

## ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

6 AUGUST 2019

### UPDATE ON CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION

**Cabinet Member(s):** Councillor Simon Clist  
**Responsible Officer:** Mr Andrew Busby, Group Manager for Corporate Property and Commercial Assets

**Reason for Report:** To provide an overview of measures introduced by the Council which support the intent behind the declaration of a Climate Emergency.

#### **RECOMMENDATION: Members to note the report**

**Financial Implications:** There are no direct implications associated with this report as it is a position statement highlighting schemes already implemented by Mid Devon District Council. The support function to track and respond to the Climate Emergency declaration is not currently funded or resourced. It sits outside the extant Council budget.

**Legal Implications:** Each scheme identified in this report was subject to a legal review at point of implementation.

**Risk Assessment:** Each scheme identified in this report was subject to a risk assessment at point of implementation.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** Each scheme identified in this report was subject to an equality impact assessment at point of implementation.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** Environment – Reducing our carbon footprint.

**Impact on Climate Change:** This report identifies some of the schemes already implemented by Mid Devon District Council to reduce its carbon footprint, reduce dependency on fossil fuels and utilise renewable energy sources where sustainable.

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This report aims to provide a brief insight into a number of schemes introduced by Mid Devon District Council that directly benefit its corporate aim to reduce its carbon footprint.

#### **2. Carbon Reduction Measures**

##### **2.1 Solar PV – Housing Revenue Account Stock**

2.1.1 In 2012 the Council signed an agreement to allow over 1,170 Solar PV systems to be fitted to the Council's housing stock. The income received from the scheme is being used to fund energy efficiency projects specifically aimed at providing renewables and reducing the carbon output from our Council's stock.

2.1.2 Each property that has Solar PV saves the resident, on average, £180 pa on their electricity bills

2.1.3 Mid Devon District Council was recently recognised at a South West Energy Efficiency Awards; the award press release is attached at Annex A.

## 2.2 Solar PV – General Fund Property

2.2.1 Across the non-housing stock property portfolio the Council has implemented the following measures:

- Low voltage lighting upgrades at the three leisure centres and the multi storey car park in Tiverton.
- Air handling unit upgrades at Lords Meadow and Exe Valley leisure centres
- Variable Speed drives (in essence a switch which acts like a light dimmer that can alter motor speed and conserve energy) – for large motors in air handling units / pool pumps etc. In order to reduce energy consumption
- Vending machine controls at three leisure centres (reduce energy consumption)
- Boiler optimisation at three leisure centres – dynamic control measures.
- Valve Insulation (ensuring all pipes which emit heat are lagged to reduce heat loss)

2.2.2 Solar PV panels have been installed on the roofs of our main offices at Phoenix House, Tiverton and our leisure/sports centres at Exe Valley, Tiverton; Culm Valley, Cullompton and Lords Meadow, Crediton. A total of 278.32 Kwp (kilowatt peak) of electricity will be produced that, in turn, saves 150 carbon tonnes per annum and reduced our baseline budget for electricity by circa £60k per annum.

2.2.3 Individual home owners have benefitted from energy saving council initiatives. Last year 36 households switched their energy supplier to get cheaper tariffs through the Council's switching scheme. In addition 176 households have made use of the ECO flex grant scheme to improve the energy efficiency; the Council also made 168 referrals to the LEAP scheme resulting in the installation of around 860 small energy saving measures in people's homes.

## 2.3 Electric Vehicle Charging Points

2.3.1 Mid Devon District Council has an agreement with InstaVolt that has delivered two (2) electric charging points at each of the Council's three leisure centres. The ambition is to increase this and roll-out availability across Mid Devon.

2.3.2 The Instavolt Rapid car charging systems has a generic plug that fits the vast majority of cars, but not for all models of electric vehicle. To date, the usage figures are very encouraging and are a strong indication that InstaVolt chargers are regularly used and suitable. The chargers have recorded nearly three thousand (3000) charges since their installation saving over 12,000 litres of fuel. Part of the planning conditions for the Premier Inn development is to provide four car charging points at Tiverton multi-storey car park that will be met via two twin outlets chargers.

## 2.4 Biomass Boiler (Lords Meadow Leisure Centre)

2.4.1 As part of the Energy Saving Performance Contract, it was identified that the Lords Meadow Leisure Centre site had the space available to install a bio mass boiler adjacent to the plant room that holds the main gas boilers to heat hot water for the whole building; including heat for the swimming pool. The bio mass boiler uses woodchip as fuel and is sourced locally, the bio mass boiler is designed to operate as a lead boiler to hold off the two gas boilers resulting in a reduction of our gas consumption, the boiler is also registered for the Renewable Heating Incentive scheme RHI and at the end of the contracted term with our energy partner, the Council will receive those payments directly.

## 2.5 Fleet Contract.

2.5.1 The new fleet contract for Mid Devon, in partnership with Exeter City Council, was awarded on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The successful bidder was Specialist Fleet Services (SFS) and the contract started on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019.

