

# Agenda

## Climate and Environment Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Wednesday 20 March 2024**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **Zoom - Remote meeting**

**For further information** please contact:

Alice Courtney, Scrutiny Officer

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## **Committee Membership**

Councillor Alex Hollingsworth (Chair)

Councillor Shaista Aziz

Councillor Paula Dunne

Councillor James Fry

Councillor Emily Kerr

Councillor Katherine Miles

Apologies received before the publication are shown under *Apologies for absence* in the agenda. Those sent after publication will be reported at the meeting.

# Agenda

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<p>The Panel is asked to <b>agree</b> the notes of the meeting held on 27 February 2024 as a true and accurate record.</p>	
<b>5 Climate and Environment Panel Work Plan</b>	13 - 14
<p>The Panel is asked to consider the Work Plan and agree any amendments.</p>	
<b>6 Energy Generation/Solar Potential on Council Buildings [presentation]</b>	
<p>At its meeting on 27 June 2023, the Panel commissioned an item on Energy Generation/Solar Potential on Council Buildings and subsequently agreed a <a href="#">scope</a> for the item at its meeting on 12 September 2023. Cllr Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice, Tina Mould, Environmental Sustainability Lead and Vikki Robins, Carbon Reduction Team Manager have been invited to present and answer questions.</p> <p>The Panel is asked to receive a presentation followed by an opportunity for discussion; and to agree any recommendations.</p>	
<b>7 Tree Planting [presentation]</b>	
<p>At its meeting on 27 June 2023, the Panel commissioned an item on Tree Planting and Maintenance; this has been separated out into two distinct areas of focus, with this element focusing on Tree Planting. Cllr Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice and Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy have been invited to present and answer questions.</p> <p>The Panel is asked to receive a presentation followed by an opportunity</p>	

for discussion; and to agree any recommendations.

## **8 2023-24 Year in Review**

15 - 24

At its meeting on 29 November 2023, the Panel requested an item be submitted to its final meeting of the municipal year which allowed it to reflect on its work during 2023/24. This will be a Panel-led discussion.

The Panel is asked to:

1. Note and comment on the report.
2. Confirm its agreement to the Scrutiny Officer's suggestions as to which recommendations should continue to be monitored, or agree any amendments as required.
3. Reflect on the Panel's work to date and give consideration to impact and where the Panel could add more value going forward.

## **9 Dates of future meetings**

The Panel is asked to note the dates and times of future meetings of the Climate and Environment Panel.

- 11 June 2024, 6pm
- 05 September 2024, 6pm
- 20 November 2024, 6pm
- 26 February 2025, 6pm
- 27 March 2025, 6pm

*Meetings will take place remotely via Zoom.*

## **Information for those attending**

### **Recording and reporting on meetings held in public**

Members of public and press can record, or report in other ways, the parts of the meeting open to the public. You are not required to indicate in advance but it helps if you notify the Committee Services Officer prior to the meeting so that they can inform the Chair and direct you to the best place to record.

The Council asks those recording the meeting:

- To follow the protocol which can be found on the Council's [website](#)
- Not to disturb or disrupt the meeting
- Not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes not editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- To avoid recording members of the public present, even inadvertently, unless they are addressing the meeting.

Please be aware that you may be recorded during your speech and any follow-up. If you are attending please be aware that recording may take place and that you may be inadvertently included in these.

The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to suspend or terminate any activities that in his or her opinion are disruptive.

### **Councillors declaring interests**

#### **General duty**

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

#### **What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?**

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your\* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

#### **Declaring an interest**

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

#### **Members' Code of Conduct and public perception**

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". The matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

#### **Members Code – Other Registrable Interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing\*\* of one of your Other Registrable Interests\*\*\* then you must declare an

interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### **Members Code – Non Registrable Interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests, then you must declare the interest.

You must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room, if you answer in the affirmative to this test:

“Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.”

Otherwise, you may stay in the room, take part in the discussion and vote.

\*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member’s spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

\*\* Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person’s quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

\*\*\* Other Registrable Interests: a) any unpaid directorships b) any Body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority c) any Body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

## **Minutes of a meeting of the Climate and Environment Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee) on Tuesday 27 February 2024**



### **Committee members present:**

Councillor Hollingsworth (Chair)	Councillor Aziz
Councillor Dunne	Councillor Fry
Councillor Kerr	Councillor Miles

### **Officers present for all or part of the meeting:**

Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy  
Tina Mould, Environmental Sustainability Lead  
Vikki Robins, Carbon Reduction Team Manager  
Tristan Carlyle, Principal Ecology and Biodiversity Officer  
Alice Courtney, Scrutiny Officer

### **Also present:**

Councillor Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice

### **Apologies:**

No apologies were received

## **28. Declarations of Interest**

None.

## **29. Chair's Announcements**

None.

*The Panel agreed to consider the items in order up to and including item 6, followed by items 9, 8, 10, 7 and 11.*

## **30. Notes of the previous meeting**

The Panel agreed the notes of the meeting held on 29 November 2023 as a true and accurate record.

*Cllr Aziz joined the meeting.*

### **31. Climate and Environment Panel Work Plan**

The Panel considered the Work Plan and noted that it had one meeting left during the 2023/24 municipal year. There were three items listed on the Work Plan for the Panel's meeting on 20 March 2024:

- Energy Generation/Solar Potential on Council Buildings [presentation]
- Tree Planting [presentation]
- 2023-24 Year in Review

The Scrutiny Officer advised that, of the Scrutiny-commissioned items agreed earlier in the 2023-24 municipal year, two were outstanding and would be carried forward to the list of suggested items for 2024-25:

- Tree Maintenance
- Waste

The Panel agreed the Work Plan as set out in the agenda pack.

