



## **North Devon Council**

Report Date: 6 June 2022

Topic: North Devon Carbon, Environment & Biodiversity Plan

Report by: Donna Sibley, Climate Officer

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1. In July 2019 North Devon Council signed up to the Devon Climate Emergency Declaration. The Council have committed to being a net zero carbon organisation by 2030, and to supporting North Devon to achieve net zero carbon by 2050 at the latest.

1.2. The Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan for North Devon is attached to this report. It has been developed with input from the Member Climate Action Team as well as officers working in the relevant teams.

1.3. Note this plan 'mirrors' that for Torridge, the intention is that we will have a joint plan in 2023.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1. That the Council's Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan be approved for publication.

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1. Publication of our Carbon, Environment & Biodiversity Plan will provide the Council with an agreed programme of action to support delivery of our net zero by 2030 commitment.

### **4. REPORT**

4.1. The plan is made up of a number of sections:

a. It sets out the case for declaring a climate emergency, both with reference to global impacts but also how these effects are felt locally, with reference to the recently published Coastal Change Management Area Technical Evidence data and farming impacts (pages 1 – 5)

b. It highlights the range of projects we have already undertaken to reduce our carbon footprint, acknowledging the progress and achievements we have already made (p.6)

c. It sets out our vision, not only in meeting our stated climate ambitions by 2030 but also acknowledging the wider role we have in directing, enabling, encouraging and supporting a move towards a more sustainable future for all.

It also acknowledges the economic opportunities available to us in this new world, especially with our rich biodiversity and natural environment (p.8)

d. It outlines the positioning we have undertaken to take these measures forward from our environmental commitments given in our new Corporate Plan (p 8)

e. There is an outline of the carbon footprinting process (p9).

f. The plan specifically notes opportunities for North Devon in taking this journey to carbon neutrality (p12)

g. Details of Devon County Council's structure in taking their own climate ambitions and our integration with their process (p.13)

h. Details of the South West's Local Enterprise Partnership's own ambitions, through programmes such as the Build Back Better programme and their Roadmap to Recovery, along with their Local Industrial Strategy – all of which seeks to take advantage of the burgeoning green economy (p.15)

i. The role of Development Control is discussed (p. 16)

j. Specific consideration is given to biodiversity and the natural environment including our ongoing work with partners (p. 19)

k. The role of effective communications of this agenda going forward are discussed (p. 21)

l. Key risks to delivery of this carbon plan are identified (p 22)

m. The final part of the report, from page 25 onwards cover our priorities and plans, broken down in the headings of Energy, Transport, Planning, Biodiversity, Waste and Recycling, The Council and Our Communities.

4.2. This plan brings together proposals from both Councillors and Officers over the past nine months. It will be continually reviewed and updated as new opportunities emerge.

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. At this point we are unable to provide details of the funding that will be needed in the future. This will come out in individual project business plans, capital bids and through existing financial procedures. Going forward, it is envisaged that there will be opportunities for external funding for a number of these workstreams and where this is available, approval of this plan will provide the endorsement to pursue these opportunities. It should also be noted that the national context appears to be shifting towards the green agenda, and it is likely that some areas may be subject to legislation and formal requirement. Costs of this may be recognised and compensated for through central allocation. All in all, this is a fast paced and ever-changing agenda and it is difficult to predict these elements.



5.2. Similarly, it is likely that staff resource to implement this plan will be from a combination of existing resources and funding of new resource, whether internally or externally.

## 6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. There are no equalities implications anticipated as a result of this report.

## 7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. Delivery of the actions in this Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan will reduce the Council's greenhouse gas emissions, support adaptation to climate change, reduce water use and waste, protect the natural environment, ensure the Council's purchasing power is used positively and that we all implement our Environmental Policy.

## 8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:

8.1.1. The commercialisation agenda: investment in eg renewable energy offers the Council the opportunity to reduce carbon emissions and our electricity bill, and create an income stream.

8.1.2. Improving customer focus: current predicted climate change will have a devastating impact on North Devon's communities, delivery of this plan will support delivery of the UK's net zero ambition and support more resilient communities.

8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development: The UK Net Zero Strategy presents an opportunity to develop a green economy, elements of which North Devon is ideally placed to deliver and which will be identified through delivery of the Carbon Plan.

## 9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. Article of Part 3 Annex 1 paragraph 1(h):

9.2. Delegated power:

## 10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

10.1. This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Torridge District Council Carbon, Environment & Biodiversity Plan; North Devon Council Environment Policy.



(The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report).

## 12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

12.1. The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Donna Sibley, Climate Officer