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# Countryside Climate Network and UK Green Building Council

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<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Individual Executive Member Decisions
<b>Date of Individual Decision:</b>	7 February 2022
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter
<b>Report Author:</b>	Emily Ashton-Jelley and Megan Dalgarno
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	ID4122

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## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present information on the UK100 [Countryside Climate Network](#) (CCN) and the UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) supported by recommendations regarding whether or not West Berkshire Council should become a member of both or either of the networks.

## 2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Environment Delivery Team progress the process of confirming West Berkshire Council as a member of the CCN and the UKGBC. The Leader of the Council will then be asked to sign the Net Zero pledge provided by the CCN. The Chief Executive or person authorised to sign on behalf of the organisation will be asked to sign the Statement of Member Commitment/Requirement of the UKGBC application form.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resource:</b>	N/A
<b>Legal:</b>	N/A

<p><b>Risk Management:</b></p>	<p>CNN - The Net Zero pledge entails committing to a 2045 (or before) target for area wide emissions. Our current Net Zero Carbon target for council operation is 2030 with an ambition to strive towards district neutrality through enabling, promoting, encouraging and incentivising action. As the CNN pledge states 2045 <u>or before</u>, our own targets align with this. The potential risk is that we do not meet the West Berkshire targets but with 2045 in the pledge we would still be aligned if further action is needed across the district up to 2045. It is therefore considered that there is no significant risk.</p> <p>UKGBC - all members are required to demonstrate that they have a commitment to climate action. As a minimum requirement of their membership of UKGBC, organisations are required to submit their corporate-wide commitment to climate action to UKGBC.</p> <p>Information required to demonstrate an organisation's commitment to climate action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Scope of GHG emissions reductions (e.g. Scope 1 and 2 emissions from the organisations operations within their direct control and/or scope 3 emissions outside of the organisations direct control)</li> <li>B. Timescales for GHG emissions reductions (e.g. emissions reduction target by 2030)</li> </ul> <p>The Council can provide the information detailed above, therefore no risk has been identified.</p>
<p><b>Property:</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Policy:</b></p>	<p>CNN and UKGBC - The proposals relate to the actions set out in the Council's <a href="#">Environment Strategy Delivery Plan</a>. The impact of joining both networks would be beneficial as they will contribute to fulfilling those actions focusing on building partnerships and engaging with other Councils (Appendix A and Appendix B shows list of current members), as well as supporting the Council's commitment to lobbying Government over environmental topics.</p> <p>Membership to the UKGBC will also provide insights on the latest sustainability topics, support learning and development of Council Officers and Members and allow Council involvement in shaping best practice in the built environment and infrastructure industry.</p>

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		N/A
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		N/A
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>	x			The proposal will relate to the actions set out in the Council's <a href="#">Environment Strategy Delivery Plan</a> . The impact would be beneficial as it will contribute to fulfilling those actions focusing on building partnerships and engaging with other Councils, as well as supporting our commitment to lobbying Government over environmental topics. It will also support the training and development of Council Officers and Members in Environmental Sustainability best practice.
<b>Health Impact:</b>		x		N/A
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		x		N/A
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		x		N/A

<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	x			The proposal would benefit the Council's Priority to <i>Maintain a Green District</i> by supporting the Council's Environment Strategy Draft Delivery Plan (see environment impacts above).
<b>Core Business:</b>		x		N/A
<b>Data Impact:</b>		x		N/A
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	Environment Board, Environment Delivery Team, Jon Winstanley, Susan Halliwell, Cllr Adrian Abbs - Shadow Portfolio Holder			

## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 West Berkshire Council has been invited to become a member of the [Countryside Climate Network](#) (CCN). The CCN is part of the organisation [UK100](#) which is the only network for UK locally elected leaders who have pledged to play their part in the global effort to avoid the worst impacts of climate change by switching to 100% clean energy by 2050.
- 4.2 UK100 have recognised the important and unique part that rural areas have to play in tackling climate change and have set up the CCN as a result. The Network is made up of ambitious local leaders from predominantly rural councils who are working to achieve Net Zero and improve the resilience of their communities now and for the future.
- 4.3 If West Berkshire Council become a member of the CCN it is considered it will bring about the following benefits:
- Demonstrate the Council's commitment to tackling climate change.
  - Provide access to a board network of Local Government colleagues where best practice can be shared and discussions around the latest development of innovative approaches and studies can be investigated and scrutinised.
  - Support partnerships (a key deliverable of the Environmental Delivery Plan) and provide opportunities for potential joint working and value for money.
  - Support lobbying Government (an action within the Environmental Delivery Plan) over environmental issues in a collective way.
  - The Network has a focus on rurality which is relevant and beneficial given that 74% of the district is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 4.4 West Berkshire Council has also been invited to become a member of the UK Green Building Council (UKGBC). Established in 2007, UKGBC has been progressing against its mission of “...*radically improve the sustainability of the built environment, by transforming the way it is planned, designed, constructed, maintained and operated*”.

As a membership network, they act as a unified voice of the sustainability industry's current and future leaders who are striving to realise meaningful transformation in response to the planetary emergency.

4.5 If West Berkshire Council become a member of the UKGBC it is considered this would result in the following benefits:

- Upskilling the Council (officers and members) through online learning and development.
- Support the Council's commitment to lobbying Government over environmental topics (an action within the Environmental Delivery Plan).
- Support best practice standards within the West Berkshire built environment.
- Support the Council in leadership and embracing innovation.
- Support the Council's current and future leaders and create new networks, ensuring sustainability becomes central to business leadership.
- Nurture and support collaboration with peers through forums enabling cross-organisation networking, knowledge sharing and collaboration (a key deliverable of the Environmental Delivery Plan) and provide opportunities for potential joint working and value for money.
- Link the council to a global network. Joining the UKGBC, the Council will become part of the world's largest green building network - UKGBC is one of 70 Green Building Councils (GBCs) worldwide.

### **Addressing the Climate Change Emergency**

4.6 Becoming members of these organisations will offer education and training opportunities to Council staff and members which will in turn provide an opportunities to pass on knowledge gained to West Berkshire residents and businesses. This education and knowledge sharing supports the districts collective response in addressing climate change and carbon reduction priorities.

4.7 Recommendations:

- (a) West Berkshire Council become a member of the CCN and the leader of the Council sign the Net Zero Pledge.
- (b) West Berkshire Council become a member of the UK GBC and the Chief Executive or person authorised to sign on behalf of the organisation the Statement of Member Commitment/Requirement section of the application form.
- (c) Following a positive decision, the Environment Delivery Team will take forward the necessary steps to becoming a CCN and/or UKGBC member.

## **5 Supporting Information**

### **Introduction**

5.1 This report is seeking to provide information on two networks, the first UK100 CCN, a network for UK locally elected leaders who have pledged to become net-zero and the second UKGBC, a charity with over 600 member organisations which unites the UK building industry using sustainability as a catalyst to positively transform the places

people use every day. This report offers recommendations regarding whether West Berkshire Council should become a member of both or either organisations.

## Background

### CCN

- 5.2 CCN was brought to the attention of the Environment Delivery Team after being contacted by a member of the organisation. They have asked that West Berkshire Council become a member of the CCN, and requested that the leader of the Council sign their Net Zero pledge.
- 5.3 The Net Zero pledge entails committing to a 2030 target for Council emissions and a target for 2045 (or before) for area wide emissions. The Council already have compatible targets and ambitions in place for Council operations and the district.
- 5.4 The CCN is part of the organisation [UK100](#) which is the only network for UK locally elected leaders who have pledged to play their part in the global effort to avoid the worst impacts of climate change by switching to 100% clean energy by 2050.
- 5.5 UK100 have recognised the important and unique part that rural areas have to play in tackling climate change and have set up the CCN as a result. The following paragraphs are taken from their website:

The UK's rural community plays an essential role in our move towards Net Zero. The Countryside Climate Network amplifies the rural voice as part of our national policy advocacy.

