

**REPORT TO: FULL COUNCIL**

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019

**TOPIC: CLIMATE CHANGE DECLARATION**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In recent months, various organisations and local authorities have been declaring climate change emergencies and agreeing various dates by which the organisation will become a net zero carbon emitter.
- 1.2 Local authorities and other bodies in Devon have been asked to sign up to a joint declaration setting out a co-ordinated approach to the issue.
- 1.3 This report seeks endorsement of that joint approach.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To endorse the declaration set out in Appendix 1
- 2.2 To report back within 6 months on a strategy to comply with the declaration.

## 3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To reflect the joint approach across the County

## 4 REPORT

- 4.1 In response to a number of authorities declaring climate emergencies, local authorities across Devon have worked together on a joint declaration showing intent to work together strategically across the County and with other bodies.
- 4.2 The declaration has been prepared with input from local authorities, agencies such as the EA and academic institutions. The declaration has been prepared so that it allows local targets to still be introduced but uses the IPCC targets as a backstop.
- 4.3 Signing up to the declaration will assist as the Council will benefit from collectively pooled resources and expertise.

4.4 Signing up to this declaration or any other declaration is only a signal of intent. If the Council is serious about achieving the outcomes then it has to also put in place an plan to make actual changes. This will start to formulate with the Corporate Plan and in strategies that sit below it. The second recommendation is that a strategy is approved within 6 months.

## 5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are none arising from this report.

## 6 CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Article or Appendix and paragraph	Referred or delegated power?
4.5	Delegated

## 7 STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

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

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- DCC Declaration

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

## 9 STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

9.1 The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers.

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Author: Ken Miles  
Reference:

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019

## Devon Climate Declaration

1. This Declaration has been prepared by a consortium of public, private and voluntary organisations collaborating through a Devon Climate Emergency Response Group. It sets out an ambition to tackle climate change that covers all of Devon, including those people who live, work in and visit our county, and those businesses who are based or operate here.
2. We are aware of the significant implications of climate change for Devon's communities; it is already affecting our environment, infrastructure, economy and health & wellbeing. If not addressed, the impact on future generations will be profound and the ability to meet the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals will be severely compromised.
3. We understand that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has advised that carbon emissions must reduce globally by at least 45% by 2030 from 2010 levels and reach net-zero by 2050 if we are to avoid the worst effects of climate change by keeping warming below 1.5 degrees.
4. We will lead in the global response to climate change through our collective action, innovation and influence.
5. Individually, we will review (within 6 months) our plans to reduce our organisation's carbon emissions to meet or exceed these targets, including ensuring the people we do business with are doing the same. We will publicly report our carbon emissions annually in accessible formats.
6. In collaboration, we will engage Devon's residents, businesses and visitors to develop and implement a plan to facilitate the reduction of Devon's production and consumption emissions to meet IPCC recommendations at the latest. We will openly report progress on its delivery. We know this transformational change will be challenging and will include:
  - Deploying more renewable, decentralised and smart energy systems
  - Retrofitting energy-efficiency measures into our existing buildings
  - Constructing zero-carbon new buildings
  - Travelling less and using improved walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure more often, and using electric and hydrogen vehicles
  - Changing our consumption to use less, re-use more and choose low-carbon options
  - Challenging all economic sectors to review their practices and the values of those they do business with
  - Divesting from fossil fuels
  - Changing our dietary patterns and reducing food waste
  - Changing agricultural practices to reduce emissions associated with farming operations, manage soils sustainably and replenish soil carbon
  - Encouraging carbon storage such as through tree planting, the use of wood in construction and peatland restoration
  - Empowering the people of Devon with the knowledge and skills to act collectively.

7. Additionally, we will work to understand the near-term and future risks of climate change for Devon to plan for how our infrastructure, public services and communities will have to adapt for a 1.5-degree warmer world.
8. Local organisations and communities cannot do this alone as national government plays a key role in many of the policy areas that are vital to reducing emissions and adapting to climate change. We call on government to prioritise decarbonisation and adaptation within decision making and work with us by using its powers to provide the resources and funding necessary to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon and resilient economy and society.
9. We challenge every organisation, business, community and individual to do the same.