### **32. Report back on recommendations**

The Panel noted the following Cabinet responses to its recommendations:

- Biodiversity Action Plan for Oxford City Council Parks and Nature Areas – September 2023 Review
- Retrofit

In response to a question, the Panel was informed that the 'OCC/ODS Client officer review meeting' referred to in the response to recommendation three on the Biodiversity Action Plan for Oxford City Council Parks and Nature Areas – September 2023 Review was a monthly meeting attended by officers only; there was no Member representation at those meetings. The Head of Corporate Strategy advised that a review of the commissioning of services provided by ODS, linked to the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, had just begun. In light of this, the Panel was of the view that the Cabinet should have perhaps stated that it agreed with the Panel's recommendation to review the Council's contracts with ODS, although the formal agreed response remained that the Cabinet did not agree the recommendation.

The Panel noted the response to recommendation one on the Biodiversity Action Plan for Oxford City Council Parks and Nature Areas – September 2023 Review, which related to data and mapping. The Panel agreed that a wider, more general data and mapping exercise across the Council would add significant value to the Council's operations and that this broader work may be of interest to the Scrutiny Committee.

### **33. Biodiversity Net Gain [presentation]**

Tristan Carlyle, Principal Ecology and Biodiversity Officer delivered a presentation which set out an overview of Biodiversity Net Gain, including the statutory regulations and national guidance; monitoring arrangements; Biodiversity Gain Plans; and identification of Council land for Biodiversity Net Gain purposes. A copy of the presentation slides was included in the agenda pack.

In response to questions, the Panel was advised that:



- The offsite biodiversity offsetting market had developed slowly and in a patchy way as a result of the nature of biodiversity offsetting model required under the statutory regulations.
- There was no formal requirement for the Council to produce Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring guidance.
- The Local Planning Authority or Responsible Body securing offsite biodiversity units would be responsible for ensuring Biodiversity Net Gain delivery and monitoring; it was not clear how this would work in practice where offsite biodiversity units were located outside of the Local Planning Authority which provided consent for the development.
- Biodiversity and carbon offsetting could theoretically be 'stacked' at the same site, provided it could be demonstrated the units would deliver additionality.
- Biodiversity offsetting could be delivered anywhere in England as per the regulations.
- The Council's Corporate Assets team was determining which Council land should be considered for the provision of biodiversity units; larger sites were preferred initially.
- National Biodiversity Net Gain guidance stated that development boundaries should not be artificially amended for the purposes of ensuring certain habitats were out of scope for developments in terms of Biodiversity Net Gain; in practice, enforcement of this could be difficult.
- Providers of offsite biodiversity units were required to be registered with Natural England; this would help ensure transparency of spend on offsite biodiversity units.
- There were a series of exemptions in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain; two main exemptions were for householders and 'de minimis' applications.

The Panel agreed to recommend to Cabinet that:

1. The Council coordinates with the other Oxfordshire Districts to establish basic Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring guidance for certain habitats to ensure a consistent set of principles and processes across the county.
2. The Council, through its project to identify Council-owned land with the potential to provide biodiversity units, seeks to identify sufficient sites so as to establish itself as a key provider of biodiversity units locally, thus strongly encouraging the uptake of biodiversity units in Oxford or as close to Oxford as possible.

*Tristan Carlyle, Principal Ecology and Biodiversity Officer left the meeting and did not return.*

### **34. Citywide Retrofit Strategy [presentation]**

Tina Mould, Environmental Sustainability Lead delivered a presentation which set out an overview of work to date in relation to the development of a Citywide Retrofit Strategy and Action Plan and sought the Panel's feedback. A copy of the presentation slides is included in the minutes pack.

In response to questions, the Panel was advised that:

- The Council's 2030 net zero ambitions included emissions relating only to non-residential Council-owned buildings where the Council paid the energy bill; non-residential buildings which formed part of the Council's commercial property portfolio were not in scope, but emissions relating to non-residential Council-

owned buildings were in scope of the 2040 net zero ambitions for the City more broadly.

- Social and behavioural considerations, including the retrofit 'efficiency paradox', would be considered under the umbrella of the strategy.

*Vikki Robins, Carbon Reduction Team Manager left the meeting and did not return.*

- Discussions had begun around developing expertise within Council service areas to work on areas of direct Council control, which would enable the Environmental Sustainability team to be freed-up to drive forward areas of work where the Council had influence, but not direct control.

The Panel agreed to recommend to Cabinet that:

1. The Council incorporates all non-residential Council-owned buildings within the scope of the Citywide Retrofit Strategy and includes an approach within the strategy and associated action plan to ensure improvements in energy efficiency of all non-residential Council-owned buildings regardless of whether or not the Council pays the energy bill.
2. The Council ensures appropriate internal expertise in relevant service areas to drive forward projects and actions to achieve the Council's net zero ambitions where it has direct control in order to release additional capacity and resource within the Environmental Sustainability team to enable the continuation of its transition towards driving forward areas of work where the Council has influence and can shape and enable collaboration across the City to facilitate the achievement of the City's broader net zero ambitions.

### **35. Net Zero Masterplan**

The Panel considered the Net Zero Masterplan, which set out Oxford City Council's actions over the next two years to achieve its two carbon targets: a Net Zero Estate and Operations by 2030 and a Net Zero City by 2040.

Tina Mould, Environmental Sustainability Lead summarised the updates which had been included since the previous iteration of the document.

During discussion, the Panel noted:

- Actions assigned to Ian Wright needed to be reallocated as he had left the organisation.
- It was anticipated that local area energy planning would help alleviate some of the issues around local grid constraints; but there was still a significant amount of partnership working and collaboration required to address these constraints.
- It would be helpful for a more detailed item on local area energy planning and mitigation measures regarding local grid constraints to be submitted to the Panel at a future meeting at the appropriate time.
- The ODS GUL-e technology was ready to be commercialised, but not yet at the householder level; the County Council was about to procure a cable gully system as part of its LEVI programme and ODS was understood to be submitting a bid for that contract.

