate the impact of some of the recommendations.

4.3. **Recommendation 1. Develop a feasibility / options and funding appraisal for a 'model house' project for a historic council street property. Incorporate and publicise best practice into the Supplementary Planning Document.**

4.3.1. Highbury Quadrant is a prototype for Islington Council and will be an important test case for exploring options for highly sustainable refurbishments and new builds.

4.3.2. The project involves refurbishment of an existing Victorian end of terrace council property with eight single dwellings converted into three family sized flats of which two will be EPC-B and one EPC-A, and construction of a new 3 storey 3-bedroom house to ultra-low energy design standard. The contract for this has been awarded, and works on the retrofit build started on site in February 2023 with the expectation that works will take 18 months to complete. The learning from development and delivery of this project will inform the guidance set out in the Net Zero Supplementary Planning Document.

4.3.3. We are also working with London South Bank University who is leading a small research study into how the energy efficiency of private Victorian homes within the Thornhill Square area of the Barnsbury Conservation Area can be improved. This research should be completed and returned to the council by March 2023. Additionally, the planning policy team will commission further research into possible retrofit measures for other types of historic residential buildings across the borough. The findings of these research projects will be incorporated into best practice guidance in the Net Zero Carbon Supplementary Planning Document. The Supplementary Planning Document will set out best practice guidance including a 'whole building' approach for a range of typical historic building types within Islington.

4.4. **Recommendation 2. Ensure the council's Net Zero Carbon building retrofit schemes are developed in tandem with approach to fire safety**

4.4.1. In response to new post-Grenfell Tower legislation, the Council's Building and Fire Safety Board has established a Building Materials and Practice Group. The intent

of this group is to not only develop and update Council specifications, but to ensure a consistent approach in all construction work undertaken by Housing Property Services (HPS) including net zero retrofit measures.

- 4.4.2. The Council will also take account of recommendations and specific requirements arising from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI), including those relating to Contractor competence. The HPS processes for assessing and appointing suitably competent Contractors are also being reviewed by the Governance Group under the Building and Fire Safety Board.
- 4.4.3. By incorporating recommendations arising from our ongoing Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) programmes where appropriate, the Council will also seek to take advantage of evolving standards in construction materials and processes, enhancing and improving the safety of residents through our retrofit programme(s). Housing are working with Green Economy colleagues to ensure the council has suitably qualified retrofit assessors.
- 4.4.4. To ensure that this workstream is adequately resourced there is also a need to build up the capacity of the council's in-house Building Control Service. This Service is responsible for advising on and approving the fire safety of all the relevant council capital works. As a first step to providing this capacity, organisational change is underway within Planning and Development to create a new role of Head of Building Control and a team that will focus on in-house building control applications.

4.5. Recommendation 3. Develop a strategy for delivery of carbon reduction improvements for corporate buildings and schools from completed feasibility studies.

- 4.5.1. The Corporate Landlord Service is working closely with the Energy Service to develop a strategy for decarbonisation of corporate buildings and schools. 32 feasibility studies have been completed to date (10 for corporate buildings and 22 for schools) and these are being assessed and prioritised, with applications being made where possible for funding to deliver the works. These studies outline a number of measures each building could take to reduce carbon and energy, such as installing heat pumps, solar PVs, increasing loft insulation and replacing windows. Learning from previous studies and funding application rounds are also being applied to strengthen the data being collected and improve efficiency going forward. Funding has been secured through the Low Carbon Skills fund to conduct feasibility studies on a further 29 buildings this financial year.
- 4.5.2. Delivery of decarbonisation measures is underway at New River College (NRC) including a ground source heat pump, window replacement, heat metering, mechanical ventilation, and heat recovery. The annual carbon savings 26 tonnes of CO₂ for New River College. The project is also providing important learning for the team about the organisation of works.
- 4.5.3. In September 2022, 7 schools and 8 corporate buildings were submitted to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for funding with the outcome expected in

January 2023. Eligible buildings included those where work included replacement of a boiler (10 years or older) with an electricity driven heat pump. Limited applications were submitted due to significant match funding requirements. Engagement with schools is ongoing to ensure that they understand and are on board with the measures.

