

**Report to:**

**TOURISM, ECONOMY AND COMMUNITIES  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Relevant Officer:**

Scott Butterfield, Strategy Policy and Research Manager

**Date of Meeting**

3 February, 2021

## **CLIMATE EMERGENCY: PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS**

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To outline the key activities and steps for 2021 in taking the climate emergency forward as Council and town to make Blackpool net-carbon neutral by 2030, and to give an overview of the Climate Assembly process.

### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

2.1 That the report be noted.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 Full Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 which committed the Council to work towards carbon neutrality across its services, companies and the whole town by 2030.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

### **4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:**

4.1 None.

### **5.0 Council priority:**

5.1 The Climate Emergency cuts across both Council priorities:

- "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool"
- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

### **6.0 Background information**

6.1 This report sets out some of the activity required to address the council's Climate Emergency Declaration in 2021. The primary concern is to establish an approach which provides leadership

across the organisation and town to achieve the goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

6.2 Key activity underway includes:

- **Delivery of a Climate Assembly** 40 residents, recruited at random then selected to be representative of the population, will meet to produce a series of recommendations and actions over January and February. The final report and other outputs is due in mid-March. Further information will be made available at the meeting in the form of a presentation by FutureGov, the independent organisation leading the work;
- **Carbon Trust “Roadmapping”** This involves establishing a baseline of emissions across energy use sectors and sub-sectors (e.g. transport; dwelling stock etc) based on Blackpool’s infrastructure, with scenarios outlining various trajectories depending on the speed and scale of interventions. Key officers from the Steering Group have determined which aspects of “scope 3” carbon emissions should be included within the scope for planning purposes. Work commenced in January and complete by May.
- **The establishment of the Blackpool Climate Action Partnership** This is intended to be a high-level strategic group drawn from key public, private and VCFS organisations, and the Climate Assembly, which will oversee and champion town-wide work. An initial membership list has been drawn up and further work will take place following conclusion of the Climate Assembly and Carbon Trust work.

6.3 Supporting activity underway includes:

- **The work of the Climate Emergency Steering Group** Meeting approximately every 6 weeks, and covering all council directorates and companies, the steering group is responsible for delivery and oversight of internal carbon emission reduction activity via an action plan (see Appendix), ensuring the Sustainability Impact Analysis tool is used for new projects, and developing and overseeing funding bids.
- **Establishment of a Climate Emergency Delivery Officer post** The post-holder will be responsible for facilitating activity across the town and council to work towards net zero, including the development and administration of the Climate Action Partnership. Recruitment commenced in January.
- **Recruitment to a Climate Expert Panel** As part of the development of the Climate Assembly, the lead provider FutureGov are recruiting expert contributors, some of whom will be invited to join a panel advising on innovative opportunities and potential cross-sector joint working.
- **An update of the Sustainability Strategy.** We have completed a light-touch update to the strategy so it reflects the target established by the declaration. Note that the strategy

currently only covers council activity (see Strategic Framework Review below).

#### 6.4 Planned activity includes:

- **A review and refresh of the council's internal action plan** At present this focuses mostly on corporate enabling activity, and not large scale transformational change. This will change following the output of the Assembly and Roadmapping work. It also needs to integrate actions being delivered by the Energy and Utilities team.
- **Development of a town-wide action plan** This will bring together the output of the Assembly and Roadmap work with the plans of Climate Action Partnership members. It will be a high-level plan with some specific initiatives and projects, but is unlikely to represent a comprehensive approach covering the remaining 9 years before the 2030 deadline. Further work will be required to deliver this (see below).
- **Strategic Framework review** This is closely linked to the action plan work. By early March, the Roadmapping work will have delivered a baseline assessment of emissions sources across the town. Once we have received the recommendations of the Assembly, the science and target-based actions of the roadmapping work, and the input of the Climate Action Partnership, an exercise will be undertaken to highlight areas where strategic thought and decisions are needed for the medium to longer term. This is likely to highlight the need for various additional strategies, including a town-wide sustainability strategy from which sub-strategies (e.g. Decarbonising Transport, or specific views on aspects of this such as EV's) could emerge. This would need to dovetail with our existing strategy framework, with current strategies being re-considered in light of decarbonisation effectively being a new corporate priority. The Core Strategy review due to commence in 2021 will be crucial in this regard.

In addition, Lancashire County Council is intending to deliver two pieces of work as part of a wider exercise to produce a Greater Lancashire Plan, which aims to set a new narrative for the county and maximise its potential:

- a **State of the Environment of Lancashire** report to update a 1991 baseline and identify further indicators across air quality, water quality, waste, noise, energy generation and use, emissions, nature recovery and transport; and
- a piece of work looking at **pathways to carbon emission reduction**.

It is particularly important that the council shapes and leads this work to maximise opportunities to achieve our own targets.

#### 6.5 Whilst work to date has prepared the ground for future activity, impact on the Council's carbon emissions so far has been limited to those achieved by moving to a renewable source of energy for our electricity. Given that the Council is responsible for just 3% of Blackpool's emissions, it is clear that a step change is needed to deliver genuine progress both within the

organisation and across the town. This will be the focus of work in the remainder of 2021.

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? Yes/No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 6(a) - Summary of action plan and progress.

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 No immediate considerations, with future funding requirements to be identified following the Carbon Trust work.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 The UK government has set a legally binding target on itself to deliver net-zero carbon emissions by 2050; our target would surpass this.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 No immediate implications.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 A draft analysis has been prepared which considers issues of Climate Justice. This will be developed further in line with the outputs above.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 This work is aimed at both delivering net zero, and also changing the culture of the organisation and town in line with this objective.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 Internal - Climate Emergency Steering Group. External – In addition to the Climate Assembly, an open-access survey was undertaken to seek the views of the general public, the results of which are being processed.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.