The Panel requested that:

- The Head of Corporate Strategy circulated an explanation to the Panel as to why the ODS GUL-e technology could not currently be commercialised and made

available to individual private householders who wished to pay for installation of the technology to enable home charging of their electric vehicle.

The Panel noted the Net Zero Masterplan; no recommendations were agreed.

### **36. Matters exempt or part exempt from publication and exclusion of the public**

The Panel agreed, in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and the public from the remaining item of business on the grounds that their presence would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

#### **a) Heat Network & Zoning [presentation]**

Tina Mould, Environmental Sustainability Lead delivered a presentation on Heat Networks & Zoning, the content of which was commercially sensitive. The Panel received the presentation and held discussion in private.

The Panel agreed it would be worthwhile for this item to be brought back to the Panel once the project had progressed further.

The Panel noted the presentation; no recommendations were agreed.

*Cllr Dunne left the meeting and did not return.*

### **37. Dates of future meetings**

The Panel noted the dates and times of future meetings.

**The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.07 pm**

**Chair .....**

**Date: Wednesday 20 March 2024**

*When decisions take effect:*

*Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired*

*Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued*

*All other committees: immediately.*

*Details are in the Council's Constitution.*

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## Climate and Environment Panel Work Plan

NB This work plan is provisional and is subject to change. Changes made outside meetings are agreed between the Scrutiny Officer and the Chair.

Cabinet items beyond two months in advance are not included on the work plan owing to the greater potential they will move or alternative items of higher priority arise in the meantime.

### 20 March 2024 – confirmed reports

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Energy Generation/Solar Potential on Council Buildings [presentation]	No	To receive a presentation followed by an opportunity for discussion; and to agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice	Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy
Tree Planting [presentation]	No	To receive a presentation followed by an opportunity for discussion; and to agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice	Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy
2023-24 Year in Review	No	To consider the report, reflect on the Panel's work and assess impact during 2023/24 and consider where the Panel could add more value going forward.	N/A	N/A

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**To:** Climate and Environment Panel  
**Date:** 20 March 2024  
**Report of:** Scrutiny Officer  
**Title of Report:** 2023-24 Year in Review

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To provide an overview of Climate and Environment Panel activity in 2023/24.
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Pursue a Zero Carbon Oxford
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Council Strategy 2020-24
<b>Recommendation(s): That the Panel resolves to:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Note and comment on</b> the report.</li> <li>2. <b>Confirm</b> its agreement to the Scrutiny Officer's suggestions as to which recommendations should continue to be monitored, or agree any amendments as required.</li> <li>3. <b>Reflect</b> on the Panel's work to date and give consideration to impact and where the Panel could add more value going forward.</li> </ol>	

<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	Climate and Environment Panel Recommendation Tracker
Appendix 2	List of Suggested Items for 2024/25

## Introduction and background

1. At its meeting on 29 November 2023, the Climate and Environment Panel requested an item be submitted to its final meeting of the municipal year which allowed it to reflect on its work during 2023/24. The Panel agreed it would be useful to assess its impact and consider where it could add more value going forward.

## Panel Remit

2. As per the Panel's scope, which was agreed by the Scrutiny Committee in November 2022, the Panel was established to scrutinise progress in delivering existing climate and environment workstreams and to consider their effectiveness. This includes consideration of Cabinet reports with a clear climate or environmental focus, reviewing regular performance reports and the delivery of strategies, policies

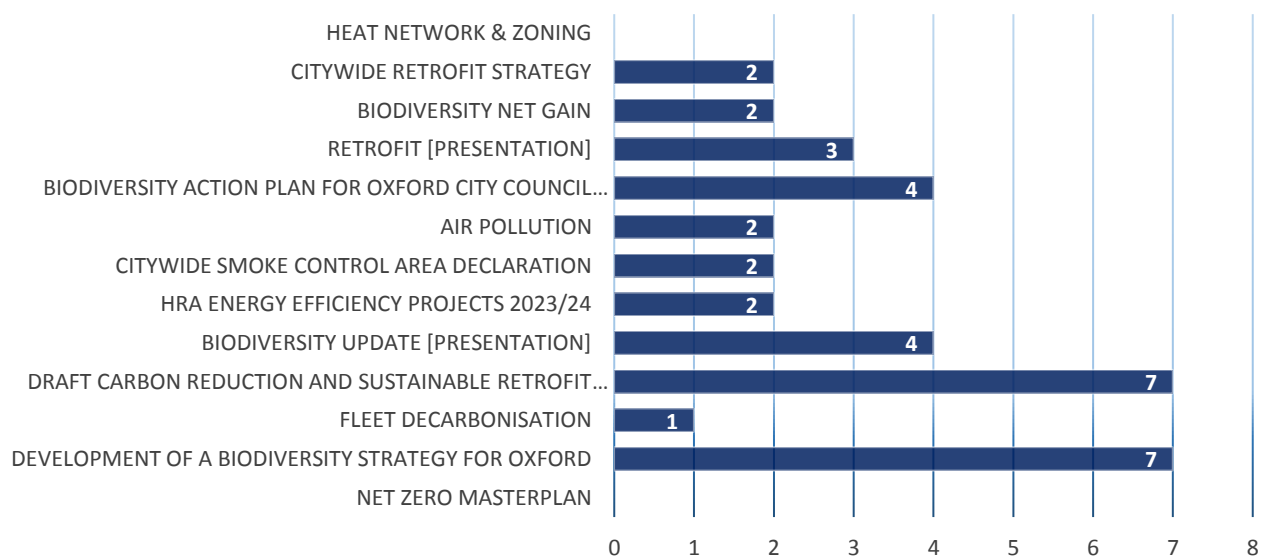
and projects already adopted. In addition, the Net Zero Masterplan is a standing item at each meeting.

