

**Supporting Good Decisions**

**Promoting Equality and Human Rights;**

**Reducing Poverty; and**

**Protecting the Environment**

**Integrated Impact Assessment Form**

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**Promoting Equality and Human Rights;**

**Reducing Poverty; and Protecting the Environment**

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| **Title of Policy/ Proposal** | Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2025-30 |
| **Timescale for Implementation**  | April 2025-2030 |
| **IIA Completion Date** | 14/04/2025 |
| **Completed by** | Cheyne Hamm, Sustainability & Climate Change Officer |
|  **Lead officer** | Cheyne Hamm, Sustainability & Climate Change Officer |

**Section 1: Screening**

**1.1 Briefly describe the policy/proposal/activity you are assessing.**

East Lothian Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and adopted its Climate Change Strategy 2020-25 the following year. That Strategy covered a period of 5 years and is due to be refreshed to reflect the latest policies, activities, and developments. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, as a public body, East Lothian Council is expected to lead by example in reducing carbon emissions, contributing to climate change adaptation and acting sustainably. It has a statutory duty to contribute to national emission reduction targets and to help deliver the national adaptation plan.

The Climate Change Strategy 2025-30 will update East Lothian Council’s approach to tackling climate change. This approach will make use of the latest guidance and best practice, align with recent national policy developments, and fulfil our statutory obligations relating to climate change and sustainability.

The Strategy sets out the outcomes we are working toward across 4 Themes, which are:

* Governance: All our employees and partners understand how climate change affects us and what our responsibilities are.
* Assets: Our buildings and vehicles are lower emission and adapted for climate change.
* Services: We will design our services to be lower impact and resilient to climate-induced disruption.
* Place: Through partnership working, we enhance nature and our built environment. Communities benefit from the energy transition.

The proposed approach to climate adaptation is to follow an urgency-based framework. In this approach, we identify areas and operations at greatest risk from climate change, assess whether we are adapting sufficiently already, and plan to improve our response where there is a shortfall. . This is the methodology used in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment.

The proposed approach to climate mitigation is to follow the mitigation hierarchy. This is a framework which orders the types of changes that are effective at reducing emissions. We will (in order of priority): avoid activities which create emissions where possible, reduce the level of emissions-creating activities, and lastly replace emissions-intensive activities with low- or no-emissions ones.

* 1. **What will change as a result of this policy?**

We will make progress towards realising the Outcomes of the Strategy. Our staff and partners will be more climate-ready, sustainability will have a higher profile throughout the organisation, and we will work closely with communities to make East Lothian a more climate-positive place. We will deliver services with a leaner number of assets -which will be more efficient- and our decisions and policies will lead to more climate-positive outcomes. Most of these changes are planned or underway already, so the Climate Change Strategy 2025-30 focuses on monitoring their success, aligning with wider strategic aims, and maximising co-benefits for climate change. Many changes will be implemented at the project level in the next 5 years. ELC’s Integrated Impact Assessment was also reviewed at the outset of the Strategy’s development and consulted periodically throughout the process, including before and after public and staff consultation. Therefore the Strategy’s objectives consider and align with improving outcomes for protected groups.

* 1. **Deciding if a full Impact Assessment is needed.**

Please answer the following questions:

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| 1. The policy/ proposal has consequences for or affects people e.g. how they can access a service?
 | x |  |
| 1. The policy/proposal has potential to make a significant impact on equality and human rights, socio-economic disadvantage, the council’s role as a corporate parent, children’s rights, or the council’s commitment to tackling climate change?
 | x |  |
| 1. The policy/proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact as defined by the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005?
 |  | x |
| 1. The policy/ proposal involves a data processing activity (storage / collection of personal data) that is likely to result in a high risk to individuals as determined by Article 35 of the General Data Protection Regulation?
 |  | x |

* If you have answered yes to questions 1 and 2 above, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment. If you have answered No then an IIA does not need to be completed. Please keep a copy of the screening paperwork.
* If you have answered yes to question 3, you will need to consider whether you need to complete a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
* If you have answered yes to question 4, you will need to consider whether you need to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment. Please seek further advice from the Team Manager Information Governance.

