

Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny**  
Date: **22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021**  
Title: **Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Update**  
Portfolio Areas: **Cllr Lynn Daniel**  
Wards Affected: **All**  
Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**  
Date next steps can be taken: **N/A**

Author: **Drew Powell** Role: **Director of Governance and Assurance**  
**Adam Williams** **Climate Change Specialist**  
Contact: **Email: [drew.powell@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:drew.powell@swdevon.gov.uk), [adam.williams@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:adam.williams@swdevon.gov.uk)**

---

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the update on the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan

**1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 At the meeting of full Council on July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019 it was resolved that the Council sign the Devon Climate Emergency Declaration (Minute CM 29 refers).
- 1.2 At Full Council on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019 Members considered a comprehensive report, including an action plan, on Climate Change and Biodiversity.
- 1.3 The Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and an updated Action Plan was developed and adopted by Council on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
- 1.4 This report provides an update on progress on the action plan since its adoption following an update being given to Hub Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 At Full Council on 8<sup>th</sup> December, Members considered an updated Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy, containing both a framework and action plan.
- 2.2 It was noted that the Action Plan will be a continually evolving document and that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Governance and Assurance to make revisions to the Plan as and when deemed necessary.
- 2.3 The Action Plan has been updated and includes suggestions brought forward by members and through the Climate Change and Biodiversity Community Forum.
- 2.4 It was resolved on the 8<sup>th</sup> December that performance against the Action Plan would be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a six-monthly basis.
- 2.5 At the same meeting, officers were instructed to establish an officer led Climate Change and Biodiversity Community Forum and hold a quarterly Community Forum meeting.
- 2.6 An update was provided to Hub Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021 where progress was noted. The Committee also requested that a number of actions in the action plan were reviewed and specifically that the action plan be presented in a way that clearly differentiates between the actions that the Council will deliver directly and those that will be enabled/delivered in partnership.

## **3. Outcomes/outputs**

- 3.1 The report sets out progress to date on delivery of the action plan in line with the adopted strategy.

## **4. Progress Update**

- 4.1 Appendix 1 contains a tabulated version of the Action Plan with the latest position on each individual action, new actions and changes to actions marked in red.
- 4.2 Key progress has been made in the following areas since January;
  - a. Secured an additional £400,000 in Green Homes Grants. We are forecasting 60 installs, a combination of Air Source Heat Pumps and External Wall Insulation. The deadline for spending the previously awarded phase 1a grant has been extended from 31 March 2021 until end of August 2021 in recognition of a range of supply chain issues.

- b. Climate and Biodiversity Newsletters have continued to be produced and released monthly.
- c. A Community Forum has been established with the first meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021. After a welcome and introduction session, the forum were briefed on our Green Homes Grant housing retrofit work and began exploring ways to create opportunity for a more local supply chain. Forum members were then briefed on our Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and work to date. Member's views were then sought on their aspirations for the forum and opportunities for collaboration going forward.
- d. Our Community Forum work has recently been featured as a case study by the Local Government Association <https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/developing-community-forum-help-tackle-climate-change-and-increase-biodiversity> and we have been invited to present at the Sustainable Earth Conference organised by Plymouth University in June.
- e. Collaborated on a Carbon Footprinting public campaign with Carbon Savvy, North Devon Council, Torridge District Council and West Devon Borough Council called 'Lifestyle Spring Clean'. We are awaiting full figures from the campaign, but in terms of our social media engagement, our own posts on Twitter and Facebook reached 16,912 people. 178 people engaged with the posts directly.
- f. Commissioning a feasibility study into EV charging, solar and battery storage on our car parks and exploring the potential for direct energy feed to nearby assets as part of the scope.
- g. Partnering with Torbay Council for accredited Carbon Literacy Training for Extended Leadership Team (ELT) and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in late May/Early June to being to align our Climate Change ambitions across the organisation.
- h. Contributing to the Devon Citizens Assembly as a member of the project team.
- i. Since January 2021, saved through 'agile working' an estimated 300,000 miles in combined travel, leading to a saving of 106tCO<sub>2</sub>e<sup>1</sup> (Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalent).

## **5. Plans for short term (next 6 months)**

- 5.1 The Action Plan will continue to be worked on alongside development of the Councils new Corporate Strategy. Integrating carbon reduction and increasing biodiversity will be embedded within the strategic approach.
- 5.2 Over the next 6 months we will expect to see a final version of the Devon Interim Carbon Plan which will trigger an update of

---

<sup>1</sup> Travel emissions including well to tank emissions

our own action plan, bringing in actions from the wider Devon work as well as its performance monitoring indicators.

- 5.3 The following pieces of work will be developed in the short term, these are as follows;
- a. Grounds Maintenance Review – increasing biodiversity through our land management.
  - b. Scoping work underway on a replacement of our vehicle fleet with EV and associated infrastructure (non-waste fleet).
  - c. Feasibility work on cycle schemes / active travel.
  - d. Fully update the website to include a tabulated version of the Action Plan, Climate Change related reports to Council and links to the Climate Change and Biodiversity Community Forum.
  - e. Further public engagement campaigns with Carbon Savvy taking lessons learnt from the March campaign to strengthen this further and to collaborate with more councils and organisations.
  - f. Undertaking an Energy Audit of our buildings to inform options for retrofit.
  - g. Continuing Carbon Literacy training for SLT and ELT.
  - h. Develop and produce a carbon trajectory for Council emissions as part of our ongoing operational carbon reduction plan. This will enable us to begin to understand what our likely residual emissions will be and what steps we need to take each year.

## 6. Proposed Way Forward

- 6.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the updates provided within this report and Appendix 1 and support the progress made so far with a view to being provided a further update in 6 months' time.

## 7. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	N	
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	N	At the Hub Committee on 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 and Council on 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2021, it was approved to put £200,000 into an Earmarked Reserve for the Recovery and Renewal Plan and Climate Change.
Risk	N	

Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Wellbeing, Homes, Climate Change and Biodiversity
Equality and Diversity	N	No direct implications
Safeguarding	N	No direct implications
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	No direct implications
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Y	The provision of energy efficiency measures will have a positive impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the households.
Other implications	N	

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Appendices:**

1: West Devon Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Update