

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of Meeting:** 8 January 2020

**Public Document:** Yes

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release** None



**Subject:** **Climate Change – EDDC Local Climate Change Action Plan and carbon footprint**

**Purpose of report:** As part of our response to the Devon Climate Change Declaration we committed to producing a local climate change action plan to be informed by a comprehensive carbon footprint assessment. This report presents the results of this work and identifies the next stage in our carbon neutral journey.

The Council Plan clearly states that this Council is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and overtime become a carbon neutral council. This is a huge challenge, but one that we are working towards through a clear understanding of our carbon and greenhouse gas emissions, and what we can do to reduce them.

The report also addresses resourcing of the ambitions and plans in order that we can make meaningful progress towards becoming carbon neutral, and the organisational changes required to put the plan into action.

**Recommendation:** **That Cabinet;**

**(1) Note the carbon footprint assessment and endorse the draft Climate Change Action Plan; and**

**(2) Agree to the Climate Change Action Plan being incorporated into a Climate Change Strategy and note the intention of this being presented for adoption at the February Council meeting.**

**That Cabinet recommend to Council;**

**(3) That both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account establish climate change emergency budgets in the sums detailed in the report.**

**Reason for recommendation:** This report progresses several of the commitments contained in the Devon Climate Change Emergency Declaration. The carbon footprint analysis informs the Climate Change Action Plan, which aims to reduce the Council's carbon foot print, ultimately achieving a carbon neutral position.

**Officer:** John Golding Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment.

**Financial implications:** An initial assessment has been made on the cost implications associated with the Climate Change Action Plan and this has been indicated on the Plan; General Fund Revenue funding £621.5k (not all ongoing) and Capital £2.2m and for the Housing Revenue Account Revenue funding of

£251.5k (not all ongoing) and Capital £42m. The draft budget proposals for 2020/21 considers the funding implications and does make proposals for members consideration to start meeting the outcomes outlined in the Plan. As stated this is only an initial assessment and a number of the action cannot be costed at this stage, particularly implications on contractor costs and future tenders. It is clear with this magnitude of funding that Government support will be required.

**Legal implications:** The Climate Change Strategy is part of the Policy Framework and therefore a matter for Council to adopt. The Climate Change Action Plan is an important part of this and it is appropriate for Cabinet to consider this as part of the evolution of the overall Strategy. Once adopted the Council will need to act in accordance with the Strategy. Aside from this there are no specific legal implications arising but consideration will be given to individual actions and projects as they come forward, which Legal will assist with as required.

**Equalities impact:** Low Impact

**Climate change:** High Impact

The report is centred on reducing our carbon footprint and ultimately becoming carbon neutral as a Council. The Action Plan is the means of achieving this ambition.

**Risk:** Medium Risk

The journey towards becoming carbon neutral relies on delivering a wide range of challenging actions and a change in the way we undertake our business.

**Links to background information:**

- [Cabinet report July 2019](#)
- [Devon Climate Change Emergency Declaration](#)
- [Producing a carbon footprint](#)
- [East Devon District Council Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2018/19](#)
- [EDDC Local Authority Carbon Footprint template](#)

