

Report for: Environment Policy Development Group

Date of Meeting:	20 June 2023
Subject:	Climate and Sustainability Update
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Natasha Bradshaw - Cabinet Member for Climate Change.
Responsible Officer:	Jason Ball - Climate and Sustainability Specialist. Paul Deal - Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and Climate Change.
Exempt:	None. which are Exempt from publication under paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
Wards Affected:	All.
Enclosures:	Annex A - brief summary of actions and progress.

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To receive an update on the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and the wider Climate and Sustainability Programme.

Recommendation(s):

- 1. That the Environment PDG notes and accepts this report as an update on the Council’s response to the Climate Emergency, documenting progress with the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and the wider Climate and Sustainability Programme.**

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan places a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability matters in all aspects of its work, linked to everything from procurement to promoting nature recovery.
- 1.2 The Climate and Sustainability Specialist leads development of the Council's Climate and Sustainability Programme, working inclusively with all colleagues and Councillors, particularly the Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and Climate Change; and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change.
- 1.3 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and aims to be climate neutral by 2030. The term 'climate neutrality' describes a balance achieved, for any given period, for carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases released into or removed from the atmosphere; related to the actions taken by organisations, businesses or individuals. The goal of climate neutrality is to achieve a net zero climate impact.
- 1.4 The Council's work to address the climate change crisis aligns with the climate emergency declaration across Devon, and the Devon Carbon Plan. Council actions with regard to **climate mitigation** (reducing greenhouse emissions) and **climate adaptation** (resilience to climate change risks) can be split into two work streams:
- an internal organisational / corporate focus for the Council;
 - the wider agenda to enable actions across Mid Devon communities.
- 1.5 Therefore this report is divided into **corporate** and **community** items (some overlap is possible). Clearly the Council can monitor and manage matters related to our own assets and operations to a significant degree. For the wider agenda linked to the whole Mid Devon area, we will work as a partner with local businesses, organisations, community groups and residents.
- 1.6 This report emphasises activity and progress updates for brevity. For background details, please refer to previous reports, all archived online.

2.0 Performance

- 2.1 Aims, Priorities and Performance Indicators
- 2.1.1 Tables in Annex A for this report briefly summarise actions related to the Council's Corporate Plan (CP) aims and Climate Strategy (CS) priorities.
- 2.1.2 Progress on Performance Indicators (PI) is provided separately.
- 2.2 Climate Action Plan (CAP).
- 2.2.1 The C&S Specialist has run team meetings for all Operations Managers / Service Leads and Corporate Managers; and hosts a monthly support call. Updates requested from all. Totals updated below.

- 2.2.2 The CAP comprises both Corporate and Community work stream items**.
- 2.2.3 Estimated costs identified thus far*** total £117,155,857 split as follows:
- 2.2.4 For the Internal Structures and Processes strand, £643,138.
- 2.2.5 For the Housing Energy and Assets strand, £108,515,689. (This includes HRA planned works and estimates for the Council's facility buildings.)
- 2.2.6 For the Transport and Vehicles strand, £6,405,030.
- 2.2.7 For the Community and Wider Context strand, £1,511,000.
- 2.3 Cost estimates may be allocated within existing budgets, or may be additional; the CAP format shows where additional funding is required (or cost savings) in order to enable fundraising and budget planning.
- 2.4 The “estimated total tCO_{2e} saved 2020-2030” (tCO_{2e} = tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) indicates proposals could save 2,134 tCO_{2e} per year in the Corporate work stream and 7,953 tCO_{2e} per year in the Community work stream.
- 2.5 Caveats. Robust caveats must be provided with any CAP reporting to cover factors such as uncertainty and data gaps. Examples below.
- **Analysis gap. We have not identified all the projects required for the Council to achieve Net Zero. (Corporate impact.) Therefore we do not yet have a comprehensive carbon reduction plan.
 - Data gap. The majority of the CAP items require more information. Details will be enhanced by lead officers assigned to each prioritised project.
 - ***Estimates. The majority of costs are estimates. The majority of carbon savings are estimated, and not always based on an assessment.
 - Forecasting. The further ahead a project is planned, the less certain we can be about future costs.
 - Scope. Many items show capital costs but do not always forecast running costs of e.g. new installations or vehicles, or disposal costs. Embodied carbon is not considered. Business cases for each project / activity must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis (do not assume projects have been approved simply by being listed as an option in the CAP).

3.0 Community and partnership activities

- 3.1 Devon Climate Emergency (DCE) Partnership
- 3.1.1 The draft Climate Adaptation plan for Devon, Cornwall and isles of Scilly is out for consultation. To be circulated to PDG Members for feedback.
- 3.1.2 The C&S Specialist joined DCE at Devon County Show, outreach was themed on Net Zero Visions e.g. the mural hosted at Tiverton Pannier Market.
- 3.2 Planning Policy Statement: Climate Emergency
(Corporate Plan aims: h01, h03, c01, c04, env01, env02, env03, env05.)