- 4.5.4. As the energy price crisis emerged over the summer, teams from across the council came together to monitor the rapidly increasing cost of energy and accelerate mitigation measures. Assessments continue to be undertaken at corporate buildings to identify where energy usage can be minimised. Two Energy Officers support this work across council building stock (including estates), with a third post approved and officer appointed in September 2022 to increase capacity.

4.6. Recommendation 4. Deliver the first new build scheme designed to meet Passivhaus level performance.

- 4.6.1. Vorley Road Passivhaus Pilot project secured a resolution to grant planning permission in December 2022. Subject to the Stage 2 referral to the GLA, construction is set to start in 2023 and expected to complete in 2025. The project will provide 72 mixed tenure flats, a library and GP surgery.

Transport

4.7. Recommendation 5. Develop the council's approach to reducing carbon emissions from freight – e.g. last mile deliveries. This approach to be detailed in the council's Net Zero Carbon Supplementary Planning Document.

- 4.7.1. The Council is currently developing a Freight Action Plan for publication in Q1 2023/24 to strategically reduce emissions from freight. The Council is also developing a Net-zero carbon (NZC) Supplementary Planning Document, which will consider the measures to address freight in the context of NZC.
- 4.7.2. The overarching approach of the Freight Action Plan is to ensure actions align with the three 'R's':
- Reduce - the number of freight trips and impact on the borough's roads
 - Remode - increasing the use of zero emission vehicles for freight
 - Retime - extending deliveries & servicing times outside of peak hours
- 4.7.3. It will focus on the key areas of partnership working, developing comms and promotion of sustainable freight, managing freight at the kerbside, consolidation and onward distribution, information and data and cycle freight for last mile deliveries.
- 4.7.4. The action plan will build on the Council's strong existing foundation of efforts to reduce carbon emissions from freight, including:
- Reducing the Council's vehicle fleet and a transition to electric vehicles for the remaining fleet.

- The use of e-bikes and e-cargo bikes for mail deliveries, ground maintenance and street cleaning and provision of e-cargo bikes for local organisations to use for delivering and collecting food.
 - Engaging with local businesses regarding their deliveries and servicing requirements through the Archway Zero Emissions Network (ZEN) to reduce their impacts on air pollution.
 - Implementing low-traffic neighbourhoods/liveable neighbourhoods that use modal filters including bollards and smart cameras to restrict through traffic including freight from cutting through residential streets and also local lorry controls to restrict the movement of HGVs to certain main roads.
- 4.7.5. Our fleet service started trialling 5 high spec EAV cargo bikes for our fleet in January 2023. Community Partnerships have 7 e-cargo bikes which are deployed at community centres.
- 4.7.6. Businesses and residents can also purchase cargo bikes through our accessible purchase scheme, Try Before You Bike.
- 4.7.7. Islington is one of the project partners for Cross River Partnership's Clean Air Logistics for London (CALL) project to deliver more river freight trials and micro logistics hubs, supported by low emission delivery modes such as EV's, cargo bikes and walking freight. As part of the project, Islington has secured funding to procure two e-cargo bikes and support services for host businesses to use for their last mile logistics requirements as well as that of neighbouring businesses and customers. This is building on an existing Shared Cargo Bikes for Businesses trial scheme currently in operation in the borough, with two e-cargo bikes hosted by businesses at Exmouth Market and Caledonian Road. Engagement with potential host businesses for the trial scheme is currently being undertaken with potential locations including Camden passage and along Essex Road. The CRP funding will enable a two-year trial to be implemented, operated by OurBike.

Sustainable and Affordable Energy

4.8. Recommendation 6. Explore opportunities to address net zero carbon ambitions in the context of the current cost of living and energy security crisis, both of which have emerged since the publication of Vision 2030 (for example through our work on Renewable Power for London).