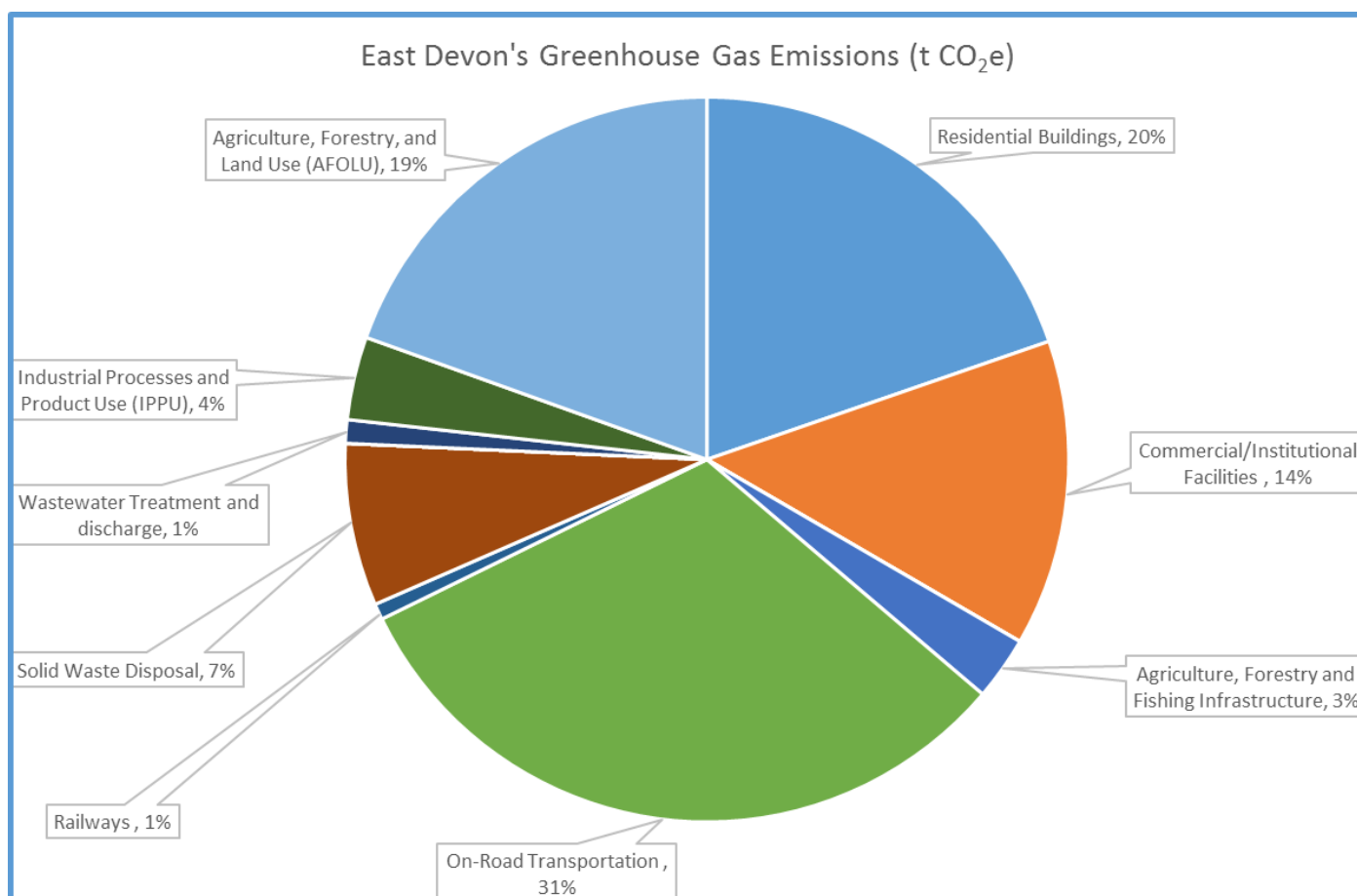
### **Appendix 1 - EDDC Climate Change Action Plan 2019**

**Link to Council Plan:** Delivering and promoting our outstanding environment.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Cabinet report in July 2019 presented the Devon Climate Change Emergency Declaration. This commits us to a series of actions as part of the Devon wide response to the climate change emergency. The Devon Climate Change Declaration is reproduced in the links above.
- 1.2 We allowed ourselves six months in which to develop a local action plan and undertake a comprehensive carbon footprint for the Council. The carbon footprint data is essential to inform the local action plan as it reveals our main carbon emissions, and as a consequence where we need to focus our efforts to reduce emissions.

- 1.3 We also committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2040. This is an arbitrary date and can now be refined in the light of detailed and accurate carbon emission data, adopting the action plan, and assessing the cost of carbon reduction measures.
- 1.4 I propose to develop a narrative around the action plan, once endorsed, to create a Climate Change Strategy to reflect our ambitions in greater detail. My intention is to link this with the ambition set out in the Council Plan, and explain how we intend to make the journey towards carbon neutral, and some of the risks and barriers to achieving our goal. This will provide a context for the action plan and the relevant data underpinning our carbon footprint.
- 1.5 A considerable amount of work has been occurring at county level to assist in producing a county Carbon Plan. Key to this is the creation of a Task Force with recognised experts drawn from economic, environmental, health and academic organisations. The role of the Task Force is to use its specialist knowledge and experience to produce an evidence-led Devon Carbon Plan, including consideration of the earliest credible date that should be set for net-zero emissions, following the process and schedule endorsed by the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group.
- 1.6 A series of themed enquiry events have been held across Devon where a panel of experts under the Chairmanship of Professor Patrick Devine-Wright have considered evidence by invited representatives. This work is being collated, analysed and incorporated into the Devon wide plans.
- 1.7 We recently received useful data on the 2017 greenhouse gas emissions for the county produced by the University of Exeter. The pie chart below shows the proportions and areas emitting GHGs in East Devon. It has been estimated that 1,067,233 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e was emitted in the district in 2017.