3. In addition, it was agreed that the following items would be within the remit of the Panel, should it wish to request future updates:
  - Climate Emergency Review Group Update
  - Zero Carbon Action Plan Updates
  - Waterways Update
  - Annual Air Quality Status Report
  - Biodiversity Action Plan (*including reporting required under the Environment Act secondary legislation*)

### Overview of 2023/24

4. The Scrutiny Officer has produced a recommendation tracking document of recommendations to date, which is included at Appendix 1. Given there was only one formal meeting of the Climate and Environment Panel in 2022/23 (the year the Panel was established), recommendations made in 2022/23 and 2023/24 to date are included for completeness.
5. The tracking document at Appendix 1 sets out the meeting date, reports considered, recommendations agreed by the Panel and Cabinet responses (where available). It also includes a column setting out whether or not each recommendation will continue to be monitored; those recommendations which will not be monitored any longer have been greyed-out to help focus the document.
6. From 09 March 2023 to 29 February 2024, the Panel held 5 formal meetings and considered 12 substantive items. In addition, the Panel considered the Net Zero Masterplan as a standing item at each of its meetings. During this reporting period, the Panel made a total of 36 recommendations; the distribution of recommendations by report is set out in Table 1 below.

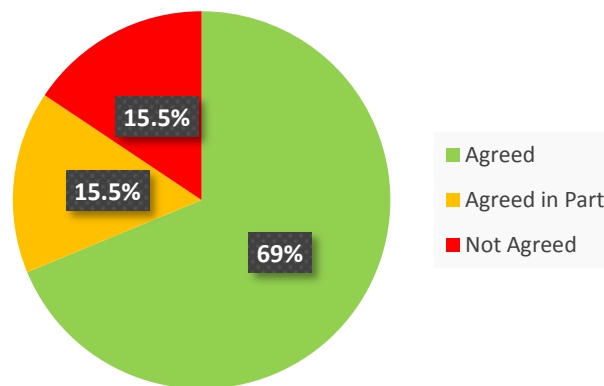
*Table 1: Recommendations by Report*





- To date, 32 of the 36 recommendations made by the Panel have received a response from Cabinet. Of those 32 recommendations, 22 (69%) were agreed by Cabinet, 5 (15.5%) were agreed in part and 5 (15.5%) were not agreed. The Panel is awaiting Cabinet responses on 4 recommendations which were made at its meeting in February 2024.

*Table 2: Recommendations Agreed, Agreed In Part and Not Agreed*



- Of the 32 Panel recommendations which have received Cabinet responses to date, the Scrutiny Officer has suggested that 23 should continue to be monitored until such a time as the Panel determines no further monitoring is required, based on Cabinet responses. It is suggested that 9 should not be monitored further but will remain on the tracking document for information and to help avoid duplicate recommendations being made at future meetings. This is set out at Appendix 1.
- The Panel is recommended to confirm its agreement with the Scrutiny Officer's suggestions as to whether or not recommendations should continue to be monitored, or agree any amendments as required.

### **Impact**

- It is widely recognised that measuring the impact of Scrutiny is difficult. A focus on quantitative data and outcomes alone, while providing some useful insight into the work of Scrutiny, risks reducing the meaning and impact of that work. On the other hand, a focus on only qualitative data and outcomes can make it difficult to capture impact in a consistent way.
- Table 2 shows that the majority of the Panel's recommendations were agreed, which is an indicator of positive impact. However, the way in which recommendations are responded to by the Cabinet is quite binary and does not necessarily present an accurate enough indicator of the scale of impact. This is evidenced by some of the Panel's recommendations being 'not agreed', but the narrative response alluding to longer-term work to progress those recommendations. This has led to some recommendations which were 'not agreed' being kept on the 'continue to monitor' list as some appear to have been agreed in all but name, but in the much longer term.
- The draft Council Corporate Plan 2024-28 is currently out for public consultation. It sets out the Council's highest priority areas for the next four years and the Council

will prioritise time, money and resources to achieve the outcomes set out in the document. Going forward, the Panel may wish to consider aligning its approach to Scrutiny of climate and environment issues to the 'Zero Carbon Oxford' priority within the refreshed Corporate Plan 2024-28, once adopted, to ensure continuous Scrutiny oversight of progress towards the outcomes set out alongside the Zero Carbon Oxford priority. This would complement the Panel's consideration of the Net Zero Masterplan at each meeting.

13. It is recommended that the Panel reflects on its impact to date and considers where it might add more value going forward, noting that decisions regarding items for consideration during 2024/25 will be a matter for the new Panel. Reflection should be within the context of the Panel's remit.

### **Look Ahead to 2024-25**

14. The list of suggested items for consideration at future Panel meetings is included at Appendix 2. Decisions as to which items are considered during 2024/25 will be a matter for the new Panel.
15. The Panel is asked to suggest any additional items to add to the longlist for consideration in 2024/25.