Rural communities are at the frontline of climate change impacts. More extreme weather brings longer droughts and wetter winters. Our national interest is damaged when our food production is damaged, and for the two-thirds of people who live outside the largest urban areas, climate change brings distinct challenges to our villages and towns.

But rural communities can also be at the forefront of climate action too. The countryside offers far more than a place to plant millions of trees to offset carbon emissions from elsewhere. To meet the UK's goal of becoming Net Zero by 2050, rural communities need to be heard; their challenges need to be understood. They need to be engaged in taking action and implementing solutions.

The Countryside Climate Network (CCN) is made up of ambitious local leaders from predominantly rural councils. As members of UK100, the CCN are committed to delivering climate action in their communities and amplifying the rural voice as part of our national policy advocacy - bringing the best from cities and the countryside together.

Members of the CCN are working to achieve Net Zero and improve the resilience of their communities now and for the future. We currently have 27 members, who represent over 45% of England's land area.

## **UK GBC**

- 5.6 The UKGBC was brought to the attention of the Environment Delivery Team by the new Principal Environment Delivery Officer who has worked with the UKGBC in previous roles in the public and private sectors. In the Principal Environment Delivery Officer's previous role as a Consultant, they were invited to join the UKGBC Measuring and Reporting of Physical Risk Task Group, a group who has been helping shape the content of the first deliverable of the Resilience and Nature Based Solutions programme: the measuring and reporting of physical risk. The UKGBC would like the Principal Environment Delivery Officer to continue this role and also highlighted the benefits to West Berkshire Council in becoming a member organisation. On this basis West Berkshire Council have been invited to become a member of the UKGBC. Membership for Local Authorities is free.
- 5.7 The UKGBC aims to represent the voice of the industry's current and future leaders who are striving for transformational change.
- 5.8 The UK GBC was launched by the construction and property industry at the Ecobuild exhibition in London in February 2007. The charity was originally established to offer clarity, cohesion and leadership to a disparate sector, and to campaign for a sustainable built environment. Today the core deliverables of the UK GBC are to;
- Collaborate, by convening diverse built environment organisations to engage in a common purpose.
  - Enable, by developing guidance, showcasing solutions and stimulating innovation.
  - Advocate, by calling for ambitious commitments, stronger standards and progressive policy.
  - Inspire, by sharing knowledge and best practice, and encouraging transformational leadership.

## **Proposals**

### **CCN**

- 5.9 It is proposed that:
- (a) West Berkshire Council become a member of the CCN and the leader of the Council sign the Net Zero Pledge. The benefits of this would be:
- It would clearly demonstrate the Council's commitment to tackling climate change.
  - The Council already has the required climate targets in place so no further work would be required to fit the criteria for this Network.
  - Becoming part of this network would support actions set out in the Council's Environment Strategy Draft Delivery Plan, for example building partnerships and working with our neighbouring Councils (Appendix A shows list of current members) to draw from expertise and lobbying government on environmental issues.
- (b) Following a positive decision, the Environment Delivery Team will take forward the necessary steps to becoming a CCN member.

5.10 It should be noted that the requirements of the CCN Net Zero pledge involve committing to a 2030 target for Council emissions and a target for 2045 (or before) for area wide emissions. West Berkshire Council has a 2030 target for Council emissions and an ambition to strive towards district neutrality through enabling, promoting, encouraging and incentivising action. If the Council were to become a member of this Network, it is recommended that it is made clear in any communications that the Council are not, through joining the network, relaxing emissions targets or ambitions.

