

EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	Brent Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy (2021-2030)
DEPARTMENT:	Assistant Chief Executive's
TEAM:	Climate and ecological emergency Strategy
LEAD OFFICER:	Tom Welsh
DATE:	03/02/2021

NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.

SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

This strategy outlines the key environmental issues facing Brent and sets out the actions that the Council will take over the next ten years to tackle the climate and ecological emergency. The strategy aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 and to take steps to ensure that biodiversity in the borough is boosted/protected. The strategy also outlines the need to implement measures which allow Brent, and its residents, to adapt to the effects of climate change and global heating.

We are already feeling the effects of global heating. Estimates suggest that human activities have caused approximately 1C of global heating above pre-industrial levels (IPCC, 2018). However, by limiting global warming to 1.5C, we can avoid the most severe effects: risks to our health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, economic growth, and ecosystems. This will require step changes in the scale and ambition of our emissions reduction. By taking decisive action now, we have the opportunity to limit its impact on the borough's most vulnerable groups.

The majority of local authorities, including most London Boroughs, have declared a climate and ecological emergency. As well as reducing the risks from the warming climate, action to tackle climate change has the potential to bring positive change for the local community on many of the issues that matter most to people such as cleaner air, greener spaces, warmer homes, healthier travel and a thriving local economy. Improving the health of all through climate action also has the potential to bring significant savings to NHS budgets both now and significantly in years to come.

The themes and objectives of this strategy have been developed following extensive consultation with Brent residents (as explained further in Section B1). The five key themes to focus the energies of the borough on achieving carbon neutrality within this strategy are:

- **Theme 1 – Consumption, Resources and Waste**
- **Theme 2 – Transport**
- **Theme 3 – Homes, Buildings and the Built Environment**
- **Theme 4 – Nature & Green Space**

- **Theme 5 – Supporting Communities**

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

The strategy will affect everyone who lives, works and studies within the borough of Brent, as well as those who visit the borough.

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

Yes - the climate and ecological emergency will impact every individual, on a local, national, and international scale. However, some individuals will be disproportionately affected by its consequences. Actions to mitigate the effects of extreme weather events, changes in average outdoor temperatures, and actions to reduce housing and road transport emissions are the most pertinent to issues of equality. The Council will do everything possible to minimise the negative effects of global heating, to reduce the potentially unequal impact it could have on certain groups.

The protected characteristics of age, disability, and race are particularly relevant for this strategy. As detailed below, young children, older people, BAME communities, and those with mental or physical disabilities are disproportionately negatively affected by the adverse effects of climate change. Therefore, actions designed to mitigate these effects will help to minimise the disadvantages experienced by individuals with these characteristics.

4. Please indicate with an "X" the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	Impact Positive	Impact Neutral/None	Impact Negative
Age	X		
Sex		X	
Race	X		
Disability *	X		X
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity	X		
Marriage		X	

* There is potential for people with disabilities to be both positively and negatively impacted by climate action policies

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an “X”.

Screening Checklist

	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council’s public sector equality duty?	X	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	X	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?		X
Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?	X	

If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B.

If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

Information gathered from Brent residents at the Brent Climate Assembly was used to inform the strategy. The Climate Assembly took place at Brent Civic Centre over three Saturdays in November and December 2019. In total, 53 people attended all three meetings. Members were recruited using randomised recruitment methods to reflect the local population in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic group, and locality. The five key themes have been developed in accordance with the priority actions suggested by the Brent Climate Assembly, a group of 53 residents who were selected to be representative of the borough in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic group and locality. The question that was considered by the assembly was: *‘How can we work together to limit climate change and its impact while protecting our environment, our health and our wellbeing? Consider the Council, businesses and organisations, individuals.’*

The development of these themes were also taken forward following a Youth Summit in winter 2019, and following further discussion at Brent Connects and other engagement meetings in summer 2020. The draft strategy document as a whole was open for public comment and consultation between November 2020 and January 2021 and we undertook bespoke engagement events with disabled residents groups and carers and young people (via a workshop hosted by the Jason Roberts Roundtable). Further comments made during this period by different individuals and groups have also been analysed and assimilated into this document as necessary.

Research on the impact of global heating and air pollution on certain groups has been considered. Guidance from the website Climate Just was also used, to understand the

differential impact of global heating on different demographics. This is an information tool, produced predominantly by the University of Manchester, to help with the delivery of equitable responses to the climate crisis on a local level.