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**Section 2: Integrated Impact Assessment**

* 1. **Have those who are directly affected by the policy had the opportunity to comment on new proposals?**

Yes. There was an 8-week period of public and staff consultation which was publicised on East Lothian Council’s website and social media and the East Lothian Courier. In addition to online consultation on East Lothian Consultation Hub, there were 6 public events outwith normal working hours in libraries across the county and 4 in-person all-day staff consultation sessions at Council work sites. Children were also consulted via a survey designed with the Education team implementing Learning for Sustainability.

* 1. **What information/data have you used to inform the development of the policy to date?**

The ELC Climate Change Strategy 2025-30 aligns with legislation such as the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and guidance from Audit Scotland and the Sustainable Scotland Network on local authority climate action. It was also informed by the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals. The Strategy was developed constantly referring to the East Lothian Council Plan, the East Lothian Poverty Plan, the Local Housing Strategy 2024-29, and the East Lothian Community Wealth Building Charter, among others. ELC’s Integrated Impact Assessment was also a point of reference to ensure the Strategy’s objectives align with improving equalities for protected groups.

* 1. **What does the evidence/ research suggest about the policy’s actual or likely impact on equality groups and those vulnerable/ or experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?**

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| --- | --- |
| **Evidence**  | **Comment** |
| Which groups are in particular need of this service? | Climate change will affect everyone in the county. It will have the greatest impact on deprived communities, who are also likely to have contributed the least to climate change. |
| What level of service uptake/ access is there from protected and vulnerable groups? | Protected and vulnerable groups are targeted by climate change mitigation interventions such as the Area-based Scheme energy efficiency upgrades and ‘Greening the grey’ projects. |
| Can you identify positive outcomes for service users | Yes. Residents should be able to access Council services with minimal to no contribution to climate change. |
| What is the service user experience of those from protected or vulnerable groups? | Residents should find more green space, more nature networks, and more support for community energy through planning processes. The Council’s asset review and place-making project, the climate-related outcomes of which are informed by this Strategy, will likely have an effect on accessing services. |
| What opportunity have those from protected groups had to co-produce or comment on the service/ plans? | There was an 8-week period of public and staff consultation which was publicised on East Lothian Council’s website and social media and the East Lothian Courier. In addition to online consultation on East Lothian Consultation Hub, there were 6 public events outwith normal working hours in libraries across the county and 4 in-person all-day staff consultation sessions at Council work sites. |

* 1. **How does the policy meet the different needs of groups in the community? Please note that where children will be affected by the policy or activity a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact assessment must additionally be completed.** [Children’s Rights and Well-being Impact Assessment - completion guidance and template | East Lothian Intranet](https://intranet.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/1214/children_s_rights_and_well-being_impact_assessment_-_completion_guidance_and_template)

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| **Equality Groups**  | **Comments** |
| Older people, people in the middle years | Likely minimal change in meeting needs |
| Children and young people children | Contributes to Target 2030 goal, which should improve the education experience for young people. Achieving the outcomes of this Strategy will improve East Lothian’s ability to thrive in a climate-affected future. |
| Women, men and transgender people (includes issues relating to pregnancy and maternity) | This Strategy includes objectives to encourage a modal shift away from travel by private car, which may cause stress for parents. Policy changes informed by this Strategy will need to be cognizant and accommodating.The Strategy also includes goals to improve public transportation access and enhance active travel, which should improve convenience and offer affordable travel options for parents.  |
| Disabled people (includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems) | Likely minimal change in meeting needs |
| Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers) | Likely minimal change in meeting needs |
| Refugees and asylum seekers  | Likely minimal change in meeting needs |
| People with different religions or beliefs (includes people with no religion or belief) | Likely minimal change in meeting needs |
| Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people  | Likely minimal change in meeting needs |
| People who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership | Likely minimal change in meeting needs |
| **Those vulnerable to falling into poverty*** Unemployed
* People on benefits
* Lone Parents
* Care experienced children and young people
* Carers (including young carers)
* Homeless people
* Those involved in the community justice system
* People with low literacy/numeracy
* Families with 3 or more children
* Those with a child/ children under 1
 | The Strategy contains actions and objectives which should improve outcomes for those experiencing poverty or vulnerable to falling into poverty. The Action Plan includes actions to support future-proof green energy jobs and procure from local suppliers, which should help meet the needs of under- or unemployed people. The Council also plans to upgrade homes in fuel poverty and improve urban green spaces, which will have positive impacts on families and individuals in fuel poverty and people on benefits. |
| **Geographical communities*** Rural/ semi rural communities
* Urban Communities
* Coastal communities
* Those living in the most deprived communities (bottom 20% SIMD areas)
 | The Strategy contains actions and objectives which should improve outcomes for most geographical areas. The approach to climate adaptation is to identify areas of the greatest adaptation shortfall, which includes vulnerability. Actions in the Action Plan address geographic disparities by tracking progress of a Coastal Change Adaptation Plan to identify coastal areas at climate risk and rolling out Journey Hubs to facilitate rural communities’ access to public transport. |
| **People with communication needs:*** Gaelic Language Speakers {refer if necessary to the Council’s Gaelic Language Plan}
* British Sign Language (BSL) users {refer if necessary to the Council’s BSL Plan}
* English as a Second Language
* Other e.g. Deafblind, Plain English, Large Print
 | Likely minimal change in meeting needs |

