

**CABINET  
5 JULY 2022**

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**CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRESS**

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

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

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Cabinet on progress towards the Council's net zero target.

**Summary**

2. Following the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration in July 2019, a Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer was appointed in late January 2020.
3. The Climate Change Strategy was adopted in July 2020 and, working with lead officers across the Council, an action plan was produced and adopted in October 2021.
4. Milestones have been developed and these will be used by the newly appointed (in April) Climate Change Officer to monitor progress.
5. A trajectory of 30% reduction in the Council's emission every five years was agreed at Cabinet in October 2021.
6. Council emissions for 2021/22 were 6,592 tonnes/CO<sub>2</sub>.
7. The emissions reported are made up of the energy use in council buildings; business mileage; fleet emissions, and streetlighting and signs.
8. The Council does not currently measure emissions from our supply chain or from waste. It is important to fully comprehend both of these areas, so are working towards a greater understanding.
9. The district heating network feasibility study has been completed and the report received from the consultants. It has been determined that, owing to a number of factors, the risk to the Council from taking either of the two potential options forward is too great to proceed at this time.
10. BEIS has asked the Council to take part in a heat network zoning pilot to help test the government's approach to designating heat network zones.

11. Team resources have now doubled with the new Climate Change Officer arriving in April and a work plan for the year has been produced.
12. The Sustainable Darlington webpage and Sustainability and Climate Change intranet page have been updated and will be used to share information with residents and staff. It is planned to include a youth tab on the Sustainable Darlington page, working with young people to produce content.

### **Recommendation**

13. It is recommended that Cabinet acknowledges the report.

### **Reasons**

14. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons:-
  - (a) As a public organisation the Council has a duty to meet its obligation in reducing its carbon footprint and achieve its net zero target.
  - (b) With increasing public pressure to act on climate change, the Council is at risk of significant reputation damage if it fails to deliver on our stated commitment to dealing with the Council's contribution to climate change.

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

### **Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no expected impact on Crime and Disorder in Darlington.
Health and Wellbeing	According to the WHO, climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. This report is a progress report of our journey to becoming a carbon neutral council.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	The Council has recognised the need to consider the carbon impact of the decisions it makes. This report is a progress report of our journey to reducing our carbon emissions and adapting 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 report demonstrates how the Council are addressing its own carbon emissions and resilience, giving us the ability to demonstrate through good practice what other people can do themselves
Wards Affected	This report covers how the Council is addressing its own carbon emissions and resilience. It will not affect any particular ward.
Groups Affected	This report covers how the Council is addressing its own carbon emissions and resilience. It will not affect any particular group.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
Council Plan	This report has no particular implications for the Council Plan
Efficiency	Our approach to reducing emissions will mean that resources are used more efficiently
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

15. Following the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration in July 2019, a Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer was appointed in late January 2020. The Climate Change Strategy was adopted in July 2020 and working with lead officers across the Council, an action plan was produced and adopted in October 2021. An independent benchmark review has scored us well above the national average.
16. Milestones have been developed and these will be used by the newly appointed (in April) Climate Change Officer to monitor progress. A trajectory of 30% reduction in the Council's emission every five years was agreed at Cabinet in October 2021.