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**Background Papers:** None

Ref	Date	Report	Recommendation	Agreed?	Response	Continue to monitor?
0001	09-Mar-23	Development of a Biodiversity Strategy for Oxford	That the Council seeks to ensure that, amongst others, Oxford University's Biodiversity Network and the HERO project are represented on the steering group.	In Part	We will take into account these recommendations when setting up the steering group.	Yes - Panel to request update on the development of the Biodiversity Strategy more generally, including an update in relation to recommendations made on 09 March 2023 and 27 June 2023.
0002	09-Mar-23	Development of a Biodiversity Strategy for Oxford	That the Council, in conducting the baseline exercise, takes account of shifting baseline syndrome.	In Part	Historic data for the sites in question may be impossible / impractical to recover, and we may not be able to do so in a consistent way that offers meaningful insights.	Yes - Panel to request update on the development of the Biodiversity Strategy more generally, including an update in relation to recommendations made on 09 March 2023 and 27 June 2023.
0003	09-Mar-23	Development of a Biodiversity Strategy for Oxford	That the Council considers how best to move away from the use of chemicals in land maintenance as a matter of urgency.	In Part	A further review of the use of herbicides and pesticides by ODS on behalf of the Council will be undertaken this year which will explore the costs and efficacy of the Council ending the use of glyphosates including assessing the alternatives used by other Councils in England. It would not be appropriate to pre-determine the outcome of that review.	No - separate report on use of glyphosate by ODS on behalf of OCC went to Scrutiny and Cabinet in December 2023; further monitoring not required following outcome of that report.
0004	09-Mar-23	Development of a Biodiversity Strategy for Oxford	That the Council commissions or conducts its own audits of the eight Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the near future in order to understand their current condition.	In Part	We will evaluate the optimal approach to assessing the SSSIs in conjunction with the Steering Group.	Yes - Panel to request update on the development of the Biodiversity Strategy more generally, including an update in relation to recommendations made on 09 March 2023 and 27 June 2023.
0005	09-Mar-23	Development of a Biodiversity Strategy for Oxford	That the Council ensures that the protection of mature trees is prioritised wherever possible.	Yes	The Council has a range of policies in place to ensure the protection of mature trees. However, the council also has a liability to ensure dangerous trees are felled promptly. Where this is necessary, they will be offset with new trees in the same location if suitable, or an alternative location with a greater viability to support a healthy trees. Protection of trees is also considered within planning alongside other local planning priorities including housing delivery within the city.	No - already a Council policy
0006	09-Mar-23	Development of a Biodiversity Strategy for Oxford	That the Council commits to ensuring that the Biodiversity Strategy is developed in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and, also, at least in alignment with Government targets to halt decline of species under the Environment Act 2021.	Yes	No commentary provided.	Yes - Panel to request update on the development of the Biodiversity Strategy more generally, including an update in relation to recommendations made on 09 March 2023 and 27 June 2023.
0007	09-Mar-23	Development of a Biodiversity Strategy for Oxford	That the Council takes account of the interconnectedness between the policies in the Local Plan and the Biodiversity Strategy when developing both documents and ensures that these links are emphasised and appropriately cross-referenced.	Yes	No commentary provided.	Yes - Panel to request update on the development of the Biodiversity Strategy more generally, including an update in relation to recommendations made on 09 March 2023 and 27 June 2023.
0008	09-Mar-23	Fleet Decarbonisation	That the Council should commit to working with ODS to explore how ODS could include electric cargo bicycles in its fleet.	Yes	These discussions are already taking place.	Yes - Panel to request update on fleet decarbonisation, including an update in relation to the recommendation made on 09 March 2023
0009	27-Jun-23	DRAFT Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Retrofit Guidance for Historic Buildings Technical Advice Note	That the Council reviews the language used in the TAN to ensure it is accessible to residents and incorporates a glossary to explain technical terms.	Yes	The policy team will review the wording in the TAN and implement a simple glossary in line with the recommendations. The topic of retrofitting heritage assets in itself can be very technical, as is the legislation and guidance within national policy, not only because of the fast evolving nature of retro-fit technologies and practices but also because of the additional sensitivities that come with redevelopment associated with our most special heritage assets. As such, it will invariably require some level of technical expertise to fully address certain elements when it comes to this type of development. Whilst we have made every effort to explain the terminology and concepts in plain English within the text, we would agree that a glossary could be a helpful addition and are happy to add this in. The objective of the guidance in the TAN is to convey simple advice to assist applicants in approaching the design of retrofit projects for historic buildings so that their application has the best chances of success and we want to ensure that this is as effective as possible.	Yes - awaiting publication of TAN
0010	27-Jun-23	DRAFT Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Retrofit Guidance for Historic Buildings Technical Advice Note	That the Council includes more examples of successful domestic scale retrofit projects, including for non-listed buildings in conservation areas, as well as in listed buildings.	Yes	The original intention of this updated TAN was to be published as an interim measure that could help address a gap in guidance on our website and to better align this with the city's net zero objectives. The TAN currently references a variety of best practice guidance in the appendix to provide further information and flags that this would then be supported by additional guidance including specific case studies from the city that could help illustrate best practice in an Oxford context. In order to not unnecessarily delay the publishing of the helpful information within the TAN we propose to progress with the examples in the draft and update the document in the future with useful and illustrative case studies, noting that the range of different sensitivities within the city will mean that they will only be able to indicate possible solutions rather than provide a blue print for other applicants.	Yes - awaiting publication of TAN
0011	27-Jun-23	DRAFT Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Retrofit Guidance for Historic Buildings Technical Advice Note	That the Council challenges its existing assumptions around customer experience in relation to retrofit applications and seeks to engage with organisations and individuals who have gone or are currently going through the retrofit process to understand their experiences and feed those into the TAN and the broader planning process to improve usability and overall customer experience.	Yes	The policy team and planning services more widely will continue to do its part in critically assessing its own performance and interactions with our broad customer base. Where there is scope to improve our services and the support we can provide, we will endeavour to incorporate this into our work. This may include future updates to the TAN as well as our wider resources and processes where appropriate.	Yes - awaiting publication of TAN
0012	27-Jun-23	DRAFT Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Retrofit Guidance for Historic Buildings Technical Advice Note	That the Council reviews its existing Article 4 Directions to see whether they create unnecessary obstacles to applicants wanting to install carbon retrofit measures.	No	Whilst it is accepted that the Article 4 Directions were set up at a time predating the current net zero objectives in the city, a review of these is an extensive piece of work which will need to be considered in the longer term alongside other commitments, such as the extensive work related to the production of the 2040 Local Plan. Such commitment is beyond the scope of this TAN.	Yes - although in the long term
0013	27-Jun-23	DRAFT Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Retrofit Guidance for Historic Buildings Technical Advice Note	That the Council, looking at the approach taken by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, considers using Local Development Orders to make clear that certain low carbon approaches will be approved by the Council.	No	We are aware of the approach undertaken by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and will consider the pros and cons of this and other approaches in liaison with key stakeholders such as heritage colleagues and Historic England in due course. The current priority is the new Local Plan and we have set out our intention to try to go further than current policy as part of our preferred options consultation, though the final approach is still under consideration and will need to align with national policy to be found sound by the inspector and pass examination.	Yes - although in the long term

