
Agenda Item:	Carbon Reduction Plan
Meeting Date:	Thursday 11 June 2026
Contact Officer:	Compliance and Environment Officer

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Climate Action Working Party on recommendations from the Climate & Biodiversity Committee and outlines next steps for progressing the Council's carbon reduction plan.

Background

The Climate & Biodiversity Committee met on 19 May 2026 and agreed a number of recommendations following consideration of a report from the Compliance & Environmental Officer. A key recommendation was:

To delegate authority to officers to scope options for allocating the £50,000 carbon reduction budget, with findings to be reported to the Climate Action Working Party on 11 June 2026.

Carbon Reduction Recommendations Reports

Energy Solutions Oxfordshire have undertaken the Carbon Reduction Recommendations Reports for Burwell Hall, Windrush Cemetery Depot and the Corn Exchange. These reports were presented to the Climate & Biodiversity Committee on 19 May 2026. Members of the committee discussed how the allocated £50,000 capital budget for carbon reduction projects could best be utilised and how this may be matched funded through Energy Solutions Oxfordshire's Green Fund. The fund can match funding up to £10,000. It was also discussed that priority projects could include the energy improvement works at Windrush Cemetery Depot (estimated at approximately £14,000) and the installation of solar panels at the Corn Exchange (estimated at approximately £34,000). The full reports for both buildings presented at the committee meetings are attached for information.

A summary of recommended energy saving measures and associated carbon impacts are detailed below:

Windrush Cemetery Depot

Energy savings recommendations - summary				
Opportunity	Payback (years)	Savings current & future energy prices (£ / yr)	Estimated costs (£)	Carbon impact (tCO ₂ e / yr)
1) Take and submit meter readings	-	0	0	0.00
2) Add heating controls	0.9	129	120 to 310	0.11
3) Add loft insulation	5.4	103	560	0.08
4) Add timer to hot water	4.3	42	180	0.03
5) Upgrade lighting to LEDs	7.6	230	1,750 to 2,100	0.19
6) Add draught proofing to external door	-	0	20 to 40	0.00
7) Investigate fridge use	-	See details	See details	0.00
8) Provide signage for disabled toilet door	0.1	18	1 to 2	0.02
9) Add solar PV panels	9.5	442	4,186 to 4,508	0.26
10) Consider an air to air heat pump system	11.6	519	6,000 to 8,000	0.42
TOTAL		£1,483 per year	£12,817 to 15,700	1.11 tCO₂e per year

Corn Exchange

Energy savings recommendations - summary				
Opportunity	Payback (years)	Savings current & future energy prices (£ / yr)	Estimated costs (£)	Carbon impact (tCO ₂ e / yr)
1) Manage heating	1.1	271	300	0.63
2) Conduct an out of hours survey	-	See details	0	0
3) Upgrade lighting to LEDs	9.9	844	8,400 to 9,800	0.69
4) Add draught proofing to external doors	-	See details	50 to 70	0
5) Investigate glazing solutions	44.6	271	12,100 to 16,500	0.63
6) Manage summer heat	-	See details	1,500 to 2,000	0
7) Add solar PV panels	8.7	3,573	31,096 to 35,880	2.34
8) Consider an air to water heat pump system	-	See details	35,000 to 45,000	8.02
TOTAL		£4,959 per year	£88,446 to 109,550	12.30 tCO₂e per year

Key Actions and Next Steps

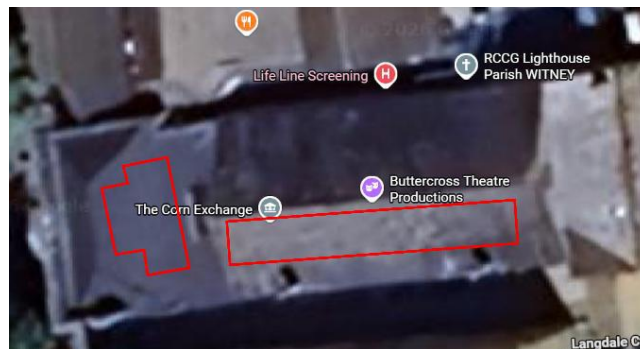
1. Project Delivery:

Officers will:

- Progress priority projects at both sites, including scoping, design, procurement, delivery, and performance monitoring.
- Use costings to support external funding applications.
- Schedule in-house works at Windrush Cemetery Depot at the earliest opportunity.
- Obtain specialist contractor quotations where required (e.g. electrical and heating works).
- Investigate installation of an automatic electric meter reading system at Windrush Cemetery Depot.

2. Corn Exchange - Feasibility:

The Corn Exchange is a Grade II listed building within a Conservation Area. Any proposed installation of solar PV panels to the south and east facing elevations will require careful consideration.



Officers will:

- Engage early with the Planning Team at West Oxfordshire District Council.
- Assess feasibility of installing south and east facing solar panels.
- Report findings back to a future Council meeting.

3. Grant Funding:

An application will be submitted to the Energy Solutions Oxfordshire Green Fund, which offers:

- Match funding of up to £10,000 for eligible energy efficiency or renewable projects
- Applications will be pursued for both sites where feasible.

Next application deadline: 9 September 2026

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

7. **A Green and Resilient Town** – Rooted in the Council's 2019 Climate Emergency declaration, with a commitment to embedding environmental responsibility into all Council activities and achieving carbon neutrality by 2028.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – All procurement will be in accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- b) Biodiversity – No significant adverse impacts anticipated; positive impacts expected through emissions reduction.
- c) Crime & Disorder - No direct implications identified.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – Positive contribution toward climate mitigation and adaptation objectives.

Risk

In decision making Members should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

All recommendations from the Climate Action Working Party will be referred to the relevant Committee and Full Council for formal approval.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. The delivery of the carbon reduction programme will generate wider benefits, including:

- Community engagement and awareness.
- Support for local businesses.
- Environmental improvements.

Project Procurement

All procurement activities will comply with:

- Relevant legislation.
- Council Procurement Policy.
- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The Council will ensure best value, balancing cost, quality, and service delivery, while maintaining efficiency and effectiveness.

Financial Implications

- £50,000 capital budget allocated for 2026-2027 carbon reduction projects.
- Expenditure will follow established Council approval processes.
- Additional external funding opportunities will be actively pursued.

Recommendations

Members are invited note the report and:

1. Support the proposed approach to allocating the carbon reduction budget.