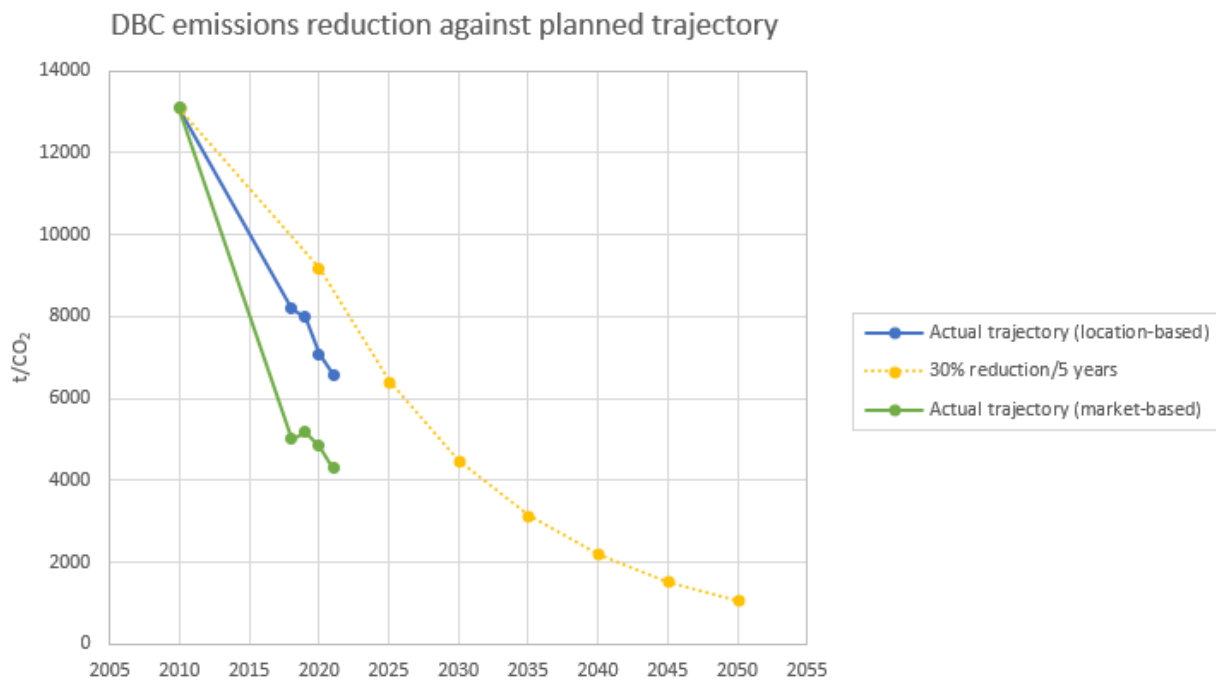
17. Emissions to date:

	2010/11	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	t/CO <sub>2</sub>	t/CO <sub>2</sub>	t/CO <sub>2</sub>	t/CO <sub>2</sub>	t/CO <sub>2</sub>
Streetlighting	3,487	759	596	515	458
Corporate Estate	7564	5,928	5,907	5,014	4864
Business Travel	2,050	1,509	1,482	1,426	1270
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,101</b>	<b>8,196</b>	<b>7,985</b>	<b>6,955</b>	<b>6,592</b>
Total estimated working from home emissions/tCO <sub>2</sub> e				125	

18. Electricity generation from the solar panels on the roof of the Town Hall:

	2010/11	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Generation	Generation	Generation	Generation	Generation
	kWh	kWh*	kWh	kWh	kWh
<b>Total</b>		1,008	7,846	7,362	9,440

19. Trajectory:



20. In 2020/21 the Council was able to make an estimate of emissions from home working. During the past year, more people have returned to the office, for at least part of the week and not always consistently, which makes that calculation harder.

21. The emissions reported include the energy use in council buildings (not including council homes as the Council does not control how residents use the energy); business mileage; fleet emissions, and streetlighting and signs. Reporting emissions from the Council’s supply chain is optional under the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and officers do not currently measure these emissions. However, it is important to understand what these emissions are, and the Council is partnering with a consultant to help identify where the supply chain emissions are coming

from. Understanding this will give the Council the opportunity to both influences widely and be innovative in greenhouse gas management.

22. The emissions from waste disposal are not currently collected. Currently it is not possible to separate out the tonnage of waste from only Council buildings and disposal is dealt with in different ways. With the current collection regimes, it is almost impossible to separate Council waste from third party waste and until this is achieved, the Council cannot report these emissions in a clear and transparent way.