- 4.8.1. Islington Council is leading the 'Renewable Power for London (RP4L) programme', the energy programme of London Council's seven London-wide climate programmes. London Councils is a pan-London organisation representing all London boroughs. RP4L focuses on three areas, one of which is energy advice. This workstream seeks to support residents, in particular vulnerable groups, with saving energy and, therefore, money on their fuel bills, thus addressing fuel poverty. This is more important than ever with the energy security and cost of living crises.
- 4.8.2. Islington, through its SHINE (Seasonal Health Intervention Network) service, is one of four boroughs who provide an energy advice service to residents across London. SHINE includes assistance with energy bills, accessing water discounts, getting people onto the Priority Services Register, providing advice on and helping access

grants (such as Safe and Warm), mediating with energy suppliers and applying for debt relief, and referring clients to other means of support, including food vouchers, taxicards, befriending services and benefits checks. The service will also be launching its own debt relief fund in the near future. In addition, SHINE also has an energy doctor service, which visits people in their homes to provide tailored advice, install energy-saving measures and check heating controls. The council is funding additional resources for this team through the North London Waste Authority funding.

- 4.8.3. The Council's SHINE service has worked phenomenally hard this year to support people across London to increase the energy efficiency of their homes, reduce their energy bills and address fuel poverty. This helps people's wellbeing and finances while also reducing carbon emissions. As well as the small measures installed by the Energy Doctors, the service supports larger-scale retrofit for residents on low incomes through promoting the GLA (Greater London Authority's) Warm Homes Programme (with Islington seeing one of the highest levels of takeup) and delivering its own Warmth on Prescription grants, which are targeted at vulnerable residents in inefficient homes. The wider Energy Services team has also successfully bid for Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund grant money to improve the energy efficiency of the council's own stock and are currently developing a new project to take advantage of the government's ECO4 (Energy Company Obligation round 4) funding, which is targeted at retrofitting inefficient homes. All of this work seeks to support residents on low incomes live in warmer homes while reducing their energy bills.
- 4.8.4. The Council has renewed its focus on a Corporate Energy Savings Programme to identify and deliver measures to reduce its own energy consumption, addressing the dual crises of cost of living and climate change. This work includes council homes and school buildings as well as a staff campaign. The NZC Programme team have pulled together this work which is being delivered across numerous council teams, and the additional activity and projects identified will be embedded into the NZC programme going forwards.
- 4.8.5. The council also has a grant scheme for small businesses to install energy-saving measures, as well as offering free environmental audits of their premises to identify energy saving opportunities.

Green Economy

4.9. Recommendation 7. Identify and create a pipeline of carbon reduction jobs through our Housing and Corporate Buildings programmes that can kickstart and provide training and confidence for the supply chain in promoting green skills and local green jobs and suppliers.

- 4.9.1. Officers from the Green Economy and Buildings workstreams have met to discuss this and agree next steps.

- 4.9.2. An assessment of options to retrofit the housing estate was undertaken by UCL and completed in late 2022. The next stage of this is to review and analyse the report in order to prioritise our retrofit and decarbonization work and create a pipeline of local carbon reduction jobs. We plan to commission a supplementary piece of work to scope the skills pipeline requirements for this.
- 4.9.3. As referenced under 4.3, work is underway to develop a strategy for the decarbonisation our corporate estate and this will inform the assessment of pipeline skills and jobs requirements. We have also started working with our Anchor Institution partners to develop a Reducing Carbon Emissions Action Plan and collaboration on retrofit of our collective estate and identification of the pipeline for procurement and green skills development opportunities is a key area for joint work in 2023.
- 4.9.4. To support this work and facilitate development of retrofit skills and employment opportunities in the borough, funding has been allocated to appoint a Green Construction Skills/Employment officer for the next 2 years who will work with employers and businesses to employ appropriately skilled residents/help businesses to upskill capacity.
- 4.9.5. Social Value is an integral part of our procurement process and we are committed to ensuring that NZC principles, upskilling and opportunities for local residents are embedded in our processes. Currently, building contractors have an obligation to employ local apprentices, and we are working closely with the green economy team to see where there is the opportunity to train existing staff and if there are opportunities to strengthen these elements within future contracts.
- 4.9.6. Green construction jobs and training opportunities are also secured through s106 agreements with developers, e.g. on the Holloway Prison site.