2.5.2 The contract was based on the current fleet with a like for like replacement plan over the initial seven year period of the contract. The contract has the flexibility to allow for any vehicle to be of a different type when it is due for replacement. The Council can vary its fleet size to meet the needs of the business.

2.5.3 Lower emission vehicles trials – The flexibility described above allows the Council to trial new vehicle types as technology emerges over the life of the contract. This means the Council can consider options when making fleet replacement decisions based on both cost and environmental information. This may include the use of electric commercial vehicles when that market matures to deliver a product capable of being deployed in a sustainable manner.

2.5.4 Part of the value added criteria for the contract was to allow officers to monitor its fleet more efficiently; this includes the ability to record emissions by vehicle. This will be done by linking the system with our fuel management system, which records fuel usage and mileage by vehicle. Over time we will be able to show our fleet emissions and usage as a year on year comparison.

## 2.6 Waste and Recycling

2.6.1 The performance of the waste and recycling team is reported and regular updates are provided to Environment Policy Development Group. To restate the current position:

- No waste is sent to landfill – all waste collected by Mid Devon is either recycled or used as feedstock for a recovery process.
- We track all our waste through to its final use; ensuring legislative compliance.
- Our waste is not exported
- We sell recyclable materials to reduce the cost of providing our collection service
- Food waste is used as feedstock for AD plants

- Non-recyclable waste is generally utilised as feedstock for Energy from Waste Plants.
- Collection rounds are constantly under review to ensure efficient use of transport.

### 3. **Emerging Work Streams**

- 3.1 Following the recent climate change declaration by councils across Devon, there are now two emerging workstreams; an internal organisation focus on reducing CO2 emissions to (net) zero; and the wider agenda looking at reducing emissions across the whole Mid Devon area.
- 3.2 Clearly, the first of these is much more of a process that a) we can manage/monitor/influence; and b) that we can control to a significant degree, as it relates to our own asset and operational base.
- 3.3 With respect to this internal focus, Devon County Council hosted a 'Carbon Footprint Workshop' on 23<sup>rd</sup> July; attended by representatives from across Devon to ensure that there was a consistent understanding of approach. It highlighted the scale of the task, confirmed methodology and contextualised the issue. The guidance to be followed is available at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/791529/Env-reporting-guidance\\_inc\\_SECR\\_31March.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/791529/Env-reporting-guidance_inc_SECR_31March.pdf)
- 3.4 Following this, it is currently the intention of officers to explore opportunities to jointly commission the necessary baselining exercise to report this back to members as soon as is practicable. Discussions on how, when, what we could then do to achieve a 'glide-path' down to net zero will then take place at the PDG and beyond before recommendations are considered.
- 3.5 For the wider piece linked to the whole of the Mid Devon area achieving net zero emissions, this is a piece of work that DCC will be initiating linked to baselining work being undertaken for the whole county. It is currently officers' intention to use that position (disaggregated down to District level) to start the conversation locally about options that could be considered to achieve the stated ambition around carbon reduction and the extent to which the necessary structural and behavioural changes might be viable/achievable. Further reports to members will be brought forward as required to update this position.

### 4. **Recommendation**

- 4.1 That members note this report and give due consideration to how they wish to proceed in responding to the declaration of a Climate Emergency.

**Contact for more Information:** Mr Andrew Busby, Group Manager for Corporate Property and Commercial Assets (abusby@middevon.gov.uk)

**Circulation of the Report:** Cabinet member/Leadership Team

## ANNEX A

# Mid Devon District Council ‘Commended’ in SWEE Awards

*Duncan Banks, CEO of IU Energy*



Mid Devon District Council were nominated by IU Energy for ‘Local Authority Body of the Year, 2019’, in recognition of their sustained energy efficiency drive into their housing stock, for which they have been recognised with a ‘Commendation’ in the 2019 South West Energy Efficiency Awards.

In previous years, the Council ordered over 1,200 Solar PV systems to be fitted to their housing stock. The income they receive from the scheme is being used to fund energy efficiency projects specifically aimed at providing renewables and reducing the carbon output from the Council’s stock of 3,000 residential properties.

In recent years this fund has contributed to significant improvements across the Council’s estate, upgrading heating, water and insulation, using the most energy efficient methods and where appropriate, renewables. The upgrades include modern gas central heating, quantum heating, air source heat pumps, solar thermal, efficient electric systems, optimisation, modern gas boilers, loft and cavity wall insulation.

Mid Devon Council have a clear strategy and aggressive targets to reduce energy costs to those who are least able to afford them. They generate an annual income of approximately £160,000 from Government renewable energy incentive schemes and save their tenants approximately £216,000 on their electric bills annually.

Mid Devon District Council works diligently to deliver energy savings and community support for the most vulnerable tenants. It has a clear strategy with strong leadership and effective delivery of solutions.

IU Energy is so impressed by their desire to help those who are least able to afford rising cost that we were proud to nominate them for this prestigious award.