



## **North Devon Council**

Report Date: Monday, 4 March 2024

Topic: The Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Adaptation Strategy

Report by: Donna Sibley, Sustainability and Climate Officer

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1. Our planet's climate is changing and warming is accelerating. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published their sixth assessment report in March 2023. It states that human activities, principally through emissions of greenhouse gases, have unequivocally caused global warming, with global surface temperature reaching 1.1°C above 1850–1900 in 2011–2020. Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred. Human-caused climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe. This has led to widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people. Climate change is a threat to human well-being and planetary health. There is a rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all.

1.2. We must not only make rapid, deep and immediate cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, but must understand the risks climate change poses for our region, and how we can adapt to these changes. The Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Adaptation Strategy (published in November 2023 by the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Climate Impacts Group) provides this information.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1. That Strategy and Resources Committee endorse the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Adaptation Strategy.

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

3.1. Endorsement of this strategy supports delivery of our Devon Climate Emergency Declaration and our Corporate Environment Policy. It does not commit us to any additional work or funding.

### **4. REPORT**

4.1. The Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Adaptation Strategy is a plan that details the risks the region may face in the future as climate change increasingly affects the UK, and identifies how we can adapt to these changes. The Strategy can be read in full in Appendix One.

4.2. The Adaptation Strategy has three parts:

- the Risk Register, which identifies regional climate impacts and their risks and opportunities
- the Adaptation Plan, which sets out the conditions for everyone to act on adapting to climate change together
- the Action Plan, which sets out the priority actions for regional collaboration over the next five years.

**Headline summary of climate risks/opportunities for the region**

Impacts	Type of impacts	Severity of impacts
<p><b>64</b></p> <p>Impacts evaluated across multiple sectors</p>	<p>49 Risks</p>	<p>18 Severe</p>
		<p>28 Major</p>
	<p>7 Opportunities</p>	<p>16 Moderate</p>
	<p>8 Risks and opportunities</p>	<p>1 Minor</p>
		<p>1 Negligible</p>

4.3. The region is expected to suffer severe impacts from:

- River and surface water flooding
- Sea level rise
- Reduced water availability
- Temperature change and extreme heat/cold
- Cascading impacts

4.4. These severe impacts will affect:

- Natural environment, agriculture and forestry
- Infrastructure
- Health and the built environment
- Business and industry
- Cross-cutting impacts

4.5. North Devon Council will support delivery of relevant strategic actions, and as a trusted partner in our area can help communities, families and individuals prepare for the impacts of climate change.

4.6. A full list of actions can be found in the attached document in Appendix 1.

See Table 9. Short Term Actions, page 59. Our endorsement of the Adaptation Strategy does not commit us to any additional work or resources (including finance).



## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. It is anticipated that delivery of strategic adaptation actions will be through usual Council functions and services and no additional resource is required at present.

## 6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. There are not considered to be any negative impacts arising from publication of this Adaptation Strategy for any of the protected characteristics. Developing regional resilience to climate change will aid protected characteristics.

## 7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. Endorsing the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Adaptation Strategy will support delivery of our Devon Climate Emergency Declaration and our Corporate Environment 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: non identified at present

8.1.2. Improving customer focus: none identified at present

8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development: adapting to climate change will support economic development and regeneration in the district.

8.1.4. Our environment is cherished and protected: We recognise that as a single Council we can only do so much ourselves and so we will need to work with the community/partner organisations to ensure that we fulfil our obligations to future generations.

## 9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. The decision in respect of the recommendations in this report can be made by this Committee pursuant to delegated powers provided in Part 3 Annex 1.

## 10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

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

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: 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

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