Some headlines to provide a context:

It has been estimated that 2 million trees need to be planted to offset our (EDDC) annual carbon emissions, requiring something like 8,000 hectares or 10% of East Devon's area.

It has been said that one tree can 'sink' 1 tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>e over its life (40 years).

The official adviser the Committee on Climate Change says the UK must plant 1.5 billion new trees by 2050 to achieve carbon neutrality, or 50 million a year.

It is widely believed that a typical personal carbon footprint in the UK is between 6.5 - 10 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per annum.

A return flight from Exeter to Lanzarote represents approximately 0.80 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e.

## 2. EDDC Carbon footprint

- 2.1 Consistent with the commitment in the Devon Climate Change Declaration we have plotted our carbon footprint in a comprehensive way to provide a baseline against which we can measure our carbon reduction ambitions. I have used the financial year 2018/19 as the base year as we have a full year of data available.
- 2.2 I have set out our approach to plotting our [carbon footprint](#). This is a more detailed assessment, undertaken in accordance with government guidance (HM Government 2019, Environmental Reporting Guidelines: Including streamlined energy and carbon reporting guidance), than previous exercises looking beyond our energy consumption and business mileage to consider the three scopes of carbon use:
  - Scope 1 direct – combustion fuels; owned transport; process emissions; and fugitive emissions (air conditioning and refrigeration).
  - Scope 2 energy indirect – consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling.
  - Scope 3 other indirect – purchased materials and fuels; transport related activities; waste disposal; leased assets and franchising and outsourcing; sold goods and services.
- 2.3 I have commissioned the University of Exeter to assist us with this complex piece of work. The Centre for Energy and Environment at the University of Exeter have considerable expertise in this area of work. A spreadsheet has been prepared and populated for our reported carbon emissions. Colleagues have captured our and our key partner's carbon emitting activities, and this has been translated in tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent using national guidelines and conversion advice.
- 2.4 The carbon footprint assumptions with details of inclusions and exclusions are set out in a [Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2018/19](#) report. This provides part of the audit trail and baseline data for future years comparisons.
- 2.5 As might be expected our energy use in buildings and our travel and transport account for the major part of our carbon footprint. Our council housing stock accounts for a high proportion of our buildings carbon footprint.
- 2.6 The report in spreadsheet form shows [our carbon footprint](#).
- 2.7 Our total carbon footprint has been measured as **30,598.7 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e** comprising 10,370.1 tonnes from scope 1 emissions; 5,589.6 tonnes from scope 2; and 14,639 tonnes from scope 3. In previous years we have reported 1,774 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2013 reducing

to 1,301 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2016. This work was limited in scope and excluded partners' emissions. Clearly a gross underestimate of the true picture.

- 2.8 Our purchase of materials and fuel account for the highest proportion of our carbon footprint at 11,652 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. This is followed by stationary combustion, which is our social housing, leisure centres and gas consumption at 8,742 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Electricity consumption accounts for 5,590 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Leased asset/outsourcing emissions for outsourced services (Suez, Strata, and LED) amounts to 2,422 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e and owned transport (StreetScene, Housing, Suez fleet) represents 1,628 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e. Transport related activity (our grey fleet (employee owned), staff commuting, tenant mileage, public transport accounted for 565 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- 2.9 There have been a number of conscious **exclusions** from the carbon footprint, which I have listed below:
- Investments – our financial investments have been supplied to the University, but these are not in a useable format because it does not show the carbon footprint of the companies we are investing in and the proportion of our investment to total value.
  - Events – we run a range of events in Countryside and at Queens Drive, in our theatre and gallery where customers travel, but we are unable to accurately measure their travel methods and distances of visitor transport. We have included the use of power and staff transport for events.
  - Strata data centre – no allowance has been made for the EDDC share of this facility based in Exeter.
  - Ian Williams – our new Integrated Asset Management contractor has only been operational since July 2019 so we do not have data during the baseline period.
  - Waste – from our various offices as no reliable data is available.
  - Greendale Depot and workshop – electricity usage information requested.
  - Other contractors/partners – Liberty Gas; Norse cleaning; etc.
- 2.10 The areas where we should concentrate our early efforts to reduce our carbon footprint is the improvement in our procurement processes, including reducing consumption of purchased products and services, reducing reliance on fossil fuels for heating our buildings (mainly council homes) and electrifying our vehicle fleet. The Action Plan picks up on all of these points.

