

Report to: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 5 February 2020
Public Document: Yes
Exemption: None
Review date for release: None



Subject: Climate Change Strategy

Purpose of report: Having completed a carbon footprint exercise and adopted a climate change action plan I recommended that these elements of our climate change actions be incorporated in a climate change strategy. This provides a context for the actions we propose to take to become carbon neutral.

The Strategy pulls together elements of the previous Cabinet reports and briefings into a narrative that explains what we are trying to achieve and why.

The central piece of the Climate Change Strategy is the Action Plan and the Devon Climate Change Declaration.

This will constitute a key policy document for the Council.

Recommendation: That Cabinet recommend to Council that it adopts the Climate Change Strategy 2020 – 2025 incorporating the Climate Change Action Plan.

Reason for recommendation: To present a strategy document to sit with the Climate Change Action Plan.

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; 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 is a matter properly for Council to determine. Otherwise there are no specific legal implications requiring comment.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Climate change: High Impact

The report progresses our climate change response and establishes a clear direction of travel.

Risk: Medium Risk

The consequences of not achieving our carbon neutral ambition are set out in the report alongside the seriousness of climate change.

Links to background information:

Link to Council Plan: Outstanding Place and Environment.

1. Background

- 1.1 This report flows on from the January 2020 and July 2019 Cabinet reports on climate change and pulls together the strands of narrative into a strategy document, setting out our intentions.
- 1.2 At your last meeting you endorsed the carbon foot printing exercise and the local Climate Change Action Plan.
- 1.3 The Climate Change Strategy is intended to compliment the action plan and provide a narrative within which the Action Plan can feature.
- 1.4 I have used extracts from Cabinet reports in the Strategy and attempted to reflect good practice and our bold ambitions. The Strategy is consistent with the recently adopted Council Plan aspirations and Service Plan content to provide a joined up approach to the challenge.

2. Climate Change Strategy

- 2.1 The introduction to the Climate Change Strategy sets the context with the key content reproduced below:

Our vision

To become a carbon neutral council working within a low carbon economy and lifestyle, reflected in our travel, homes, businesses, visitor experiences and communities.

Our targets

Carbon emissions: To reduce our carbon emissions annually, and to be carbon neutral by 2040.

The target reductions are required for the UK and this Strategy identifies our contribution to achieve the targets in the Climate Act 2008.

We will work with partners and contractors to support them in reducing their carbon footprint.

We will also assist Town and Parish Councils, community and voluntary groups understand their carbon footprint and make changes to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Action Plan – Mitigation & Adaptation: We are including in our Climate Change Action Plan a mix of mitigation and adaptation measures to ensure that reducing emissions and preparing for climate change is given equal importance. We aim to undertake critical adaptation measures identified with partners to ensure the resilience of people, homes, communities, and businesses.

Our Priorities

- Increase resilience to climate change to maintain East Devon as a safe and healthy place to live, work and visit.
- Enable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from energy consumption in homes, transport and businesses in East Devon.
- Enable the development of secure supplies of renewable and low carbon energy for individuals, communities, business and industry.
- Support new development which seeks to minimise additional associated greenhouse gas emissions.
- Contribute towards developing the low carbon economy.

- 2.2 The Strategy reiterates that 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.
- 2.3 The **themes** in the Action 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.**
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 If agreed I will incorporate the carbon footprint data, the greenhouse gas inventory, Action Plan into the Strategy to provide a comprehensive position statement on climate change.