## **UK GBC**

5.11 It is proposed that:

- (a) West Berkshire Council become a member of the UKGBC and Chief Executive or person authorised to sign on behalf of the organisation will be asked to sign the Statement of Member Commitment/Requirement of the UK GBC application form. The benefits of this would be:
- It would demonstrate the Council's commitment to tackling climate change.
  - Upskill the Council (officers and members) through online learning and development, a key deliverable of the Environment Strategy Delivery Plan. For example the development of mandatory WBC staff training on carbon reduction and climate change, as well as specific training where needs are identified (for example, for planners and local developers on how to ensure new developments are resilient to climate change).
  - Support the Council's commitment to lobbying Government over environmental topics (an action within the Environmental Delivery Plan). Policy & advocacy is a major focus of the UK GBC activity and it's has a long track record of helping to shape progressive, industry relevant and fit for purpose policy. The UK GBC has strong connections with both elected Parliamentarians, Government officials in the different departments and local councils/ mayoral offices and are frequently invited to help shape proposals.
  - Support best practice standards within the West Berkshire built environment. UKGBC is keen to capitalise on the renewed emphasis on local policy and place-making across the UK. As an organisation they engage with both public and private sector to inspire and inform the application of standards and best practice, particularly on the largest, long-term regeneration schemes.
  - Support the Council in leadership and embracing innovation. UKGBC are committed to bolstering members' business models to ensure their viability long into the future. They focus on generating and co-creating cutting edge insights and thought leadership around the topics that the industry needs to grapple with.
  - Support the Council's current and future leaders and create new networks, ensuring sustainability becomes central to business leadership.
  - Nurture and support collaboration with peers through forums for example building partnerships (Appendix B shows list of current members). UKGBC forums bring together likeminded individuals who work on similar projects. It enables cross-organisation networking, knowledge sharing and collaboration. This supports a key deliverable of the Environmental Delivery Plan and provide opportunities for potential joint working and value for money.
  - Link the council to a global network. Joining the UKGBC, the Council will become part of the world's largest green building network - UKGBC is one of 70 Green



Building Councils (GBCs) worldwide. UKGBC are members of World Green Building Council, a global network of Green Building Councils comprising of 36,000 organisational members leading the transformation of the built environment to make it healthier and more sustainable. UKGBC are closely connected with other GBCs to ensure that there is an exchange international best practices and to capitalise on the momentum behind green buildings as part of COP26 and other international treaties.

- (b) Following a positive decision, the Environment Delivery Team will take forward the necessary steps to becoming a UKGBC member.

5.12 Membership of the UK GBC does not require any terms of reference to be signed, however Membership terms and conditions need to be understood and the application form signed by the appropriate person of authority.

The joining process is as follows:

- Once the form is complete, it is submitted for processing. It is recommended to add as many contacts as appropriate from across the organisation to allow direct access to the membership benefits and support membership value.
- Once processed and membership is activated, a 'confirmation of joining' e-mail will be sent to all the listed contacts, explaining what to expect and how to use the membership, as well as a pdf copy of the Council's registration certificate and UKGBC member logos. Following this, all contacts will begin to receive communications.
- New membership is generally announce via the UKGBC Twitter feed, <<https://twitter.com/ukgbc>> which has over 40k followers, however this new member can opt out of this announcement.
- New membership is also announced via the UKGBC Monthly Member Update newsletter which is sent to all contacts at UKGBC member organisations.

### **Addressing the Climate Change Emergency**

5.13 Becoming members of these organisations will help us focus on priority areas and the opportunities they offer - such as energy and heating efficiency and decarbonisation as well as agriculture and best use of our rural environment. Upskilling Council staff and Members through education and training opportunities offered through membership, will support us as an organisation in leading the way in addressing the Climate Change Emergency. Knowledge gained by Council staff and members can in turn be passed on to West Berkshire residents and businesses through our engagement and communications channels allowing a collective response to West Berkshire's priorities for addressing climate change and carbon reduction.

## **6 Other options considered**

6.1 If it is preferred West Berkshire Council do not become associated with the CCN and the UK GBC, the invitation to join the CCN and the UK GBC will be declined by the Environment Delivery Team. The Council would not then realise the benefits of membership outlined earlier in the report and summarised below.