### **3. EDDC Climate Change Action Plan**

- 3.1 Our local climate change action plan has been developed having regard to good practice in the sector, published advice and guidance, and through a series of staff workshops.
- 3.2 My recommendation is that we refresh the action plan every five years reflecting on the annual carbon reductions achieved and the practicality and affordability of the measures proposed. This way we might see four iterations of the action plan as move towards our carbon neutral ambition. The target date of 2040 for becoming carbon neutral is arbitrary and can be refined as we monitor progress on the actions. If feasible we will bring the date forward.
- 3.3 It would be appropriate to achieve some 'quick wins' in the early stages of the action plan and effectively buy some time where Government policy, technology and markets need to be more developed before we can progress certain elements of the Plan with confidence.

- 3.4 The **purpose** of the Action Plan is to achieve a carbon neutral position for the Council within a defined timescale. The Action Plan will also be used to encourage others to adopt a similar approach. Whilst this is primarily an EDDC plan it recognises the influence we have on others who share our ambitions. We have an ambition to reduce our carbon use at every opportunity and work towards the **Act Globally – Think Locally** aspiration that is still relevant today.
- 3.5 The **themes** in this plan where the Council can make meaningful climate change interventions include: (1) **energy supply and consumption**; (2) **permitting and encouraging low carbon development**; (3) **improving the carbon footprint of existing buildings (public and private sector)**; (4) **protecting and enhancing the natural environment**; (5) **water supply and flood protection**; (6) **transport and travel**; (7) **purchasing and consumption**; (8) **community resilience**; (9) **education, communication and influencing behaviour**.
- 3.6 We need to be brave and bold if we are genuinely committed to reducing our carbon footprint, and ensuring residents and business adopt similar aspirations. We propose undertaking five yearly reviews to update and refresh the plan.
- 3.7 This Climate Change Action Plan (shown in **appendix 1** at the end of this report) is about social and organisational responsibility, lifestyle change, education and awareness raising, and consideration of environmental and ecological issues for future generations.
- 3.8 I have divided the Action Plan into two distinct sections based around **mitigation** measures and **adaptation** measures. Mitigation is concerned with interventions designed to reduce emission sources and any carbon offsetting activity, whereas the adaptation section is concerned with an adjustment we make in response to climate change i.e. raising sea defences and supporting community resilience.
- 3.9 The Action Plan has been informed by a series of staff and member workshops where ideas and contributions have been put forward for inclusion in the Action Plan. We need to be 'brave and bold' if we are to achieve our ambitions and recognise that some of the actions will not be universally popular as they may impact on lifestyle.

#### **4. Resources required**

- 4.1 To deliver the Action Plan we need to identify resources to implement the actions and monitor progress against our commitments. This is essential to bring the plan to life and drive forward this agenda. We have set ourselves an ambitious plan and require capacity and skill sets that are capable of promoting, enabling and delivering the various actions in the Climate Change Action Plan.
- 4.2 There is still work to do in terms of costing the Action Plan. There are some elements of the Plan that will involve significant expense such as the replacement of gas boilers in our council homes, or the replacement of the recycling and refuse collection diesel fleet. Other elements require behaviour change some of which will be low cost.
- 4.3 We will need a concerted effort and the necessary skills to implement the Action Plan, with staff driving the change and championing the agenda. This requires a genuine 'One Council' effort.
- 4.4 Conscious of the Council's financial position I have considered how we might create a virtual climate change team by identifying existing resources across our Services and asking them to second a 'champion' into a virtual team for a period of time. Secondments would have the advantage of those people having good insight into their host Service and appreciation of the constraints, barriers and opportunities.