### **District Heat Network**

23. In 2019, the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) funded an energy masterplan document for Darlington, which recommended a feasibility study be carried out for two areas: Town Centre and Central Park.
24. Funding has been received BEIS' Heat Network Development Unit, with matched funding from the TVCA to carry out this feasibility. The techno-economic results show that, for the Town Centre, a significant grant would be required over and above capital and operational expenditure to recoup a minimal Internal Rate of Return (IRR) after 40 years. Added to this, there are significant archaeology issues in the ground where most of the route of any pipework would be placed which could significantly delay any construction. In addition, the consultants who carried out this study suggest that a minimum depth of 1.5-2m would be appropriate for a water source heat pump. There is no data available for the exact location of the pump, but daily mean levels at South Park and at John St do not reach this depth.
25. The above infrastructure constraints in addition to risk of gaining a sufficient number of potential customers for a heat network, has led to the conclusion that the Town Centre option is too much of a risk for the Council now, but could be looked at again in the future.
26. The Central Park option requires less gap funding to give a positive IRR. However, given the need for sufficient customers on a currently empty site and the lack of surety of commercial investment putting the entire risk on the Council, it is not recommended that the Council should proceed with the Central Park option at this time either.
27. BEIS has also asked us to take part in their heat network zoning pilot project. Heat network zones were announced in the government's Energy White Paper, Heat & Buildings Strategy and Net Zero Strategy. They are areas where heat networks are the lowest cost low carbon energy source for the end user. The Council is one of 28 pilots across the country and is helping to test the government's approach.

### **Teamwork Plan**

28. Now that the team resources have doubled, the team is in a stronger position to help lead positive actions within the Council. A work plan for the year has been produced, which includes:
  - (a) A strategy review to take account of work that has developed across the Council such as the housing and climate change strategy
  - (b) Determining supply chain emissions and a plan to deal with them

- (c) Understanding what our waste emissions are
- (d) Monitoring and reporting on actions in the action plan
- (e) Developing our adaptation approach
- (f) Developing our offsetting approach
- (g) Working with young people
- (h) Developing our communications internally with Members and staff and externally with residents and business

### **Climate change fund**

- 29. £100k was allocated in the Medium-Term Financial Plan to help fund projects that will help the Council meet its targets.
- 30. It has been difficult to persuade teams to apply for the funding, but support has been arranged for three projects so far:
  - (a) Additional paper recycling boxes – these boxes have been in constant use during the recent clear out, and by replacing those that had broken or gone missing, and staff have been encouraged to recycle again.
  - (b) Let's Do Digital – funding enabled the team to expand its original plans to support residents facing digital exclusion. They have also been able to provide refurbished mobile phones to care leavers.
  - (c) Benji Bin – funding was provided to enable the team to engage with schools, create adverts and a social media campaign.
- 31. Approximately £10,000 will be used to carry out work on understanding supply chain emissions from the fund.

### **Communications**

- 32. The Sustainable Darlington page on the council's website has been reviewed to bring it up to date and increase the information available.
- 33. A series of blogs and are inviting internal and external contributors has commenced.
- 34. A youth page will be added, and officers are working with the Young People's Opportunity & Involvement Worker to make sure that young people are involved in writing and developing it.
- 35. Access to the sustainability and climate change intranet page has now been gained to ensure information to staff is up to date.

### **Financial Implications**

36. Chief Officers Board has recently approved the creation of a Green Initiative Reserve which will help to capture and ring-fence savings arising because of the implementation of green initiatives.

### **Legal Implications**

37. There are no legal implications.

### **HR Implications**

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

### **Estates & Property Advice**

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

### **Procurement Advice**

40. The report does not involve any purchase over £100k.

### **Equalities Considerations**

41. Climate change affects everyone, but it has a disproportionate impact on areas of deprivation.

### **Consultation**

42. This report is a progress report for the Council's commitment to reducing its carbon emissions and increasing its resilience to the impacts of climate change. No public consultation has been carried out.