Planning

- 4.10. **Recommendation 8. Consider how conservation area guidelines and other planning policies could be further amended beyond existing national permitted development rights to encourage the installation of solar panels and other carbon reduction measures.**
 - 4.10.1. This recommendation will be carefully considered in tandem with the development of the Net Zero Carbon Supplementary Planning Document and its associated research programmes. Any changes to planning policy will be subject to extensive public consultation and the relevant statutory procedures.
- 4.11. **Recommendation 9. Investigate the options and implications for providing residents with retrofitting and net zero carbon advice as an enabler to encourage owner occupiers and private landlords to install carbon reduction measures.**

- 4.11.1. Funding has been sought for an additional Planning Officer post to be funded for the next 2 years to provide free of charge specialist pre-application planning advice on energy efficiency measures. This will support local residents and small businesses in bringing forward supportable applications.
- 4.11.2. By February 2023 the Development Management Service will have publicised its existing free duty planner service for applicants to receive advice on what carbon reduction measures require planning permission, and what documentation would be needed in support of applications. This free advice will relate to energy efficiency proposals only. The Development Management's webpages will be updated to publicise this new service.
- 4.11.3. Alongside this, the Net Zero Carbon Programme team are exploring options to build further capacity within the programme to support private property owners through outreach and engagement.

Natural Environment

- 4.12. **Recommendation 10. Deliver a new 'Greening of the Borough' programme with an emphasis on resident engagement and participation and maximise the benefits to ensure it is targeted around residents with greatest need.**
- 4.12.1. The Islington Greener Together programme launched in March 2022 and is designed to allow residents, businesses and community groups to help shape a more environmentally-friendly future by bringing their green ideas to life. Of the 95 applications received, 38 community projects were approved. The first 8 projects are expected to complete by Spring 2023.
- 4.12.2. The design of the scheme has been to create a process that was fair and accessible to all, enabling all parts of the community to have the opportunity to green their neighbourhood. To this end, the scheme has been designed not as a grant and instead is about identifying various funding routes (e.g. People Friendly Streets and Thriving Neighbourhoods), and the team working with the applicant to design and deliver the project. This means that the programme is very accessible as groups don't require constitutions or bank accounts making it more accessible to more disadvantaged communities.
- 4.12.3. Promotion of the scheme has emphasised reaching target groups, including through Housing TRA's and our VCS partners.
- 4.12.4. We used the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and Areas of Green Deficit (measured by a proximity rate of +/- 400m from households from local, small, and pocket parks) to ensure that projects were prioritised where they can have greatest impact. The projects are all in publicly accessible locations and include food-growing areas for neighbours, community orchards, raised herb gardens, wildlife corridors, pocket parks and parklets.
- 4.13. There is an expectation that the applicant and associated group or community is able to manage and maintain the area once complete. Once the

project has been delivered, there will be a handover and introduction gardening session and an opportunity of training, support and resources through our Islington Greener Together Champions scheme.

4.14. Recommendation 11. Incorporate climate adaptation principles into the Greener Together Strategy, for example sustainable drainage, rainwater gardens.

- 4.14.1. We know that climate change is already being felt in London, and Islington is amongst six boroughs at highest risk of surface flooding and extreme heat according to 2021 modelling by Mayor of London and Bloomberg. We will continue to ensure the Greener Together Programme addresses these risks by identifying opportunities for sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) to reduce surface water flooding and planting that will result in increased shading to mitigate the urban heat island effect.
- 4.14.2. The Green Infrastructure Strategy, finance model for private investment and a pocket park framework are also under development will identify need and opportunities for adaptation across the borough.
- 4.14.3. These will be supported by the development of a Climate Adaptation Plan for Islington which is due to start in 2023.

4.15. Recommendation 12. All council traffic and engineering projects to incorporate green infrastructure elements where feasible.

- 4.15.1. Opportunities for incorporating green infrastructure elements are actively considered during project conception and through the design process via the Public Realm Design Review Panel chaired by the Director of Climate Change and Transport.
- 4.15.2. The forthcoming green infrastructure strategy will include a mapping exercise to identify opportunities for greening across the borough. This mapping will enable the prioritising of green infrastructure in accordance with community needs and reduce the deficiency in access to local, small, and pocket parks.

Waste Reduction and Recycling

4.16. Recommendation 13. A renewed focus on waste management on estates and premises above shops with the objective of increasing the engagement with residents to improve the recycling rate including food waste.

