

**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**22 OCTOBER 2024**

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**CLIMATE CHANGE**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To give consideration to the revised briefing note for Scrutiny Committees drafted by the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer, in relation to the Council's commitment to tackling climate change.

**Summary**

2. Following the Local Government elections in 2023, the Climate Emergency Declaration was re-affirmed, and the Council's carbon neutral target was brought forward to 2040. Further aims to increase engagement with residents and businesses were included with the intention of reducing wider borough emissions. A further commitment to monitor the Council's supply chain emissions was also added.
3. A new Climate Change Officer was recruited and joined the Council in January 2024. His focus is internal, working with teams to develop new carbon reduction projects and guiding existing actions in the climate change action plan to fruition.
4. A revised briefing note, which is attached at **Appendix 1** of this report, has been drafted by the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer, and reminds Members that tackling climate change is a shared responsibility. It is deeply connected to other policy issues and local action is necessary for sustainable solutions. The Council needs to be clear how any proposal / project, or how aspects of our work, impacts on our carbon emissions and how it affects our resilience. It is also important that the decisions that the Council makes does not prevent other people from reducing their own emissions or improving their own resilience.
5. It is noted that Scrutiny has a critical role to play in these cross-cutting issues. Climate change as a stand-alone issue sits within the remit of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, however everything the Council does either has an impact on, or is impacted by, climate change so it is important that all Scrutiny Committees ensure that everything that comes before them has considered this. The Council Plan now includes climate change as a key principle underpinning everything the Council does.

## Recommendations

6. It is recommended that
  - a) Members note the advice and guidance provided by Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer in the revised briefing note.
  - b) That the questions outlined in the revised briefing note appear as an appendix to our Agenda, and form part of any submitted Quad of Aims, to ensure that these questions remain in the forefront of Members’ mind when scrutinising reports.
  - c) All internal reports coming to this Committee have a small section at the end of each report entitled ‘Climate Considerations’, with a brief note about any considerations which have been given, where appropriate (This can come with the qualification that the staff within the department are not qualified in climate action).

**Councillor McEwan**  
**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Economy**

## Background Papers

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

Author: Paul Dalton

Council Plan	The Council Plan includes climate change as a key principle underpinning everything the Council does, and the report requests that this Scrutiny Committee give consideration to how it wishes to move forward in supporting this key principle, within the remit of this Committee.
Addressing inequalities	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address.
Tackling Climate Change	The report requests that this Scrutiny Committee give consideration to how it wishes to move forward in supporting the Council Plan’s key principle of tackling climate change, within the remit of this Committee.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report has no impact on the Council’s Efficiency Programme.
Health and Wellbeing	This report has no direct implications to the Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder.
Wards Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Ward is considered to be minimal.
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Group is considered to be minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision

Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers
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