The 'Diversity in Brent' report, published by the Council, was used to understand the diversity of Brent's residents, and the proportion of those with protected characteristics. Equality analyses for similar climate and ecological emergency published by other local authorities have been taken into account.

2. For each "protected characteristic" provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state "not applicable".

AGE

Details of impacts identified

The Climate Just web tool outlines that young children and babies and older people experience disproportionate health effects from climate-related extreme weather events, particularly hot weather. Young children are more likely to over-heat as they sweat less, and are less able to adapt their own clothing and behaviour. Many excess deaths during heatwaves are among older people; their temperature regulation processes are less efficient, making them less able to cope with extremes of temperature. Older people may also be more likely to experience effects such as dehydration and the worsening of existing health problems during heatwaves. The strategy aims to reduce both greenhouse gas emissions from consumption, and territorial carbon emissions in the borough which will help to slow global heating and thus reduces the likelihood of temperature extremes. Educating individuals on how to cope with temperature extremes will also help to reduce the unequal impact of these events on certain age groups. Ensuring that buildings and homes are adapted to future climate risk is identified as a key element to this.

Research also suggests that high air pollution may be linked to increased risk of dementia. If this is the case, reducing air pollution could reduce risk of dementia, a disease which predominantly affects older people. Theme 2 in particular focuses on tackling the noxious gases produced by transport, and promoting active and sustainable modes of travel accordingly.

There are significant physical and mental health risks from air pollution in the borough. Children are particularly impacted, as their lungs are still developing and they breathe more rapidly than adults. Children exposed to high levels of air pollution over a long period may be at increased risk of asthma, coughs, and of developing lung cancer in adulthood. In children with existing asthma, high levels of air pollution are linked to increased asthma attacks. Several actions included in the strategy aim to reduce air pollution within theme two. Actions to reduce air pollution near schools would help to reduce the negative health effects experienced by young people.

In Brent, it is estimated that 6.6% of mortality in those aged 30+ is attributable to particulate air pollution.

DISABILITY

Details of impacts identified

In Brent, 1 in 7 individuals say their day-to-day activities are limited by a disability. During extreme weather events, such as heatwaves or flooding, people with existing physical or mental health problems are likely to be disproportionately affected. These groups may have a lower ability to take action due to physical constraints, or a lower awareness of their circumstances and how to take action.

Some medications affect the body's ability to sweat or perform temperature regulatory functions; individuals taking these medications will be more susceptible to the effects of heat.

Individuals with mental health issues may be less likely to take effective precautions against extreme weather events, and may be less likely to know what to do in response. The strategy aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which help to slow global heating and thus reduces the likelihood of temperature extremes.

The strategy sets out aims to promote active travel, in line with the Mayor's target of 80% of journeys in London taking place by walking, cycling, or public transport by 2041. Actions to incentivise active travel may have a negative impact on individuals with a disability, who may be less able to travel by walking or cycling. Not all public transport options are fully accessible for disabled individuals.

Information campaigns, community engagement strategies, and emergency planning aimed at the public may be less accessible for individuals with sensory impairments or learning disabilities

RACE

Details of impacts identified

Data from the 2011 census suggests that Brent is the second most diverse local authority, with 63.7% of residents from a BAME background. Research suggests that particulate air pollution in the UK is concentrated in the poorest 20% neighbourhoods in England, and in areas with greater ethnic diversity (defined as those where more than 20% of the population is non-white). Several actions included in the strategy aim to reduce air pollution.

According to Natural England, the decline in urban green spaces in the UK will most severely affect BAME communities, who tend to rely more on urban green space and have less access to outdoor space at home, such as a balcony or garden, than white people. Green space is linked with a range of positive effects, including reduced impact of deprivation, increased sense of community and reduced risk of health problems like depression and lung disease. Green areas also have substantive potential benefits for improving mental and physical health. Actions to improve access, quality, and quantity of green spaces are therefore likely to have a particularly positive impact on Brent's BAME communities.

56% of Brent residents were born outside the UK, while in 1 in 5 households, English is not spoken as a first language. Information campaigns, community engagement strategies, and emergency planning aimed at the public may be less accessible for individuals whose first language is not English. This may limit the extent to which these groups can get involved in, and benefit from, these initiatives.