6.2 There are a whole range of external organisations and networks that the Council could associate itself with. These particular organisations detailed in this report link well with the nature of West Berkshire and the priorities we are trying to address which is why the recommendation is to join them. It is not suggested that every such opportunity is taken but that membership is approached thoughtfully and only entered into where the benefits are clear for West Berkshire and its priorities.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 It is recommended that West Berkshire Council become a member of the CCN and UK GBC.
- 7.2 It would clearly demonstrate the Council's commitment to tackling climate change, particularly within the 2030 timeframe already outlined.
- 7.3 The Council already has the required climate targets and ambitions in place so no further actions would be required to fit the criteria for both Networks.
- 7.4 Becoming part of both networks would support actions set out in the Council's Environment Strategy Delivery Plan, for example building partnerships and working with our neighbouring Councils to draw from expertise. Actions also to lobby government over environmental issues would be supported by joining the CCN and the UK GBC.
- 7.5 Membership would also support the education, training and awareness actions detailed within the Council's Environment Strategy Delivery Plan, for example the development of mandatory WBC staff training on carbon reduction and climate change, as well as specific training where needs are identified (for example, for planners and local developers on how to ensure new developments are resilient to climate change). Knowledge gained by Council staff and members can in turn be passed on to West Berkshire residents and businesses through our engagement and communications, allowing the district to collectively address West Berkshire's priorities for climate change and carbon reduction.

## 8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – List of current CCN members
- 8.2 Appendix B – Link to current UK GBC members and List of current Local Authority UK GBC members

**Subject to Call-In:**

Yes:  No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

**Wards affected:** No specific Ward

**Officer details:**

Name: Emily Ashton-Jelley and Megan Dalgarno  
 Job Title: Principal Environment Delivery Officer and Environment Delivery Officer  
 Tel No: 07551 272389 and 07385 407403  
 E-mail: [Emily.Ashton-Jelley1@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Emily.Ashton-Jelley1@westberks.gov.uk) and [megan.dalgarno1@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:megan.dalgarno1@westberks.gov.uk)

**Document Control**

<b>DocumentRef:</b>	Countryside Climate Network and UK Green Building Council	<b>Date Created:</b>	22.12.21
<b>Version:</b>	V1	<b>Date Modified:</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	Emily Ashton-Jelley and Megan Dalgarno		
<b>Owning Service</b>	Environment Department		

**Change History**

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

## Appendix A

### List of current CCN members

- Adur District Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Canterbury City Council
- Central Bedfordshire Council
- Cheshire East Council
- Cornwall Council
- Cotswold District Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Durham County Council
- Essex County Council
- Gloucestershire County Council
- Hampshire County Council
- Herefordshire Council
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Lancaster City Council
- Leicestershire County Council
- North Somerset District Council
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Shropshire Council
- Somerset County Council
- South Gloucestershire Council
- South Lakeland District Council
- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
- Suffolk County Council
- Wiltshire Council
- Worthing Borough Council
- Wychavon District Council

## Appendix B

### Link to current UK GBC members

<https://www.ukgbc.org/members-directory/?members-sectors=&members-type=Member&members-name=>

### List of current Local Authority UK GBC members

- Adur & Worthing Councils
- Amber Valley Borough Council
- Birmingham City Council
- Bradford MDC
- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Bristol City Council
- Calderdale MBC
- Cambridge City Council
- Camden Council
- Central Bedfordshire Council
- Chiltern District Council (Building Control)
- City of London
- Cornwall Council
- Croydon Council
- Dacorum Borough Council
- Devon County Council
- Durham County Council
- Enfield Council
- Essex County Council
- Exeter City Council
- Glasgow City Council
- Hammersmith & Fulham Council
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Horsham District Council
- Kent County Council
- Leeds City Council
- Lewisham Council
- London Borough of Barnet
- London Borough of Brent
- London Borough of Hackney
- London Borough of Haringey Council
- London Borough of Lambeth
- London Borough of Sutton
- London Borough of Waltham Forest
- London Borough of Wandsworth (Building Control)
- Manchester City Council
- Mendip District Council
- Milton Keynes Council
- Oxford City Council
- Plymouth City Council
- Rochdale Borough Council
- Rossendale Borough Council
- Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
- South Bucks District Council
- South Somerset District Council
- St Albans City and District Council
- Thanet District Council
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich
- Westminster City Council
- Wiltshire Council
- Woking Borough Council
- Wokingham Borough Council Building Control