Priorities for reaching Carbon Neutrality by 2030

This document gives WinACC's thoughts on priorities for the next Carbon Neutrality Action Plan. Ideas are included even when we know the City Council is already doing or considering them, in order to present our perspective as a whole.

WinACC's principles (Section 1) and priorities (Sections 2a and 2b) largely reflect and support the Health and Environment Policy Committee decision on 8 December 2022:

> "in recognition of the need to be greener faster in order to meet carbon neutrality targets by 2030, as a matter of urgency to:
>
> a. Prioritise and seek funding for highest impact actions within our scope.
>
> b. Identify ways to use developer (Community Infrastructure Levy) and other funding to drive or unlock change.
>
> c. Put carbon at heart of relationship with key partners to accelerate delivery.
>
> d. Scale up actions and increase pace of delivery."

We also suggest ways in which WinACC might support the City Council (Section 3).

Section 1 - Principles

To reach a net zero carbon district by 2030, we recommend these 5 principles:

1. **Consistent, visible and assertive leadership** by WCC councillors, the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors.
2. **Focus on the highest impact actions, not on completeness:** actions that will lead most quickly to the biggest reductions in greenhouse gas emissions at the best cost/benefit ratio.
3. **Scale up actions and increase pace of delivery.** Act fast on the top priorities. Don't delay action until you have details of a plan that covers every angle. After the top priorities are under way, the Council can assess the impact of further Council action on subjects not already assessed.[1]
4. **Put carbon at the heart of the council's relationship with other public bodies, business, communities and above all the electorate** (more than 4 in five people in the UK want action on the climate emergency[2])**. Build partnerships that** accelerate delivery, given **the City Council's limited powers and budget.** We suggest a standing conference of major partners which agrees the top priorities for the district, and works together to make them a reality, monitor implementation, monitor progress to neutrality, and keep the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan up-to-date.
5. **Adopt a policy position to take / permit no action that increases greenhouse gas emissions or creates barriers to change.**

   Assess every proposal for change against its climate impact (e.g. North Park and Ride, Bushfield Camp, River Park, Central Winchester Regeneration). Do nothing that increases emissions, and such action by others (M3 widening and Southampton Airport being recent examples).

   Encourage climate action by others by ensuring the Council does not put barriers in their way. For example, ensure planning policies do not stand in the way of retrofitting, or of installation of domestic or commercial renewable power.

[1] WinACC's critique of the WSP roadmap lists some of the subjects which need to be considered, including consumption emissions; nature-based solutions including sequestration by plants other than trees; transport emissions from flying, freight, and motorways; emissions from greenhouse gases other than CO2.

[2] The latest BEIS Public Attitudes tracker in Summer 2022 found that 83% of people were concerned about climate change.

Section 2a – Priorities for emission reduction

We believe that action on the five priority areas in the table below would have the biggest impact on emission reduction.

Under each priority area, we list the actions we have identified as having the most impact. More work is required to quantify the impact robustly. Some of the data required is in the WSP report[3]. WinACC would be pleased to work with and support the City Council in reviewing the WSP data, and identifying and using data not yet to hand.

Meanwhile, we give our informal assessment of the City Council's power or influence on implementation, affordability, speed of impact and public support. We would be pleased to work with officers to assess actions more rigorously against these criteria.

Many of the actions listed are cost-neutral or could generate funds: green = income generating, black = cost neutral or small, red = needs financing. We include the last (red) only where we believe there is potential for financing work from grants, loans, or investment to save.

[3] WinACC has provided the Council with feedback on the WSP report, setting out where we suggest their data needs checking.