- 3.2.1 [Cabinet 07 March](#) approved the Council's new Climate Emergency Planning Policy Statement. Policy emphasises that the climate change emergency is a material consideration to the planning process; promotes better, more consistent application evidence; and provides guidance and tools to support planners and applicants involved in new build and retrofit.
- 3.3 Electric Vehicle charging points.
(CS priority: 3. CP aim: env02.)
- 3.3.1 Deletti partnership scheme under way. Leases for 3 car parks finalised; first phase installation schedule to follow (Cullompton Forge Way; Crediton Market Street; Tiverton William Street). Second phase will cover 3 more: Crediton St Saviour's Way; Tiverton Westexe South; Tiverton Pannier Market.
- 3.3.2 The Council is part of the new Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Partnership; led by Devon County Council which has £7m allocated. Preparatory workshops under way, outline sent to government office.
- 3.4 Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme.
(CP aims: env01, env02.)
- 3.4.1 This retrofit scheme raises energy efficiency of low income homes with a focus on energy performance certificate (EPC) ratings of E/F/G. Phase 2 has achieved 149 home installations in Mid Devon e.g. insulation, ventilation, solar PV. These improvements will save an estimated 138 tCO₂e annually.
- 3.5 Tree planting and community engagement through nature.
(CP aims: env04, env07, env10.)
- 3.5.1 The C&S Specialist coordinated community volunteers to help plant 1,100 native trees on Aggregate Industries UK land in March 2023 as part of AIUK's nature area project at Uffculme.
- 3.5.2 The Council is grateful to all who helped to plant 92 trees on Council land in 2023 - at Old Park in Tiverton, and new community orchards at Oak Close in Tiverton and Court Orchard at Newton St Cyres.
- 3.5.3 The Housing team has worked with neighbourhoods on a 'no mow May' zone at Bickleigh, and consulted tenants (a positive majority vote) on a wildflower and hedgehog conservation area at Willand.
- 3.5.4 Nature surveys, habitat management and outdoor engagement supported by community groups at Council land continues e.g. Sustainable Crediton at open spaces; Sustainable Tiverton at the Tiverton Community Orchard.
- 3.6 Climate Change Adaptation.
(CS priority: 3. CP aims: Env01,02,03; H01,02,03; Ec01,02,03; C01,02,04.)
- 3.6.1 The Council's Zed Pod housing project at Shapland Place, Tiverton, has been [shortlisted for awards](#). This is an exemplar of redevelopment at a brownfield site, designed to address climate adaptation (flood resilience, high spec insulation) and climate impact (capable of Net Zero carbon performance).

4.0 Corporate activities

4.1 The Net Zero Advisory Group (NZAG). (CS priority: 1.)

4.1.1 *NZAG to be re-established as a working group of the Environment PDG.

4.2 Sustainability appraisals for decision-making and reports.

4.2.1 Cabinet endorsed Environment PDG recommendations, for the PDG and NZAG to liaise with Corporate Management Team (CMT) to:

- formulate a method for a Climate and Sustainability Statement that can be consistently applied to all business cases
- devise a consistent approach to climate change impact statements noted on committee reports

4.2.2 A draft framework will be circulated to this PDG, and to PDG Chairs for consideration (already circulated to CMT 03 March 2023 and then to PDG members 29 March 2023).

4.3 Sustainability in Procurement Strategies. (CS Priority 6.)

4.3.1 Environment PDG tasked NZAG with the Review of Procurement Strategies.

4.3.2 [Cabinet 07 February](#) approved the new [MDDC Procurement Strategy 2023](#), which cites the MDDC Climate Emergency declaration and includes guidance on supporting delivery of environmental and social benefit.

4.3.3 Next steps: Devise meaningful indicators for social and environmental impact.

4.4 Climate knowledge, literacy and capacity. (CS priority: 1.)

4.4.1 Carbon Literacy workshops were offered to all Members; 4 Members signed up delivered by the Learning and Development Specialist and the C&S Specialist in January 2023. Manager workshop dates to follow (some have completed training with the Local Government Association).

4.5 Project: Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS).
(CS priority: 1, 2. CP aims: env01, env02, ec01.)

4.5.1 This £2.8m PSDS funded project to decarbonise heating at Exe Valley and Lords Meadow leisure centres uses combined arrays of ground-source and air-source heat pumps (and wood biomass heating at Lords Meadow) with extra power from new solar photovoltaic panels. The heating and cooling installation works are complete. The new systems are being commissioned and tested to the required standards. (PDG will have a verbal update.)

4.6 Bin-it-123. (CP aim: env06.)

4.6.1 Since the change to Bin-it-123 collection cycles, Mid Devon's recycling rate for domestic waste has improved by 4%-5%, with a considerable cut in residual waste. Recycling 2021-2022 was in the top 15% in England.

Financial Implications: The financial implications associated with this report are the overall costs of the Climate and Sustainability Programme, budgets linked specifically to the Council's Corporate Plan, Climate Strategy and CAP.

Legal Implications: [Full Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019](#). The Environment Policy Development Group (PDG) is responsible for developing relevant council policies; considering how best to implement the Council's approved policies; and for making informed recommendations to Cabinet on the matter.

Risk Assessment: Progress on Performance Indicators (PI) provided separately by Performance and Risk Reports. There are 2 main risks (to the Council): 1) that the Council does not take sufficient actions to enable it to meet its Climate Emergency declaration ambitions; and 2) that the financial implications of Climate Change are not adequately measured and reflected in the Council's decision making.

Impact on Climate Change: The role of the Climate and Sustainability (C&S) Specialist in support of the corporate officer team is central to the Council's Climate and Sustainability Programme by actions such as the development of strategic positions and delivery of projects through internal, community and partnership work.

Equalities Impact Assessment: There are no equality impacts associated with this report. Specific projects and policies are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty. (Assessing the equality impacts of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices is not only a legal requirement, but also a positive opportunity for authorities to make better decisions based on robust evidence.)

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Please refer to Annex A which shows the Council's Corporate Plan aims (Table 1) and Climate Strategy priorities (Table 2).

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 06 Jun 2023

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 06 Jun 2023

Chief Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director

Date: 06 Jun 2023

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 06 Jun 2023

Cabinet member notified: Yes.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Jason Ball - Climate and Sustainability Specialist: Email:

JBall@MidDevon.gov.uk Tel: 01884 255255.

Background papers: The previous report was provided to the [Environment Policy Development Group](#) on [14 March 2023](#). Link to [Report](#). Link to [Appendix A](#).