- 4.16.1. We are taking this forward through the Thriving Neighbourhoods Programme which includes a priority of improving recycling facilities on Islington estates. The programme is funding two temporary new members of the Recycling Team, to focus on improvements and behaviour change on estates. The two new officers

will be looking at the existing infrastructure on the estates to check location and capacity of recycling facilities. The first tranche of agreed Thriving Neighbourhood projects is being finalised and is expected to include substantial investment into recycling at a number of estates.

4.16.2. The department has submitted a capital bid of £2m to support its estate recycling and refuse bin storage programme which will be considered by Executive (January) and Full Council (February). If approved this investment will be delivered between 2023/24 and 2025/26.

4.16.3. A six-month trial is currently underway to assess the feasibility of providing food waste collections for residents living in flats above shops. A review will be carried out once the trial completes in mid-May 2023. We are also awaiting a decision from central government regarding the requirement for separate food waste collections from all households and promised funding of £300m to Local Authorities to support this new requirement.

4.17. **Recommendation 14. Build on the good work being done on the circular economy being delivered by Bright Sparks, the Library of Things and the Hornsey Street waste management and recycling centre.**

4.17.1. Islington's Library of Things (LoT) opened in the Bright Sparks shop in November 2021. Unfortunately, DigiBridge (the company name for Bright Sparks) went into liquidation in November 2022. Officers are supporting a newly formed Bright Sparks Reuse CIC (Community Investment Company) to restart reuse services, as well as working with Library of Things and the Libraries service to relocate the Library of Things facility.

4.17.2. Options for additional LoT locations are also being explored.

4.17.3. Hornsey Street Reuse and Recycling Centre (RRC) is operated by the North London Waste Authority (NLWA). NLWA are carrying out a review of RRCs within the NLWA area with a view to increase recycling and reuse rates and introducing circular economy initiatives. Officers are working closely with NLWA on this review.

4.17.4. Islington is working closely with NLWA on the development of its new Joint Waste Strategy, to support our joint priority of increasing reuse and repair, while NLWA's new Waste Prevention Plan also supports waste reduction, reuse and repair. The council is planning a programme of engagement activity for this year's Repair Week (20 to 26 March 2023).

4.18. **Recommendation 15. To campaign for a legislative framework that enables local authorities to reduce, reuse and recycle waste. This should include enabling the phasing out of single use plastics in packaging processes.**

4.18.1. The Environment Act 2021 paves the way for the introduction of a range of new measures aimed at reducing waste. Specifically, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) will place the cost of collection and disposal of packaging

waste on the producers of packaging waste, incentivising the reduction of packaging materials and of making that material more easily recyclable.

- 4.18.2. A Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) will introduce deposits on certain types of drinks packaging incentivising the return of these items by consumers to vendors for recycling.
- 4.18.3. We have submitted in support of both the EPR and DRS proposals and are awaiting the outcome of public consultation.
- 4.18.4. We have also made a submission in support of the new Consistency of Collections proposals which aims to lead to all Local Authorities collecting a common range of materials, including food waste, with packaging labelling also being made more consistent so that consumers can easily identify which items are and are not recyclable.
- 4.18.5. We participate in the London Councils Climate Change Programme, including the One World Living (OWL) workstream which is focused on waste reduction and circular economy. Going forward, this will be an effective route for lobbying and campaigning for legislative change as it provides the platform to develop One Voice for London as stated in its action plan – for boroughs work with stakeholders to develop consistent and united lobbying and policy asks of others to influence upstream changes. The OWL action plan has four themes, covering electrical goods, food, plastics and textiles, and each identifies key lobbying asks in relation to those themes. Further work is underway to establish a detailed plan for this. Specific actions have been identified including pan-London lobbying of supermarkets and large stores to provide more refill options/reduce plastic packaging.

4.19. **Recommendation 16. Work with the NLWA to reduce waste, increase recycling rates to enable the eventual phasing out of incineration.**

- 4.19.1. Islington works in close partnership with NLWA to increase recycling rates and reduce waste. Islington's new Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP) sets a new recycling target of 40% recycling for household waste by 2030, as well as significantly increasing commercial waste recycling rates. Increasing recycling and reducing overall levels of waste will contribute to the long-term phasing out of incineration. However, the NLWA are ultimately responsible for the disposal of waste, and for ensuring that any waste collected by the constituent Waste Collection Authorities can be reliably and safely managed.
- 4.19.2. The new RRP is in the final stages of approval and will apply from April 2023.
- 4.19.3. In addition, NLWA have launched a Waste Prevention Plan which aims to support a move to a circular economy that involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing, and recycling existing materials and products for as long as possible.