Table 1 - Priorities for emission reduction

	WCC power	WCC influence	Affordability	Speed of impact	Public support
1. Finance and assets					
1. Always apply for any national funding that could be used to reduce emissions (whether the bid is in the name of the City Council or a partner e.g. WinACC).	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
2. Use City Council assets to help achieve carbon neutrality, e.g.:					
a. prioritise carbon reduction actions when allocating S106 and CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funds	a. ✓✓✓		✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
b. install solar panels on Council land and buildings	b. ✓✓✓		✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
c. make low carbon, both embodied and in use, a key decision-factor in all procurement.	c. ✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓	✓✓
3. Secure investments to help achieve carbon neutrality:					
a. encourage private sector investment e.g. developers of renewable projects – encourage them to invest by making it clear that WCC welcomes investment, and that they are likely to get planning permission if they meet pre-published general conditions	a.	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓
b. invest Council reserves in large-scale renewables, locally or elsewhere	b. ✓✓		✓✓	✓	✓✓
c. set up a revolving Green Fund, which could be open to large scale private investors, or to public contributions. It could be used for general climate projects, or for specifics such as installing battery electric vehicle charging points; retrofitting; community renewable energy. (See Lewisham Council plans for a Climate Action Bond Community Municipal Investment).	c. ✓		✓	✓	✓✓✓
4. Press Hampshire Pension Fund to shift from fossil fuel to green investments.	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓
2. Decarbonising transport					
5. Require all transport schemes to identify the impact on greenhouse gas emissions; oppose schemes which increase emissions, and aim for carbon reduction.	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓

	WCC power	WCC influence	Affordability	Speed of impact	Public support
6. Make changes within the City Council's powers to deter/disincentivise use of private cars[4], such as:					
a. low traffic neighbourhoods, traffic-free streets outside schools, play streets, etc.	a. ✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
b. Clean Air Zones, with charging	b. ✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
c. workplace parking levy	c. ✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓
d. congestion charging	d. ✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
e. use parking charges as a lever for behaviour change: higher charges for on-street parking permits; higher charges for central car parks; a surcharge for parking SUVs; a surcharge for parking fossil fuelled vehicles.	e. ✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
7. Support active transport:					
a. develop infrastructure for walking cycling , taking opportunities to increase permeability e.g. on council-owned land and major developments	a. ✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
b. update the Winchester Movement Strategy to reflect recent improved low traffic neighbourhood proposals.	b. ✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓
8. Better buses:					
a. use new income from charges (6 above) to improve bus services (frequency, cost etc)	a. ✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
b. integrate park-and-ride buses into the town bus route network and redistribute the subsidy	b. ✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
c. redesign traffic flow so all bus routes serve both Winchester railway station and the city centre; provide a 'pulse interchange' at the railway station (cp. Swiss 'Taktfahrplan' principles)	c. ✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
d. support electrification of buses.	d. ✓				

[4]"Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the government should act in local neighbourhoods to increase road safety (88%), improve air quality (86%), reduce traffic congestion (83%) ." and 82% of people in the south-east supported reduction of road traffic – Kantar Public Opinion Survey on Traffic and Road Use https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/934617/DfT-Public-Opinion-Survey-on-Traffic-and-Road-Use-Phase-1-Report.pdf

	WCC power	WCC influence	Affordability	Speed of impact	Public support
		✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
9. Support the battery electrification of road vehicles:					
a. convert parts of car parks to recharging areas (combine with freeing up street parking areas for active transport)	**a.** ✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
b. install recharging points	**b.** ✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓
c. electrify Council vehicles, especially refuse vehicles.	**c.** ✓✓		✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
10. Increase the role of railways:					
a. develop a partnership to increase rail's modal share in the district and replace unused commuter capacity with more and better local services (building on South Western Railway's 'Journey to a net zero future')		**a.** ✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
b. campaign to restore Cross-Country services to the pre-Covid 1.5 trains per hour frequency at Winchester		**b.** ✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
c. campaign for additional stations in the district (cp. successful example of Exeter and Devon).		**c.** ✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
11. In the Local Plan:					
a. embed the aim of 15- or 20-minute communities	**a.** ✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
b. allocate development sites in locations that provide primary access by active/public transport, minimise transport access needs, make best use of existing transport infrastructure	**b.** ✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
c. increase requirements for bus and rail infrastructure for new housing developments					
d. revise car parking standards for new dwellings and at change of occupancy, so that town centre sites have zero car parking spaces, and all other sites a maximum of one car parking space (with exceptions for parking for people with disabled badges).	**c.** ✓✓✓		✓	✓	✓✓✓
	d. ✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓	✓
3. Decarbonising new buildings, commercial and domestic					

