

**CABINET  
10 JANUARY 2023**

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**CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRESS**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member -  
Councillor Jamie Bartch, Economy Portfolio**

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

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Council 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. A trajectory of 30% reduction in the Council's emission every five years was agreed at Cabinet in October 2021. Our emissions data is collected annually, so the next update will be reported in the July 2023 report to Cabinet and Council.
4. Milestones have been developed and are being used by the Climate Change Officer to monitor progress. The Climate Change Officer will be working with lead officers to develop the milestones for 2023/24.
5. Work has begun on an adaptation plan to sit alongside the carbon reduction plans. This will ensure continuing resilience to climate change. Work also continues on the development of a strategy for how the Council intends to offset residual emissions. This will be presented to Cabinet in September 2023.
6. The Council continues to communicate externally with residents and businesses and internally with staff. Each issue of One Darlington carries a sustainability article. A new section for young people has been added to the Sustainable Darlington section of the website. The Sustainability and Climate Change intranet pages have been revamped. A series of staff drop-in sessions have been introduced.
7. A sustainability event is in the planning stages. It will be held over two days on 2/3 June 2023.

### **Recommendation**

8. It is recommended that Cabinet notes the report.

### **Reasons**

9. The recommendation is supported because with increasing public awareness and desire to take action on climate change, the Council needs to deliver on its own Declaration.

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

### **Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report

Margaret Enstone : Extension 6229

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 we are addressing our 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

- 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 in 2021 scored us well above the national average. A trajectory of 30% reduction in the Council's emission every five years was agreed at Cabinet in October 2021.

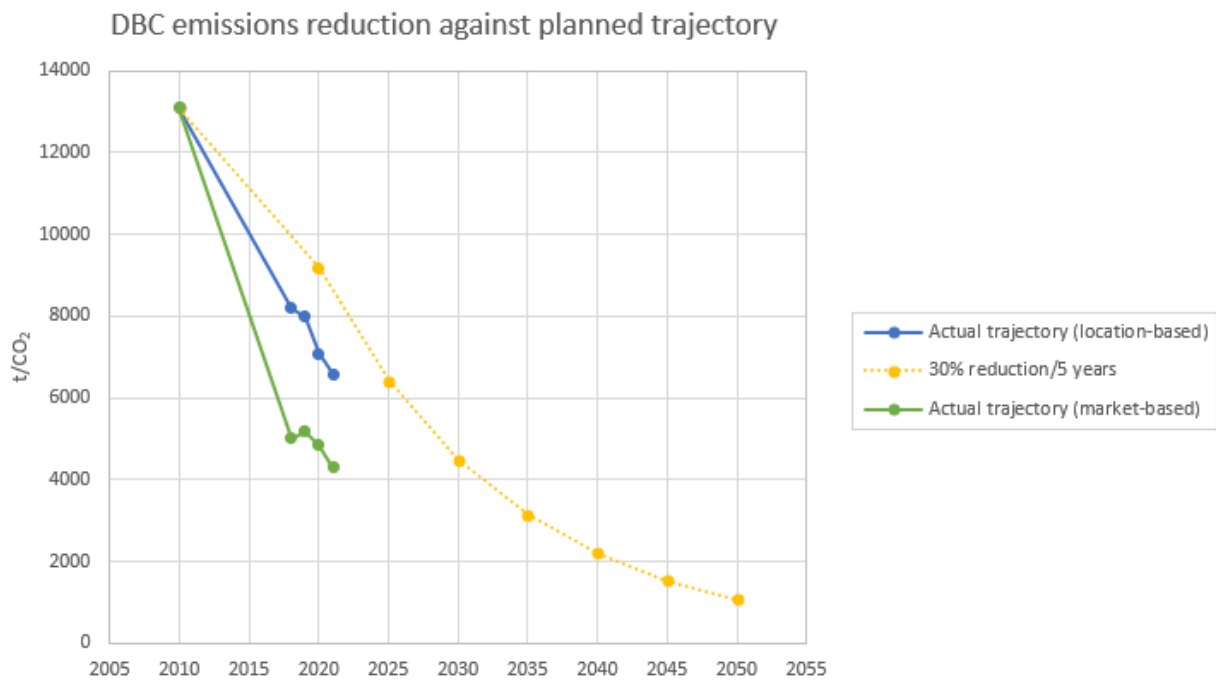
11. Our emissions data is collected annually, so the next update will be reported in the July 2023 report to Cabinet.

