

CABINET
14 JULY 2020

DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Alan Marshall, Economy Portfolio

Responsible Director - Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Cabinet approval of the Climate Change Strategy and approach to staff and Member training.

Summary

2. The Climate Change Strategy attached at **Appendix 1** details our approach to achieving the carbon neutral council target adopted in the motion passed by Full Council in July 2019.
3. We have used 2010/11 as our baseline year, allowing us to demonstrate that we have been addressing our energy use and carbon emissions for some time.
4. The scope of our ambition includes those areas where emissions are significant, we have control over them, and data is robust. Some areas of operations do not yet have robust data. We will continue to monitor these and will include them as and when we can be certain of the data.
5. Our baseline carbon footprint has been calculated as 13100 tonnes CO₂e.
6. For the financial year 2018/19, our carbon footprint has reduced to 8197 tonnes CO₂e (4903 tonnes).
7. We are reporting our carbon footprint using both market-based reporting and location-based reporting, as is considered good practice. Location-based reporting, demonstrates the carbon footprint of our actual energy usage. Market-based reporting takes into account the choices that we make in where we source our electricity.
8. We have chosen a zero carbon electricity tariff. This means that our carbon footprint reduces from 8197 tonnes to 5011 tonnes CO₂e.

9. The Strategy sets out four principles, which underpin the proposed actions:
 - (a) Reduce our overall energy consumption
 - (b) Reduce our demand for fossil fuel based energy
 - (c) Contribute to a greener grid
 - (d) Sequester carbon
10. A number of potential actions are included in the strategy. These have not yet been costed nor have feasibility studies been carried out. This will be done with the relevant teams and a detailed action plan, including SMART targets produced.
11. An e-learning training module has been developed for staff and Members. It is hoped that this will be included in the compulsory modules for staff.
12. Quarterly updates reports will be produced along with an annual report outlining progress made against our net zero target.
13. Lead officers will be tasked with producing plans for their own departments. These will form part of the overall Council action plan.
14. The action plan is likely to be a rolling 3-5 year plan. This, and the strategy, will be reviewed every three years, to take advantage of new technologies, examples of good practice and any changes in government policy.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) Cabinet approves the adoption of the attached Climate Change Strategy.
 - (b) Cabinet approves the inclusion of climate change training in compulsory modules.

Reasons

16. The recommendations are supported as with increasing public pressure to take action on climate change, we run the risk of significant damage to our reputation if we do not deliver on our stated commitment to dealing with the Council's contribution to climate change.

Paul Wildsmith, Managing Director
Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Background Papers

The Climate Change Strategy is attached.

S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no expected impact on Crime and Disorder in Darlington.
Health and Well Being	According to the WHO, climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. This strategy sets out how we will approach reducing carbon and adapting our services, to ensure that the Council can continue to support and provide services to Darlington's residents.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	The Council has recognised the need to consider the carbon impact of the decisions it makes. This strategy sets out how we will approach reducing our carbon emissions and adapt our services to the unavoidable effects of climate change.
Diversity	Climate change affects everyone, but it has a disproportionate impact on areas of deprivation. This strategy covers how the Council will address its own carbon emissions and resilience, giving us the ability to demonstrate through good practice what other people can do themselves.
Wards Affected	This strategy covers how the Council will address its own carbon emissions and resilience. It will not affect any particular ward.
Groups Affected	This strategy covers how the Council will address its own carbon emissions and resilience. It will not affect any particular groups.
Budget and Policy Framework	This decision does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	Yes.
Urgent Decision	This is not an Urgent Decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	<p>Children with the best start in life: activity under this strategy will include supporting schools in their climate change education.</p> <p>A safe and caring community: we will be suggesting actions for residents and businesses which will support communities to be safer and more resilient</p> <p>More people active and involved: we will be using our influence to inspire people to reduce their own carbon footprint and increase their resilience. One of the ways we can do this will be to encourage people to travel actively.</p> <p>More people healthy and independent: climate change threat has been shown to be a threat to health. The strategy is one way of supporting the Council's work on improving public health.</p> <p>More businesses and more jobs: through the strategy we will be supporting skills development and encouraging innovation in dealing with the impact of climate change.</p> <p>More people caring for our environment: a thriving natural environment will help us to deal with the threat of climate change. Enough support for people when needed: adapting to the impacts of climate change and</p>

	<p>becoming more resilient will allow us to continue to deliver services.</p> <p>A place designed to thrive: we will include consideration of climate change impacts in our decision making, our capital programme and all policies and programmes.</p>
Efficiency	<p>The strategy sets out a different way of doing things. This does not necessarily mean more. Once potential actions have been examined and costed, there may ultimately be budgetary implications in the short term as we invest to save. However, we are expecting that continued actions to improve efficiency will save money.</p> <p>Some suggested actions might require employing staff to manage particular projects</p>
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	<p>This report does not directly impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers</p>

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

17. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has stated that without substantial efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions over the next decade we are likely to face severe, widespread, and irreversible impacts on societies. Human activity has already led to global warming, which is resulting in damaging impacts on lives, infrastructure and ecosystems. As a result, we need to both mitigate and adapt to climate change
18. The predicted impacts of climate change in Darlington include more frequent and intense flooding, drought, episodes of extreme heat and stormier conditions. These impacts are expected to lead to an increase in heat-related deaths, particularly amongst the elderly, damage to essential infrastructure, reduced availability of drinking water, increased cost and scarcity of food, disruption to supply chains and service provision, sea level rises, greater coastal erosion and impact on habitats from rising temperature and weather events and from invasive species.
19. The attached strategy focuses on our plans to both mitigate and adapt to climate change.
20. In July 2019, Members passed a motion committing the Council to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.
21. The strategy sets out the baseline of the Council's carbon emissions and identifies the key actions and intervention measures required to meet this commitment. It also set out what measures we will take to deal with unavoidable impacts of climate change.
22. The strategy is based on previous work to reduce our emissions. A carbon management plan and action plan were produced in 2010.