4.20. Recommendation 17. Make representations to the NLWA to bring forward as soon as possible the Carbon Capture Facility at the Energy From Waste (ERF) facility in Edmonton.

4.20.1. We are supporting NLWA who are actively working on proposals for Carbon Capture at the new Resource Recovery Facility. Supporting work up to an initial value of £2.5m has been commissioned by NLWA that would support their ambition to deliver a carbon capture solution at the EcoPark as soon as practicable in the 2030s. This follows the agreement in September 2021 of NLWA's Carbon Capture and Storage Outline Strategy. The Strategy set out the high-level activities which would be delivered as part of the NLWA's forward plan to ensure it is well placed to implement CCS with an ambition to become one of the first such facilities in the UK to implement carbon capture.

4.21. Recommendation 18. Review the progress on the recommendations made in the Scrutiny Review of Household Recycling in Islington, April 2018.

4.21.1. The Scrutiny Committee received their last review of the Household Recycling recommendations in January 2020. Islington's first Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP) was approved in October 2020 and built on many of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee.

4.21.2. The RRP is actively monitored as part of the Net Zero Carbon programme.

4.21.3. As part of the development of the new RRP for 2023 – 2025, existing recommendations were reviewed and updated. The updated RRP recommits Islington to a 40% household rate by 2030 along with a 75% commercial waste recycling rate.

Finance and Investment

4.22. Recommendation 19. Develop an options appraisal on the benefits of, and how the council could enter into, joint ventures or other partnerships to attract private finance to meet the significant levels of funding needed for the council to achieve its NZC ambitions.

4.22.1. The Finance & Investment Workstream has been collaborating with all other Workstreams to strengthen the cost estimates to deliver net zero carbon by 2030. Islington submitted a return to the UK Cities Climate Investment Commission in Summer 2022 which identified projects totalling £1.5bn but this is now increasing. 3Ci (Cities Commission for Climate Investment) is developing a pipeline of projects to help attract private investment supported by GLA/London Councils.

4.22.2. In October 2021 Islington launched Islington Greener Futures 2027 which was the first ISA-eligible Community Municipal Investment in the country in support of

Islington's Vision 2030 Net Zero Carbon Strategy. By the end of January 2022 the Council had raised £1m from 661 investors across the UK who are supporting our capital investment programme to help make Islington a cleaner, greener and healthier Borough. The Council is continuing to explore options for attracting private finance and is also investigating models including Property Assessed Clean Energy financing (see Green Finance Institute/GMCA) to help homeowners access green finance. As referenced above under 4.14.2, the Greenspace team are working on a finance model for private investment for green infrastructure.

4.22.3. The Council is currently engaging with external consultants to assess a wide range of commercial structures for our GreenSCIES project (to develop a smart local energy system) that allow different degrees of commercial control and risk. These include a Joint Venture ESCO which is a public/private partnership with shared development, delivery and financing responsibilities and 3rd Party ESCO (funded/delivered by the private sector). This work is ongoing pending grant application to the Green Heat Network Fund sometime in 2023 and will inform our strategy for other projects and programmes.

4.22.4. The Mayor of London is also developing its own financing facility comprising a £500m Green Bond which was first announced in February 2022.

4.23. **Recommendation 20. Investigate feasibility and options of a loan scheme similar to the Green Deal that allows property owners easier access to finance for energy efficiency improvements such as installing heat pumps, solid wall insulation or solar panels.**

4.23.1. Preliminary scoping works have taken place to understand what the requirements, benefits, costs and risks of developing a loan scheme are. The Green Deal is being used as a case study to see how an in-house loan scheme could improve on this offer, such as by having either no interest rates, or rates lower than ordinary loans. As part of a feasibility study, business feasibility, financial feasibility and legal implications will be assessed to understand whether it is viable to operate a loan scheme, and whether there is the appropriate demand for it in Islington.

