

**CABINET  
5 OCTOBER 2021**

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**DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Alan Marshall, Economy Portfolio**

**Responsible Officer - Ian Williams, Chief Executive**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek Cabinet approval of the Climate Change Action Plan and approach to a carbon budget.

**Summary**

2. The Climate Change Action Plan is the supporting document to the Climate Change Strategy, approved by Cabinet in July 2020.
3. Lead officers have produced plans for their own departments. This plan is the result of their combined efforts.
4. The actions in the plan have been arranged according to which of the Strategy Principles they most align to. Within each section, actions have been divided into ongoing, short-term (1-3 years), medium-term (3-5 years) and long-term (5+ years).
5. Each action also has an indication of its current status and whether funding is currently available and under which portfolio each action sits.
6. The Action Plan is designed to be a rolling, organic plan. It will be continually reviewed to allow us to respond to new technologies, new understanding and government initiatives as they arise. Milestones will be developed year by year to enable robust reporting to Full Council every six months. An annual report will also be produced.
7. Three potential trajectories have been calculated, based on 20%, 25% and 30% reductions in emissions over successive 5-year periods. The 30% trajectory would give us an approximate 76% reduction in emissions by 2035 compared to our baseline of 2010.
8. Residual emissions will need to be offset; an action to develop an offset plan is included in the action plan.

## **Recommendations**

9. It is recommended that: -
  - (a) Cabinet approves the adoption of the attached Climate Change Action Plan (**Appendix 1**);
  - (b) Cabinet approves the adoption of the 30% emissions reduction every 5 years trajectory;
  - (c) Cabinet notes the annual report 2020/21 (**Appendix 2**).

## **Reasons**

10. The recommendations are supported by the following reason: with increasing public pressure to act 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.

**Ian Williams**  
**Chief Executive**

## **Background Papers**

- (i) The Climate Change Action Plan is attached at Appendix 1.
- (ii) The annual report 2020/21 is attached at Appendix 2 for information.

Margaret Enstone : Ext: 6229  
EC

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 action plan sets out the actions we will take to reduce 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 action plan 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 action plan covers how the Council will address its own carbon emissions and resilience. It will not affect any particular ward.
Groups Affected	This action plan 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.
Council Plan	<p><b>Growing Darlington's Economy:</b> through the strategy we will be supporting skills development and encouraging innovation in dealing with the impact of climate change. We will include consideration of climate change impacts in our decision making, our capital programme and all policies and programmes.</p> <p><b>Maximise the potential of our young people:</b> activity under this action plan will include supporting schools in their climate change education.</p> <p><b>Supporting the most vulnerable in the borough:</b> climate change has been shown to be a threat to health. The action plan is one way of supporting the Council's work on improving public health. Adapting to the impacts of climate change and becoming more resilient will allow us to continue to deliver vital services to our residents.</p> <p><b>Working with communities to maximise their potential:</b> we will be suggesting actions for residents and businesses which will support communities to be safer and more resilient. We will also be using our influence to inspire people to reduce their own carbon footprint and increase their resilience. One</p>

	of the ways we can do this will be to encourage people to travel actively.
Efficiency	<p>The action plan sets out a different way of doing things. This does not necessarily mean more. Once 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 actions might require employing staff to manage particular projects</p>
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report does not directly impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

11. In July 2019, Members passed a motion committing the Council to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The following July 2020, Cabinet adopted the Climate Change Strategy. The strategy set out the baseline of the Council’s carbon emissions and identified four principles, which underpin the key actions and intervention measures required to meet this commitment.
12. Lead officers were tasked with producing plans for their own departments. Brought together, these form an action plan for the whole Council. The actions in the plan have been arranged according to which of the Strategy Principles they most align to. Within each section, actions have been divided into ongoing, short-term (1-3 years), medium-term (3-5 years) and long-term (5+ years). Each action also has an indication of its current status and whether funding is currently available and under which portfolio each action sits.
13. The Action Plan is designed to be a rolling, organic plan. It will be continually reviewed to allow us to respond to new technologies, new understanding, and government initiatives as they arise. Milestones will be developed year by year to enable robust reporting to Full Council every six months. An annual report will also be produced.
14. Activity has been continuing during the development of the Action Plan and the relevant actions have been marked as completed or underway, for example:
  - (a) A salary sacrifice scheme for staff to lease electric vehicles has been set up.
  - (b) Guidance notes for councillors have been produced and distributed.
  - (c) High efficacy LED lighting and variable light levels continues to be applied.
  - (d) Upgrades to controls to improve space heating.

- (e) A compulsory training module has been developed for all staff, completion statistics are as follows:

Module	Completion rate on Academy 10	Completion Rate Hard Copy	Total
Climate Change	71%	2%	52%

We are reporting our emissions using both location-based and market-based data.

- (f) location-based – this reflects the average emissions intensity of our actual energy consumption.
- (g) market-based – this reflects emissions from the zero-carbon electricity tariff that we have purposefully chosen.
15. Three potential trajectories have been calculated, based on 20%, 25% and 30% reductions in emissions over successive 5-year periods.
  16. The Government recently published its target of 78% reduction in emissions by 2035 compared to 1990 levels.
  17. The 30% trajectory would give us an approximate 76% reduction in emissions by 2035 compared to our baseline of 2010. The residual emissions will need to be offset; an action to develop an offset plan is included in the action plan.
  18. As we obtain better data for some of the areas we are not currently reporting (waste, supply chain) we will revisit the trajectory to determine if it needs to be adjusted.
  19. We are considering the establishment of a medium-term non-financial carbon budget for departments to help us meet our carbon reduction target. More work is needed to be done to establish a mechanism for fair distribution of the carbon budget across directorates.

### **Financial Implications**

20. The action plan sets out our planned approach to meeting our climate change commitment. However, some of these actions will need feasibility studies to determine which are our best options and what the anticipated costs are likely to be.
21. £100,000 has already been agreed in the MTFP for 2020/21, for projects that will help us meet our net zero target.
22. Where we need to invest in technology or staff, we will take advantage of grant funding as it becomes available and will utilise spend to save initiatives. If additional funding is necessary we will seek further Cabinet approval.
23. We expect to see financial savings through better ways of working and efficiencies in our building management.

### **Legal Implications**

24. 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**

25. The action plan does not affect the terms and conditions of any staff or change their duties.

### **Estates & Property Advice**

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

### **Procurement Advice**

27. The action plan does not involve any purchase over £100k.

### **Consultation**

28. This action plan 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**

29. 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.