23. Since 2010 we have upgraded lighting in council buildings and streetlights and installed solar panels on the Town Hall roof. We also installed combined heat and power for the Dolphin Leisure Centre.
24. The size of the corporate estate has increased and improvements in monitoring have meant that our electricity use has increased. However, as a result of work already undertaken, we have successfully reduced our corporate carbon emissions by 37% (as of 2018/19). Despite these successes we understand that we need to lead by example and do more, faster. The strategy acknowledges this.
25. The strategy concentrates on the emissions we can measure and have direct control over. It also acknowledges that we are a leader within our community and so we will use our influence and experience to inspire action across the Borough.
26. Four principles are set out, which underpin the proposed actions:
 - (a) Reduce our overall energy consumption
 - (i) Increase the efficiency of our estate
 - (ii) Manage our buildings to reduce energy demand
 - (iii) Train staff to change their behaviours
 - (b) Reduce our demand for fossil fuel based energy
 - (i) Move away from gas heating
 - (ii) Increase on site renewables
 - (iii) Support renewables with batteries
 - (c) Contribute to a greener grid
 - (i) Increase off-site renewables
 - (d) Sequester carbon
 - (i) Offsetting
27. The scope of our carbon reporting includes:
 - (a) Corporate estate
 - (b) Energy for street lights
 - (c) Business mileage
 - (d) School estate (where schools are still under LEA control)
 - (e) Residential/care homes/communal areas of flats
28. These are all areas where we retain responsibility for bill management and payment and have control over the emissions produced.
29. We do not currently have robust data to report on commuting, disposal of waste from Council buildings, travel on public transport or procurement, so these are not included. Actions are proposed to improve our understanding of the carbon emissions from these areas. In the meantime, we can report qualitatively on progress.
30. We have used 2010/11 as our baseline year, to take account of actions taken since the previous carbon management plan was produced.

31. At 2010/11, our carbon footprint was 13100 tonnes CO₂e.
32. At 2018/19, our carbon footprint had reduced to 8197 tonnes CO₂e (4903 tonnes).
33. The majority of this reduction has been through the upgrade of streetlighting stock and some efficiencies in buildings. We have also benefitted from increasing amounts of renewable energy in the national grid, resulting in improvements in the carbon conversion factor.
34. We have reported our carbon footprint using both market-based reporting and location-based reporting. This is considered good practice. Location-based reporting, demonstrates the carbon footprint of our actual energy usage. Market-based reporting takes into account the choices that we make in where we source our electricity.
35. We are currently on a zero carbon electricity tariff. This means that our carbon footprint reduces from 8197 tonnes to 5011 tonnes CO₂e.
36. A number of potential actions are included in the strategy. These have not yet been costed nor have feasibility studies been carried out. This will be done with the relevant teams and a detailed action plan, including SMART targets produced.
37. A training module has been developed for all staff and Members. This will be included on Academy 10 and it is hoped that it will become one of the compulsory modules for all staff.
38. Quarterly update reports will be produced along with an annual report outlining progress made against our net zero target.
39. Lead officers will be tasked with producing plans for their own departments. These will form part of the overall Council action plan.
40. The action plan is likely to be a rolling 3-5 year plan. This, and the strategy, will be reviewed every three years, to take advantage of new technologies, examples of good practice and changes in government policy.

Financial Implications

41. The Strategy sets out our approach and some potential actions to meet our climate change commitment. More work is still needed on these to determine which are our best options and what the anticipated costs are likely to be.
42. There is expected to be a need for some investment in technologies or different ways of working, with potentially a need for more staffing.
43. Equally, we expect to see financial savings through better ways of working and efficiencies in our building management.

Legal Implications

44. There are no legal implications, but with increasing public pressure to take action on the threat of climate change, a strategy demonstrates how we will deliver on the motion commitments and may protect the Council from future legal challenge.

HR Implications

45. The strategy does not affect the terms and conditions of any staff or change their duties.

Estates & Property Advice

46. The strategy does not affect the Council's land holdings or involve a lease, or license or any transfer or purchase of land.

Procurement Advice

47. The strategy does not involve any purchase over £100k.

Consultation

48. This strategy relates to reducing the Council's carbon emissions and increasing its resilience to the impacts of climate change. No public consultation has been carried out.

Equalities considerations

49. Climate change affects everyone, but it has a disproportionate impact on areas of deprivation. By ensuring that the Council is resilient to the effects of climate change, we ensure that we will be able to continue providing services to all residents.