Engaging, Empowering and Partnering

4.24. **Recommendation 21. Continue to develop and promote the Net Zero Carbon pledge tool and website.**

4.24.1. We have continued to promote the microsite and pledge tool across our corporate channels - including our quarterly resident magazine IslingtonLife, our environment e-bulletin (which now has around 2,600 followers) and also as part of our Cost of Living campaign. The website has attracted 3267 page views over the past year with grants information and energy advice unsurprisingly being the most popular

pages. Uptake of the pledge tool has been low at around 250 people and 13 organisations so far. However we expect to build on that significantly as we scale up our engagement approach this coming year. Opportunities such as Earth Day for example, which we are planning to mark with partners across Islington, will give us an opportunity to promote lifestyle changes and to raise the profile of the pledge tool.

4.24.2. As workstreams finalise their engagement plans and identify their behaviour change priorities, this will inform our next steps in developing and promoting the pledge tool and website content.

4.24.3. As an aside, several councils have shown interest in adapting our pledge tool for their audiences.

4.25. **Recommendation 22. Lead the commissioning of a pan-London behaviour change programme and consider digital innovation to support the delivery of NZC ambitions.**

4.25.1. We have organised scoping workshops with interested local authorities, successfully convening 11 London boroughs to explore the potential for collaboration. The initial focus was to identify common challenges and identify priorities. We linked the discussions to developing a potential application to the LGA's Behavioural Insights Programme, creating a long list of challenge areas which was reduced to three areas that aligned most with the group's net zero priorities: Reducing consumption – particularly food; Active Travel; Retrofit in the Private Rented Sector.

4.25.2. Although it was not practical to submit an application to this year's LGA programme due to their tight timescales, the process established dialogue and identified shared priorities. A further meeting through the London Councils Climate Change programme explored pan-London behaviour change further. At the time, there was some reluctance to commit to a shared commission as participants felt they needed more support with establishing the ground work for behaviour change in their areas. The London Environment Directors Network (LEDNet) are keen to support this area, and we are working with their officers to scope some next steps and areas where LEDNet might provide additional support.

4.25.3. A brief will now be developed to commission behaviour change specialists to work with Islington and other interested boroughs to scope out and deliver 2 or 3 pilot projects over the next two years. LEDNet will continue to provide further support and we will invite the 11 boroughs to consolidate the group into an ongoing partnership for London borough collaboration on behavioural change.

4.25.4. Islington Council, through LEDNet, led the development of a Digital Sprint in the summer of 2022 in partnership with LOTI (London Office of Technology and Innovation) to explore the potential for digital innovation to support some of London's key climate change priorities. The two day event gathered officers from the London Councils climate change programme with technology companies to

explore the opportunities for digital innovation across four key areas of the programme: Retrofit London, Renewable Power for London, Transport and One World Living. A shortlist of potential initiatives was identified some of which are now being explored further.

4.25.5. Islington has since been in discussions with a business analytics company to explore how their system could support better data analysis and visualisation for decision-making across the programme and proposals will be taken to Digital Board for consideration. The NZC Programme Team are also seeking to appoint a data analyst in 2023 to support further work on data and digital innovation.

4.26. **Recommendation 23. Enhanced communications around the benefits of installing solar panels and other retrofitting measures to local businesses and commercial landlords.**

4.26.1. The Development Management Service has commissioned the production of a plain English guide to permitted development rights for householders and local businesses in relation to reducing the carbon emissions of buildings. This guidance includes a section setting out when solar panels can be installed on residential and non-residential buildings without the need for planning permission, as well as other retrofit measures. This guidance should be published on the planning section of the council's website by February 2023 and it will be accompanied by an announcement on the website that a free duty planner advice will be given on proposals from homeowners or local business owners directly relating to achieving net zero. This means that they can arrange a 15-minute call with a planning officer who will advise them on whether proposals are permitted development or would require a full application for planning permission.

4.26.2. We continue to promote solar and other retrofit measures for organisations through our Islington Community Energy Fund, our free Business Audit scheme and our Energising Small Businesses grant scheme. The benefits of these measures will also be promoted through the recently awarded Business Climate Challenge scheme which will be delivered by the Islington Sustainability Network.

