

To: Cabinet
Date: 17 April 2024
Report of: Climate and Environment Panel
Title of Report: Energy Generation/Solar Potential on Council Buildings

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To present Panel of the Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
Key decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Panel Chair
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice
Corporate Priority:	Pursue a Zero Carbon Oxford
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2020-24
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.	

Appendices	
Appendix A	Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

Introduction and overview

1. The Climate and Environment Panel met on 20 March 2024 to consider a Scrutiny-commissioned item on Energy Generation/Solar Potential on Council Buildings. It was recommended that the Panel receive a presentation followed by an opportunity for discussion; and agree any recommendations.
2. The Panel would like to thank Councillor Anna Railton (Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice), Mish Tullar (Head of Corporate Strategy), Vikki Robins (Carbon Reduction Team Manager) and Juliet Nicholas (Energy and Sustainability Manager) for attending the meeting to present and answer questions.

Summary and recommendations

3. Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy delivered a presentation which provided an overview of energy generation and solar potential on Council buildings.
4. The Panel asked a range of questions, including questions relating to local grid constraints; the optimal scale of solar installations (i.e. a small number of large sites versus a larger number of small sites); the scale of solar potential on Council assets; solar canopies on Park & Rides; and opportunities for innovation.
5. During discussion, the Panel noted the operational and commercial constraints in relation to the installation of solar canopies at Park & Rides, however highlighted that other areas had overcome those challenges and managed to install the solar canopies on car parks. The Panel noted capacity constraints within the Council to look into this in great detail, however agreed that a high-level briefing setting out the challenges would be useful, along with a commitment that the Council would continue to horizon scan and take note of any developments which could support deliverability of solar canopies at Park & Rides locally.

Recommendation 1: That the Council produces a high-level summary of current challenges and constraints impacting on the deliverability of solar opportunities at Council car parks and keeps a watching brief on how similar issues have been overcome in other areas so that any learning could be identified to support delivery in Oxford.

6. In addition to the Panel's first recommendation and recognising the limited financial and human resources across the Council to take projects forward, the Panel agreed that there should be a focus on allocating resources to projects which were the most deliverable and would have the most impact.

Recommendation 2: That the Council prioritises projects on the basis of deliverability and impact when allocating financial and human resources.

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