	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	

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

12. Trajectory:



13. Milestones have been developed and are being used by the Climate Change Officer to monitor progress. 113 actions are to be completed by the end of March 2023.

14. At end Q2 (2022/23) the end of year projection for these is:

- (a) 26 complete
- (b) 70 on target
- (c) 5 not on target but progress being made
- (d) 4 unlikely to hit target
  - (i) 2 x staff capacity issues, expected completion 2023/24
  - (ii) 1 x work outsourced, expected completion July 2023

(iii) 1 x external partner withdrawn from project

15. The remaining 8 actions are due to be taken forward in later quarters.
16. The Climate Change Officer will be working with lead officers to develop the milestones for 2023/24 and is working with the Corporate Strategy and Performance Team to explore whether the same reporting system as the corporate targets can be utilised. It is anticipated that this would make it easier for officers to complete their reports and for senior managers and members to see progress.

### **Adaptation**

17. Most of our activity to date has been focused on reducing our emissions, in line with the declaration made in 2019. The Council need, though, to ensure that it is positioned to withstand the impacts of climate change that are currently being experienced.
18. Work is ongoing with teams to determine what activity is already being undertaken to ensure that the Council can continue to deliver services under extreme weather conditions and what still needs to be put in place. From these discussions, an adaptation action plan will be put together to sit alongside the carbon neutral action plan.

### **Offsetting Plan**

19. The Council will do everything it can to reduce our emissions, but there will inevitably be a gap between where our actions can take us and where the authority need to be. Currently a strategy is being developed on how the Council intends to offset our residual emissions. This plan will be brought to Cabinet in September 2023.

### **Climate Change Fund**

20. £100k was allocated in the Medium-Term Financial Plan to help fund projects that will help us meet our target.
21. Just short of £18,000 has been spent so far. In addition to the three projects reported on previously the following has been agreed:
  - (a) Provided funding for six videos about recycling to be shown on Freeview TV and social media.
  - (b) Funded a consultant to look at the carbon emissions associated with our supply chain.
  - (c) Pending bid for school's competition to design a sustainable & climate resilient flower bed

### **Communications**

22. Climate change activities continue to have a presence on social media and in One Darlington. A new section for young people has been added to the Sustainable Darlington section of the website. This includes activities to do at school and at home, learning resources, online recycling or reselling sites and a blog area. Officers are still trying to encourage schools to get their pupils to write for this area. The aim is that these pages will

be youth led.

23. The sustainability and climate change intranet page has been updated to include opportunities for volunteering, guides and information and an update area. A series of drop-in sessions have been arranged for staff to be able to ask the team questions and learn about a different topic each time.
24. In addition, the team are working with the Event Management Team on a sustainability event for the weekend of 2/3 June 2023. The event will include interactive learning and experiences, entertainment, information, opportunities for local businesses to showcase themselves, business advice and a ticket talks programme.

### **Financial Implications**

25. Chief Officers Board has recently approved the creation of a Green Initiative Reserve which will help to capture and ring-fence savings arising as a result of the implementation of green initiatives.
26. A system to report on and monitor expected savings is planned for development.

### **Legal Implications**

27. There are no legal implications.

### **HR Implications**

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

### **Estates & Property Advice**

29. 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**

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

### **Equalities Considerations**

31. 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, the Council continues to ensure that it will be able to continue providing services to all residents.

### **Consultation**

32. 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.