4.26.3. A focus on promoting the benefits of commercial retrofit will be included the Workstream Engagement Plans currently under development. The NZC Programme team are convening a working group to focus on retrofit in the commercial sector and will be inviting Islington Sustainability Network partners to participate in this engagement planning to provide local business expertise and perspective.

4.26.4. The Energy Services team are currently commissioning consultancy support to explore the possibility of the council installing solar panels on commercial buildings and selling the occupants the renewable energy generated.

4.26.5. There are also discussions taking place between the North London boroughs about commercial retrofit and the potential to develop plans at a sub-regional level.

4.27. Recommendation 24. Create an engagement plan for all NZC workstreams following the Special Scrutiny Meeting in March 2022.

- 4.27.1. Work is underway to develop the council's engagement capacity and provide the tools and skills to deliver high quality, consistent engagement on net zero. The council has commissioned support to develop streamlined branding and net zero messaging and deliver an engagement toolkit for workstreams. We have also recently completed the commissioning of an online engagement platform which offers a range of tools to enable us to reach a broader audience and build meaningful and lasting relationship with stakeholders.
- 4.27.2. Work has started on developing workstream engagement plans. Stakeholder mapping is being undertaken for each of the priority areas in order to identify and understand key audiences and identify duplication and gaps. With such a complex corporate programme delivering projects and work within different teams, services and directorates, there is a risk that engagement and campaigns are fragmented or overlap, so this exercise will ensure that workstreams have a clear understanding of: The range of audiences they need to engage with; The stakeholder groups and organisations who can support engagement with those audiences; The relevant channels and relationships, mapped to ensure relationships and messages are clear and managed efficiently, particularly where the council may be engaging the same audiences on multiple projects. We want to ensure that we reach all communities within Islington.
- 4.27.3. This work is also identifying lobbying and influencing opportunities and needs, which will inform an emerging lobbying framework for the Net Zero Carbon Programme. The council does not currently have a central public affairs team, so this framework will help to identify priority issues and the most appropriate mechanism for taking this forward, for example, in partnership with our anchor institutions, London Councils, etc.
- 4.27.4. The work will also identify behaviour change opportunities that will feed into an emerging behaviour change framework.
- 4.27.5. Each workstream will have their own engagement plan which will align with and sit underneath an overarching engagement plan for the programme.
- 4.27.6. Our Policy and Equality Team have also been working on an options appraisal of engagement models to inform our community engagement and participation approach which will be launched this year.
- 4.27.7. Alongside an engagement toolkit for workstreams mentioned above, the Net Zero Carbon Programme is developing proposals for staff training in Climate Literacy to support staff awareness and knowledge.

5. Implications

5.1. Financial Implications

- 5.1.1. The responses to the recommendations in this report do not commit any additional financial resources with programmes and projects delivered, in progress and reflected in existing budget plans or to be considered as part of future bids.

5.2. Legal Implications

- 5.2.1. The council declared a climate emergency on 27th June 2019, when a motion committing the council to working towards making Islington net zero carbon by 2030 was unanimously passed by a meeting of full council.
- 5.2.2. Implementation of the recommendations and measures set out in this report must be carried out in compliance with: (a) the terms of all relevant primary legislation, including the *Environment Act 2021*, the *Building Safety Act 2022* and any associated regulations made thereunder; (b) published council strategies and policies, in particular *Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030*; and (c) the council's *Financial Regulations, Procurement Rules* and the general provisions set out in the council's *Constitution*.

5.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

- 5.3.1. The recommendations and actions arising within this report aim to strengthen the Net Zero Carbon Programme, therefore should have a positive impact on delivery of the council's net zero ambitions.

5.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 5.4.1. The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.
- 5.4.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report, because these assessments are carried out as required by the relevant service at the point of project development. This report provides a response to recommendations on an existing programme of work which is being delivered by a number of services across the council.

6. Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

- 6.1. Whilst the Net Zero Carbon programme is underway and working to agreed action plans, it is continuously evolving and developing and therefore we have sought to build the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations into the existing programme of work by either incorporating them into existing activity or scheduling them into forward plans. This report summarises the progress and delivery in relation to the recommendations made by the Committee.

Appendices:

- None

Background papers:

- None

Final report clearance:

Authorised by

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