	WCC power	WCC influence	Affordability	Speed of impact	Public support
12. In the Local Plan: a. set high standards of carbon neutrality for all new buildings (WinACC supports LETI standard that all new buildings must operate at Net Zero Carbon by 2030 and existing buildings by 2050) b. set development management policies to require (in order of priority) zero carbon; high density; maximising potential for solar power and heat pumps, passive heating and cooling through siting and aspect.	a. ✓✓✓ b. ✓✓		✓✓✓ ✓✓✓	✓✓ ✓	✓✓✓ ✓✓✓
4. Decarbonising homes					
13. Retrofit homes to as close as possible to zero carbon standard (incl. replacing gas and oil heating with heat pumps and adding rooftop solar panels): a. rolling programme for council homes b. a rolling fund to encourage retrofit of private dwellings c. a policy that empowers home-owners to make listed / Conservation Area properties more energy efficient (as proposed for Kensington and Chelsea standards for historic buildings), including removing planning restrictions on photovoltaic film/panels and thermal roof panels.	a. ✓✓✓ b. ✓✓ c. ✓✓✓	✓✓✓ ✓✓✓	✓ ✓ ✓✓✓	✓✓✓ ✓✓ ✓✓✓	✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓
5. Championing the need					
14. Foster public support for climate action, what the council is doing and why.					
15. Emphasise the economic benefit for Winchester of being a beacon in responding to climate heating, making Winchester District an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest in.	✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
16. Support development of community renewable energy schemes	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
17. Join with other authorities to lobby the UK government for support, policy change and funding.	✓		✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓

	WCC power	WCC influence	Affordability	Speed of impact	Public support
18. Follow best practice, adopting effective policies from other local authorities	✓✓✓		✓✓	✓	✓✓✓

Section 2b Priorities for renewable energy

The generation of renewable electricity can address any gap between emissions reduction and net zero.

Initiative	Implementation & finance sources	2019 actual (GWh)	2030 target* (GWh)	WCC power	Affordability	Speed of impact	Public acceptance
WCC's own land & buildings	Identify land parcels (including rooftops) and issue tenders to solar and wind industry for partners to develop. Shared income model: WCC provide land, receive income share.	**nil**	**25 GWh**	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
Solar – private sector utility installations	113 GWh is already in implementation or planning. The commercial/economic model is well-established – i.e. no WCC subsidy or pump-prime funding required. Effort is needed to make the planning framework encouraging for landowners and developers, also DNO (distribution network operator) grid improvements. In turn, acceptance by local communities required. • Establish and sustain **communication channel with major energy companies** and their planning agents • Establish routine **communication channels with major local employers, landowners and farmers.** Engage groups such as WinACC to facilitate and provide expertise/resources • Encourage developers to propose large scale renewable energy schemes by clarity about what will be approved (e.g. Local Plan; delegation of approval powers to officers within overall Council framework)	**82 GWh**	**475 GWh**	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓

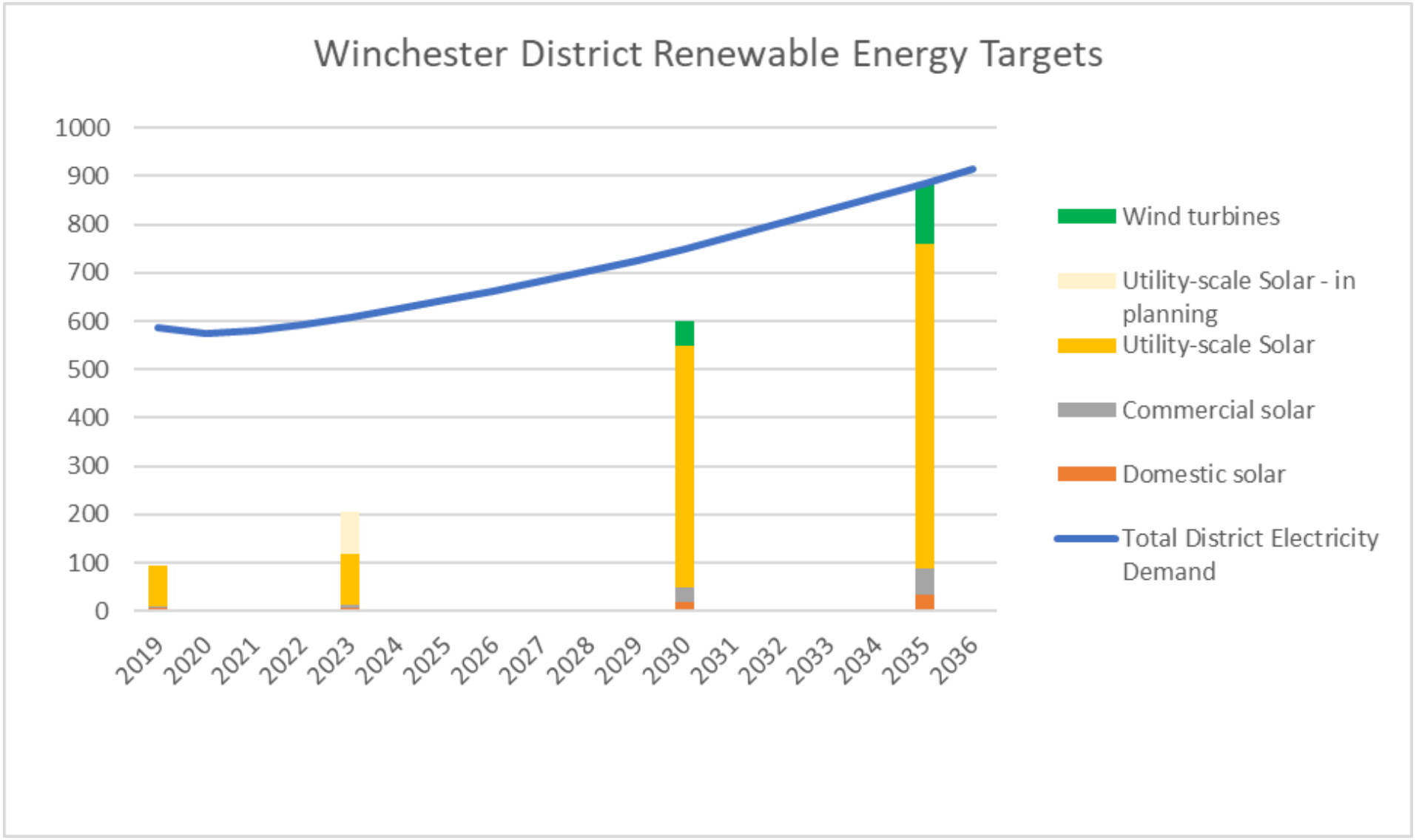
Wind - private sector utility installations	20 turbines of 1MW each. Actions as for utility-scale solar, above, plus: • GIS mapping tool to be amended to accommodate wind energy; • technical, commercial and planning guidance to be added to scope of WeCAN.	**0.1 GWh**	**50 GWh**	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
Rooftop solar - domestic	The target equates to c5,500 domestic 3.5kW installations. Pace of adoption will depend on govt policy and domestic energy economics. WCC can best influence by enforcing solar on new build applications and negotiating higher standards for existing planning permissions granted to developers at Kings Barton & North Whiteley. *Retrofit social housing stock with solar panels is in the section on decarbonising homes table 1.*	**6 GWh**	**20 GWh**	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Rooftop solar - commercial	The target equates to c300 installations of 100kW average size (rooftop, car parks, spare land, etc). • Launch and communicate **GIS mapping tool** (in co-ordination with Local Plan objectives, etc) • Produce **toolkit for energy supply** component of WeCAN parish climate action plans. Seed-fund WeCAN. • Implement fast track planning approval process	**5 GWh**	**30 GWh**	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
General activities	Align local authority planning tools with energy goals. Local Plan review to support 2035 target for energy supply, acknowledging implications for land use. Identify sites for large-scale zero-carbon energy production and/or supply (such as wind farms, solar farms, combined heat and power, electricity storage). **District energy plan:** • Embed energy generation within mainstream District support for local economic growth						