0014	27-Jun-23	DRAFT Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Retrofit Guidance for Historic Buildings Technical Advice Note	That the Council makes it clear in the TAN and broader messaging that it supports retrofit applications in heritage and conservation areas and will actively support applicants to go through that process.	Yes	The genesis of this TAN was to more clearly support applicants in making the right choices when it comes to retrofitting their properties. The review agreed to in Recommendation 1 will help to amplify this. It is important to note that Technical Advice Notes have no statutory powers unlike the Local Plan. The role of these documents is only to provide additional guidance that supports interpretation of existing policies in the Local Plan - they are unable to go as far as establishing new policy for the city which is not in the Local Plan 2036. Ensuring we get the right balance between what can be set out in the TAN at present, what can help us move towards net zero objectives and support applicants, as well as what is required of us more broadly under national policy (including our statutory duty for conserving our important heritage assets as much as securing reductions in carbon dioxide emissions) is a challenging issue we have sought to address. The planning service provides a channel for actively supporting applicants as part of its pre-application service and through this service they are able to benefit from the advice of planning officers but also colleagues in the heritage team – we flag this clearly in the TAN in a couple of places as well as on our website.	Yes - awaiting publication of TAN
0015	27-Jun-23	DRAFT Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Retrofit Guidance for Historic Buildings Technical Advice Note	That the Council takes a much clearer approach to setting out for householders and applicants what its response will be to proposals for specific retrofit measures, being clear about how that might vary from conservation area to conservation area.	Yes	The policy team will explore how we can be clearer in the guidance set out in the TAN, however there are limits to how simplified any high-level guidance such as the TAN can provide, especially in a city that has such a rich and varied historical context.	Yes - awaiting publication of TAN
0016	27-Jun-23	Biodiversity Update	That the Council ensures the inclusion of its function as both a residential and institutional landlord within the biodiversity baseline assessment exercise.	Yes	It is vital that when considering the Council's duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity that its function as a landowner forms part of that consideration. This must extend to all property owned; while it may be easier to consider in relation to large plots of green space or agricultural land, biodiversity should be considered in all contexts.	Yes - Panel to request update on the development of the Biodiversity Strategy more generally, including an update in relation to recommendations made on 09 March 2023 and 27 June 2023.
0017	27-Jun-23	Biodiversity Update	That the Council seeks to collaborate and exchange knowledge with other local landowners and institutions in the interests of promoting biodiversity citywide.	Yes	The Biodiversity Strategy will be a key vehicle for knowledge exchange, both the production of the document - which will require extensive engagement - and also likely its implementation.	Yes - Panel to request update on the development of the Biodiversity Strategy more generally, including an update in relation to recommendations made on 09 March 2023 and 27 June 2023.
0018	27-Jun-23	Biodiversity Update	That the Council suggests a dedicated biodiversity workstream be added to the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership's existing workstreams.	Yes	N/A	No - Cllr Brown updated at Cabinet in July 2023: The question was asked on 11 July, but ZCOP felt quite strongly that it didn't want to have a biodiversity workstream because it felt that would be duplicating existing work elsewhere, which ZCOP is very keen not to do. However ZCOP has undertaken to go ahead and convene a meeting of biodiversity leads across the main institutions that are part of ZCOP to see if there are ways in which people could work more closely together; so there won't be a workstream as such, but ZCOP will facilitate people getting together to liaise as much as possible around biodiversity.
0019	27-Jun-23	Biodiversity Update	That the Council continues to seek out emerging biodiversity best practice in other local authorities.	Yes	All councils are experiencing the same shifts in how to consider biodiversity, deriving from new responsibility relating to biodiversity net gain, an enhanced biodiversity duty, and new reporting requirements. Sharing and understanding best practice will be important to maximising the most of limited ecological resources at all Councils.	Yes - Panel to request update on the development of the Biodiversity Strategy more generally, including an update in relation to recommendations made on 09 March 2023 and 27 June 2023.
0020	12-Sep-23	HRA Energy Efficiency Projects 2023/24	That the Council explores the full range of procurement options for the delivery of the projects, including alternative suppliers and the possibility of establishing medium-to-long term relationships with suppliers, contractors and sub-contractors.	Yes	A procurement route has not yet been determined for these works and a full range of procurement options will be explored in line with the constitution.	Yes - Panel to request update on process/outcome of the procurement exercise undertaken.
0021	12-Sep-23	HRA Energy Efficiency Projects 2023/24	That the Council sets a timetable for achieving a full set of EPCs for its HRA properties.	Yes	The Council has a modelled EPC for all HRA properties; however, part of the delivery plan development is to quantify these with EPC surveys (where access is possible) and to update lodged EPCs where energy improvement works have been carried out. A timetable for EPC surveys beyond 2023/24 will be developed with a completion date set.	No - suggest this is picked up by the Housing and Homelessness Panel which has also shown an interest in this area.
0022	12-Sep-23	Citywide Smoke Control Area Declaration	That the Council ensures clear messaging in its publicity campaign that moored vessels are exempt from the Smoke Control Area, and communicates the rationale for the exemption.	Yes	Paragraph 33 of the Cabinet report already refers to moored vessels and explains one of the main reasons why they are exempt from this Smoke Control Area expansion. However, we will ensure that if this proposal is approved, our communication strategy to members of the public will include specific elements about moored vessels to make it clear that they are exempt for the time being and why.	Yes - awaiting outcome of public consultation and subsequent implementation of SCA.
0023	12-Sep-23	Citywide Smoke Control Area Declaration	That the Council commits to working with the various boating communities (e.g. boaters living on permanent moorings and visiting boaters) to identify and address the barriers to these communities adopting cleaner fuel types; and explores grant funding opportunities to support the work to address these issues.	Yes	The Council already expects to be developing work in this area through the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Grant funding that has been recently awarded to the City Council, for the installation of eco-moorings at the visitor's moorings in Aristotle Lane. The eco-moorings project will see allocated specific funding for a Community Engagement Officer who will be expected to work together with the various boating communities on education, raising awareness, and on exploring future grant opportunities and/or retrofitting schemes that may become available to boaters to support their transition to cleaner and more sustainable sources of heating.	Yes - Panel to request update on eco-moorings project and other fuel-related issues in relation to boating communities.
0024	12-Sep-23	Air Pollution	That the Council produces an accessible and easily digestible executive summary to sit alongside the Annual Air Quality Status Report in future years; to include what the Council has done, next steps and any issues which are likely to delay progress on particular actions.	Yes	A simplified one pager capturing actions and progress on tackling air quality will be produced alongside the existing Annual Air Quality Status Report and press release materials. At the point the Council's existing Air Quality Action Plan needs to be updated in 2025, officers will review the format of the report to consider further design changes to improve accessibility.	Yes - Panel to monitor when report is submitted to Panel from 2023 onwards (annual report).