SEX

Details of impacts identified	Not directly applicable
--------------------------------------	-------------------------

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Details of impacts identified	Not directly applicable
--------------------------------------	-------------------------

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

Details of impacts identified	<p>Extremely hot weather can pose risks to pregnant people and their unborn children. Getting too hot or dehydrated can increase the risk of pregnancy complications, and may increase the likelihood of early labour.</p> <p>Research has found a link between exposure to air pollution in pregnant women and low birthweight babies. Black carbon particles have been found in placentas, suggesting women exposed to air pollution during pregnancy may transfer these particles to their babies.</p>
--------------------------------------	---

RELIGION OR BELIEF

Details of impacts identified	Not directly applicable
--------------------------------------	-------------------------

GENDER REASSIGNMENT

Details of impacts identified	Not directly applicable
--------------------------------------	-------------------------

MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

Details of impacts identified	Not directly applicable
--------------------------------------	-------------------------

3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

Participants in the Brent Climate Assembly were recruited to be as representative as possible of Brent's residents. Engagement work to date has not consulted with specific community groups, but consultation with these groups will be part of the development of the final strategy.

We had a range of ethnicities and age groups during two recent Brent Connects on the Climate and ecological emergency, and we were also joined by a number of members of Brent Mencap who played an active role in the breakout discussions. We also held a specific meeting open to disabled residents, groups and carers in January 2021.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

When analysing the results of the responses (76 in total) to the draft strategy which were received via the council's consultation portal, there were a number of trends which could be observed and are outlined in appendix B of this report. In particular, the council will seek to redouble its efforts on engagement with BAME groups, younger people and disabled residents in particular. We will also continue to ensure we engage with older people, however older people were generally well represented within the consultation responses.

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

This strategy is a long-term strategy until 2030 and the document makes clear that it will be enormously challenging for Brent to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. All London Boroughs are facing similar challenges, but have typically opted to be more ambitious on the timeframe for carbon neutrality (2030) as compared to the government's target for the UK population as a whole (2050). The key challenges are identified within the content of the document which may inhibit progress towards the Council's overarching aim, and how the council and all of Brent's communities must seek to overcome these.

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

Impact of the strategy will be monitored annually, utilising key performance indicators of each of the delivery plan actions, alongside a more general overview of the council's progress on reducing carbon and boosting biodiversity against key baseline measures.

SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

The climate and ecological emergency will affect all residents of Brent, but has the potential to have a particularly negative impact on certain groups. Age, race, and disability will impact the extent to which individuals are affected by, and able to adapt to, the effects of the

climate crisis. This can be seen in the differential ability of certain groups to cope with extreme weather events. By reducing the borough's carbon emissions, the climate and ecological emergency strategy aims to slow the effects of global heating, which should mitigate the potential severity and frequency of such events if other authorities globally take similar action under global climate agreements. The strategy also provides an opportunity to reduce the disadvantages experienced by some groups with protected characteristics. For example, by improving access to green spaces, which is an issue which disproportionately affects BAME communities.

However, while some actions may have a positive impact for certain groups, there may be an unintended negative impact on other groups. For example, while encouraging active travel could reduce the disproportionately negative impact of air pollution on young children and BAME communities, many disabled individuals rely on car travel to get around. The negative consequences outlined above could be mitigated by considering how different groups would be affected by each action, and adapting accordingly.

SECTION D – RESULT

Please select one of the following options. Mark with an "X".

A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	X
B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
C	CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date
Seek to prioritise home energy efficiency improvements for homes with where inhabitants are	Warmer homes, a reduction in fuel poverty and in potential respiratory illnesses in vulnerable groups	CWB dept	

considered to be living in fuel poverty			
Seek to prioritise and target climate resilience plans and techniques for those groups which are more likely to adversely affected by more volatile weather in the future	Homes, buildings and infrastructure which is equipped and adapted to cope with more extreme weather in the future (ie. Heatwaves, flooding etc)	ACE / CWB / R&E depts., with also potential links to CYP and schools	
Increase access to green space	Increased biodiversity, physical exercise, mental wellbeing	R&E Dept	
Ensure information campaigns and community engagement related to this strategy is available in accessible formats	Communications are available where necessary in easy-read versions, large print, and multiple languages	ACE dept	
Consider individuals with mental and physical disabilities during travel and infrastructure planning	Improved infrastructure planning which facilitates active travel in a way that is cognisant of those with mental and physical disabilities will enable the benefits of air pollution improvements to be shared by all	R&E dept / CYP dept	

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

OFFICER:	Tom Welsh – 03/02/2021
REVIEWING OFFICER:	Bryony Gibbs
HEAD OF SERVICE / Operational Director:	Shazia Hussain