	• Establish basis and data collection routines for monitoring District supply and consumption data, with disaggregation to parish scale • Monitor Neighbourhood Plans and Parish Design Statements for consistency with District energy plan • Advocate for HCC and SDNPA development and climate plans to support District energy plan						
Totals		**93 GWh**	**600 GWh**				

***Target refers to total renewable energy generating capacity installed in 2030.**

Context for target:

	2019	**2030**	**Notes**
District RE Generating capacity	93 GWh	600 GWh	WCC can claim 500 GWh contribution to national grid electricity supply and calculate this as a proportion of District electricity demand. Can then convert this to CO2e assuming gas is the marginal energy source in 2030. WinACC can assist in the calculation and assumptions/justification.
Non-renewable electricity supply (all imported by grid)	493 GWh	150 GWh	
Total Winchester District electricity supply / demand:	586 GWh	750 GWh	750 is an estimate, interpolated from 2035 Sixth Carbon Budget assumption of 50% increase over 2019 demand (see graph which illustrates curve).


Winchester District Renewable Energy Targets
1000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027
2028
2029
2030
2031
2032
2033
2034
2035
2036
Wind turbines
Utility-scale Solar - in planning
Utility-scale Solar
Commercial solar
Domestic solar
Total District Electricity Demand

At January 2023, progress-to-date against target as follows (additional to the 2019 capacity):

Solar – utility-scale farms, totalling 113 GWh of capacity:

- Christmas Hill near Winchester – 2023 full implementation 24GWh

And in various stages of planning:

- Locks Farm, Bishops Waltham
- Denmead Farm
- South Lynch, Hursley

Commercial solar – examples of larger installations:

- Worlds End Pumping Station (Hambledon) - approved
- Safran Helicopter Engines (Whiteley) – permitted development

Section 3 - How WinACC can support the City Council

1. Funding

WinACC can spot opportunities to bring in funding from grants, and work with the City Council to develop bids. Some funding sources require partnerships, others are accessible only by charities. WinACC can be a partner or lead a bid, as we have done with the City Council for at least three sizeable grants before.

We also have some expertise, and time, we can offer in exploring and assessing the feasibility of funding from other (non-grant) sources.

2. Supporting action in the community

WinACC brings money into the District to support people who take action, in particular on retrofitting their homes.

WinACC builds capacity for communities to respond to the climate crisis together through WeCAN, developing a learning community of community groups and parish councils taking climate action.

WinACC provides ways for local residents to play a part in addressing the climate emergency, from growing their own food to developing their community projects to lobbying for change.

3. Public opinion

WinACC already aims to influence public opinion about the urgency of climate action and the need to cut emissions. An example is presenting the case for residents to support planning applications for solar farms, and other renewable energy (community and commercial).

WinACC can help harness public opinion in support of the City Council, for example if it were to pass a resolution on the investments of its Pension Fund.

WinACC can help explore public opinion on contentious topics, inviting the public to meetings which inform, canvass opinion, and where appropriate help to shape views.

4. Expertise

WinACC can sometimes provide expertise that supplements the expertise of City Council staff.

For over ten years, we have provided analyses of Winchester District emissions data. We would like to work on this in closer collaboration with the City Council officers. We would also like to work with officers on the detailed development of future iterations on the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan, working together to agree estimates of emission reduction from various actions in order to inform priorities.

We can draw in volunteers to share their expertise on a wide range of subjects, from community organising to the links between health and the climate.

WinACC's lead members on climate topics can spot and share examples of interesting or good practice from other parts of the country.

8 January 2023