0025	12-Sep-23	Air Pollution	That the Council considers how to identify and promote the broader benefits of action to improve air quality.	Yes	There is an extensive ongoing programme of communications around actions to improve air quality, and why this is important. Videos were created and posted featuring a consultant at the John Radcliffe Hospital specifically highlighting the health benefits of cleaner air. Last winter's Do You Fuel Good campaign targeting the use of wood burning stoves will be reprised this heating season. A full public consultation and engagement programme is also planned in support of the Council's proposal to create a citywide smokeless controlled area (SCA), as approved by September Cabinet. While boaters will be exempt under the proposed new SCA, further communications are planned to support the Council's introduction of ecomoorings along the Oxford Canal, which will also highlight the broader benefits of action to improve air quality.	Yes - update to be requested as part of Annual Air Quality Status Report 2023.
0026	29-Nov-23	Biodiversity Action Plan for Oxford City Council Parks and Nature Areas – September 2023 Review	That the Council, in collaboration with partners who hold relevant data, maps data relating to landscape and habitat type onto a centralised system (e.g. GIS) and populates with information about particular sites or projects which require funding; and makes this publicly accessible so that Members, community groups and the general public can find and support local projects near to them.	No	We recognise the benefits of this in line with the Scrutiny recommendation, however it would unfortunately require a significant amount of specialist officer time to coordinate, design, deliver and for ongoing review which is currently not budgeted or has identified officer capacity for. An option might be linked to the recent introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and this might be able to provide funding for much of the habitat enhancement projects required in future years.	No - broader work around Council-wide data/mapping exercise to be suggested to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
0027	29-Nov-23	Biodiversity Action Plan for Oxford City Council Parks and Nature Areas – September 2023 Review	That the Council explores how volunteer coordination could be delivered within existing resource as part of the Council's core 'business as usual'.	In Part	There will be ongoing work by the ODS Countryside Team to facilitate volunteering opportunities where possible as part of their day-to-day work, and also through the City Council's Green Spaces team with Friends of park groups. It would be challenging to expand this further without additional resource as the majority of people tend to volunteer at the weekends when there isn't dedicated resource. Officers would be able to continue to explore external funding opportunities that may link to this.	No - response cites resourcing issues to do more than is already being done.
0028	29-Nov-23	Biodiversity Action Plan for Oxford City Council Parks and Nature Areas – September 2023 Review	That the Council reviews the structure of its contracts with Oxford Direct Services in relation to parks and green space management in the longer-term, to ensure that there is clarity within those contracts as to whether the management of parks and green spaces is led by prescriptive inputs (certain amount of work over a defined period of time) or outputs (supporting, protecting and enhancing biodiversity).	No	There is a high level of commitment and expertise within ODS around the management of the green spaces for biodiversity. The OCC Biodiversity Review for its green spaces provides the Council's agreed approach and highlights the many habitat improvement projects and other conservation work successfully delivered over recent years. Whilst creating or completely renewing detailed specification contracts requires a significant amount of resource which isn't currently in place, the Council does have an OCC/ODS Client officer review meeting which might be appropriate to discuss key strategic areas within this.	Yes - there is a review of commissioning of services provided by ODS (linked to Budget and MTF5); in light of this the Panel was of the view that this recommendation should have perhaps been accepted by Cabinet. Panel to request update in due course as to the outcome of the review in relation to parks and green space management contracts with ODS.
0029	29-Nov-23	Biodiversity Action Plan for Oxford City Council Parks and Nature Areas – September 2023 Review	That the Council ensures the most appropriate approach for enhancing biodiversity is taken in its parks and nature areas according to environment on a site-by-site basis – with a focus on the right approach in the right place, rather than a uniform approach across all sites.	Yes	This is very much already in place for the many habitats and other non-recreation and sports areas in OCC's parks and nature areas. This is particularly important in a location like Oxford where there is a significant variation in geology, hydrology and soil types. If managed empathetically these different topographies develop their own distinct habitats, flora and fauna, and thereby increase the overall range of biodiversity.	No - already a Council policy
0030	29-Nov-23	Retrofit	That the Council, through its current Retrofit campaign and any future initiatives, ensures a focus on simplification and demystification of retrofit so that the options and processes are easily digestible by the public – thus encouraging uptake at scale.	Yes	The Council is delivering projects that aim to test retrofit solutions and give the public the opportunity to experience 'living examples' via open house events to see heat pumps and other retrofit solutions in situ. Two particular projects of note are: The Clean Heat Streets project seeks to install up to 90 Air Source Heat Pumps in Rose Hill and Iffley. The project offers residents the opportunity to see heat pump installations and interact with heat pump 'champions' in the local community. The project also works with a 'local convenor' who offers one-on-one support for residents through their retrofit journey, and provides clear, simple advice. The House Like Mine Project focusses on supporting residents, those on low income, and both Council and private tenants. The project also supports private landlords who house 32.2% of those that live in Oxford and therefore are a key stakeholder group to encourage retrofit solutions. The Council has created a webpage specifically to help these groups access advice and support for different types of retrofitting and grant opportunities, short films showcasing work already completed and actionable support to find an installer. The Council joint funds the Better Housing Better Health (BHBH) service with Oxfordshire County Council and the other districts. BHBH is a one-stop shop for energy advice. BHBH help us to administer and promote energy efficiency upgrade grants such as the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme and the Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS). We work together as a partnership to create useful materials on how to access grant funding and they offer support to residents with the grant application process. The Council is severely constrained in terms of funding and resource to offer deeper engagement in these areas. To combat these limitations, the Council leverages information and advice compiled by others via national entities such as the Energy Saving Trust, and at a local level, groups such as Low Carbon Hub, and other likeminded groups to disseminate information and offer support and advice.	No - as Council already doing what it can with limited resource and leverages other sources of information.
0031	29-Nov-23	Retrofit	That the Council ensures an emphasis on two-way communication in relation to retrofit and maintains a list of interested community groups and areas of the city where residents are interested in community retrofit schemes, so that relevant information, intelligence and opportunities can be shared.	Yes	Community engagement does take place via project work and in our work with several community groups who have an interest in community retrofit schemes. These groups include: Communities for Zero Carbon, Oxford Local Carbon, Low Carbon Oxford North, Local Environmental Action Florence Park, Rose Hill & Iffley Low Carbon, Low Carbon Oxford South, Low Carbon West Oxford, Friends of the Earth Oxfordshire. The Council has engaged with these groups and provided advice and support to community-based retrofit initiatives in the following ways: Helped secure funding for community-based retrofit projects - e.g. Eco Open Doors event, which allows people to find and visit their neighbours to see what retrofit means in a local context; assisted with promotion of community-based events and projects that focus on retrofit; assisted with dissemination of the Housewarming Guides – simplified and easy to use handbooks for retrofitting in Oxford, produced by Low Carbon Oxford North. Clean Heat Streets has worked closely with the Rose Hill and Iffley Low Carbon Group to provide a targeted community-based approach and keep retrofit knowledge at the centre of the community. Engagement work to promote grant funding is ongoing and includes staff presentations at community outreach events such as the 50+ Network event and the Community Links Oxfordshire event. Staff also work in partnership with BBC Radio Oxford on their cost-of-living clinics in-person at Templars Square and attend food larders to talk to residents about grants.	Yes - update to be requested in due course.
0032	29-Nov-23	Retrofit	That the Council compiles a list of local retrofit suppliers/installers to share publicly so that residents can see which suppliers are in the retrofit market.	No	The Council works with Low Carbon Hub who in turn work with CosyHomes who offer a number of retrofit services in Oxfordshire. More information is available here. Additionally, the Council's website gives signposted service to organisations who assess installers such as TrustMark, and the MCS certified installers list, where one can search via one's region to locate a suitable installer. Oxford City Council works in partnership with Better Housing Better Health to provide energy efficiency advice and access to grant funding for retrofit works. BHBH is run by the National Energy Foundation (NEF). NEF has a supplier network where TrustMark registered installers can be linked up to residents who qualify for funding such as ECO. The Council works with NEF to encourage suppliers to work with NEF and has requested NEF make this list public. A countywide source is the Climate Action Oxfordshire website offering a range of carbon cutting solutions including retrofit – it too signposts visitors to the site to local suppliers/organisations – e.g. this webpage for loft insulation or this webpage for energy assessments. The main energy homepage offers other options too.	No - as not something the Council will compile.