- 4.5 I have received approaches from a number of existing staff who would like to work on this project. I would also like to use the budget from a retiring Environmental Health Officer towards the cost of a Carbon Reduction Officer.
- 4.6 Our Public Health Project Officer can make a valued contribution towards the actions we are proposing as the links with the health & wellbeing agenda are strong. I propose to call on some input from our post holder.
- 4.7 Furthermore, as a stated Council priority I would presume that Strategic and Service Leads will assume responsibility for the objectives and actions that relate to their Service areas.
- 4.8 The Action Plan has not been fully costed, however, it is clear that a significant level of cost will be associated with implementing the Action Plan. The actions will be phased over a number of years. This will help phase the cost and allow for technological developments to become more reliable and affordable. Tackling climate change needs to be ingrained in our culture and pervade our future thinking and service planning.
- 4.9 The 2020/21 budget report on this agenda identified the following resources for climate change in the first instance:

**EDDC Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2040.** A report is included on the Cabinet agenda for member consideration. A financial assessment of the costs involved to deliver the Plan are difficult to determine and a number of areas are unknown at this stage. It is clear that there are significant financial implications for the Council and in reality to deliver in full without government support may not be possible. The initial assessment which will be significantly refined over time is:

### **General Fund**

**Revenue £622K** (not all ongoing). In addition staff resources have been realigned to create a climate change post to assist the Strategic Lead to deliver the action plan. There will certainly be additional costs when contractors are engaged and the implications factored into new tenders and contract sums.

**Capital £2.2m.** This relates to General Fund asset base and necessary improvements, again there will also be implications in future tenders and contracts.

It is proposed a sum of £323k is set aside in the 2020/21 budget and ring-fenced for climate change to be spent and approved by Cabinet. Reports in the New Year will be submitted to Cabinet for approval of spend from this budget allocation. This resource can be used to support borrowing costs for capital expenditure or to meet revenue costs. Members may consider that further monies should be added to this budget head and other areas deprioritised.

### **Housing Revenue Account**

The HRA draft budget currently shows a surplus of **£0.927m**; this level of surplus in the past has been directed to replacement housing to match the Right to Buy receipts. It is proposed that this sum is held for the purpose of replacement housing and/or climate change measures as detailed below. Reports on priority and proposed actions to be considered will be presented to the Housing Review Board with recommendations to Cabinet to approve budget spend within 2020/21.

The Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2040 includes a number of items relevant for the HRA. A financial assessment of the costs involved are difficult to determine and a number of areas are unknown at this stage. It is clear that there are significant financial implications for the HRA and the initial assessment will be refined over time.

The estimated **revenue costs are £252k** (not all ongoing) but there will be additional costs when contractors are engaged and implications are factored into future tenders and contracts. The approximate **capital cost is £42m**.

- 4.10 I am hopeful that Government funding will be forthcoming for some of the elements in the Action Plan, for example in connection with travel and transportation, to assist organisations reduce commuting and business mileage.

## **5. Wider input into our climate change commitment**

- 5.1 If we are to succeed in our ambitions we will need to contribution from partners, business, communities and individuals.
- 5.2 DCC have made significant resources available for this work including establishing themed hearings involving submission of expert evidence and a Citizens Panel. I propose that we continue to work closely with county colleagues and ensure that our local plans work effectively alongside and compliment county plans.
- 5.3 The Thelma Hulbert Gallery are undertaking a culture and climate change programme to link with our Action Plan. This is designed to raise awareness and appeal to people to change their behaviours through visual arts and other cultural media. It also helps explain the complex scientific elements of climate change.
- 5.4 It is widely recognised that using culture to understand climate change overcomes the human tendency to value personal experience over data and our preponderance to disengage from data based representations. Culture provides and emotional connection with the topic.
- 5.5 We have received numerous requests for support and guidance from voluntary organisations, Town & Parish Councils, small business etc. It would be advantageous to support some of these requests as it will contribute towards bringing down the county carbon footprint.

## **6. Next steps**

- 6.1 Assuming the Climate Change Action Plan is endorsed we need to turn our attention to delivering the numerous and challenging actions. We need to produce a suite of performance measures to track progress against the action plan and periodically report on these. The financial implications will be developed and refined to inform future budget requirements.
- 6.2 I am proposing that we create some webpage content to explain our approach to climate change and the progress we are making towards our ambition.
- 6.3 We also need to perform an annual refresh of the carbon footprint and measure the reduction against the 2018/19 baseline we have just created. This change measurement will be a key performance indicator for this work.
- 6.4 We will keep the target carbon neutral date of 2040 under review and aspire to bringing the date forward if feasible.



- 6.5 I intend to prepare a Climate Change Strategy, for adoption by Council, which clearly sets out the Council's position and builds on the Council Plan ambitions and which incorporates the Climate Change Action Plan.
- 6.6 It is widely recognised that we need to implement a transformational change programme to achieve our ambitions and the Action Plan does require a change in the way that we do our business going forward.