* 1. **Are there any other factors which will affect the way this policy impacts on the community or staff groups?**

There may be effects relating to projects mentioned in the Strategy, but these will be determined at the project-level where associated IIA’s will be completed and published.

* 1. **Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?**

If yes, how have you included equality and human rights considerations into the contract?

There may be projects mentioned in the Strategy carried out by contractors, and these considerations will be included at the project level.

* 1. **Have you considered how you will communicate information about this policy or policy change to those affected e.g. to those with hearing loss, speech impairment or English as a second language?**

Versions of our Strategy can be provided in Braille, large print, audiotape, or other languages including BSL.

* 1. **Please consider how your policy will impact on each of the following?**

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| --- |
| **Equality and Human rights*** Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services
* Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment
* Promotes participation, is inclusive and gives people control over decisions which affect them
* Preserves dignity and self-respect of individuals (does not lead to degrading treatment or stigma)
* Builds support networks, resilience, community capacity
 |
| Comments: Equality and human rights are at the heart of the Climate Change Strategy. Humans have a right to a stable environment and the Climate Change Strategy sets out how ELC is contributing to that. Adapting to climate change is a core part of our approach. The Strategy also encourages capacity building and resilience in communities. It includes actions to support community councils to include climate change in their resilience planning and to improve communication in advance of extreme weather.  |
| **Socio-Economic Disadvantage / reducing poverty*** Maximises income and/or reduces income inequality
* Helps young people into positive destinations
* Aids those returning to and those progressing within the labour market
* Improves employability skills, including literacy and numeracy
* Reduces the costs of taking part in activities and opportunities
* Reduces the cost of living
 |
| Comments: The Strategy contains actions and objectives which should improve outcomes for those experiencing poverty or vulnerable to falling into poverty. The Action Plan includes actions to support future-proof green energy jobs, upgrade homes in fuel poverty, and procure locally to support community wealth-building. Implementing Learning for Sustainability in Education will help prepare young people for climate-ready employability and we plan to continue working with partners to offer training in future-proof skills. |
| **Tackling Climate Change*** Reduces the need to travel or increases access to sustainable forms of transport
* Minimises waste / encourages resource efficiency / contributes to the circular economy
* Ensures goods / services are from ethical, responsible and sustainable sources
* Improves energy efficiency / uses low carbon energy sources
* Protects and/or enhances natural environments / habitats / biodiversity
* Promotes the transition to a low carbon economy
* Prepares and/or adapts communities for climate change impacts
 |
| Comments: The outcomes and actions of the Strategy are primarily aimed at tackling climate change. It covers projects, approaches, and plans which address all of the above categories. |
| **Corporate Parenting and Care Experienced Young People*** Impacts on care experienced young people
* Provides opportunities or reduces opportunities to participate in activities which are designed to promote the wellbeing of young people
* Adversely affects the wellbeing of young people
* Adversely impacts on outcomes for care experienced young people
 |
| Comments: Nothing in the Strategy specifically addresses this, but young people in schools will have improved outcomes as ELC implements Learning for Sustainability in its curriculum and learning plans. |

**Section 3. Action Plan**

What, if any changes will be made to the proposal/ policy as a result of the assessment?

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| **Changes to be made** | **Expected outcome of the change** | **Resources Required** | **Timeline** | **Responsible person** |
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**For consideration of the Head of Service**

Can you identify any cumulative impacts on equality groups or vulnerable people arising from this policy, when considered alongside other changes across other services?

**Sign off by Head of Service**

Name:

Date: 22/04/25