0033	27-Feb-24	Biodiversity Net Gain	That the Council coordinates with the other Oxfordshire Districts to establish basic Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring guidance for certain habitats to ensure a consistent set of principles and processes across the county.			
0034	27-Feb-24	Biodiversity Net Gain	That the Council, through its project to identify Council-owned land with the potential to provide biodiversity units, seeks to identify sufficient sites so as to establish itself as a key provider of biodiversity units locally, thus strongly encouraging the uptake of biodiversity units in Oxford or as close to Oxford as possible.			
0035	27-Feb-24	Citywide Retrofit Strategy	That the Council incorporates all non-residential Council-owned buildings within the scope of the Citywide Retrofit Strategy and includes an approach within the strategy and associated action plan to ensure improvements in energy efficiency of all non-residential Council-owned buildings regardless of whether or not the Council pays the energy bill.			
0036	27-Feb-24	Citywide Retrofit Strategy	That the Council ensures appropriate internal expertise in relevant service areas to drive forward projects and actions to achieve the Council's net zero ambitions where it has direct control in order to release additional capacity and resource within the Environmental Sustainability team to enable the continuation of its transition towards driving forward areas of work where the Council has influence and can shape and enable collaboration across the City to facilitate the achievement of the City's broader net zero ambitions.			

## **Appendix 2 – List of Suggested Items for 2024/25**

### **Standing/Regular Items**

- Net Zero Masterplan
- Climate Emergency Review Group Update
- Waterways Update
- Annual Air Quality Status Report
- Biodiversity Strategy/Action Plan
- Environment Act reporting
- Citizens Assembly on Climate Change

### **Other**

- Citizens Assembly on Climate Change
- Waste/Waste Strategy
- Tree Maintenance
- Fleet Decarbonisation Update
- Local area energy planning and mitigation measures regarding local grid constraints
- Heat Network & Zoning
- Eco-moorings Project Update

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