

Report to: **TOURISM, ECONOMY AND COMMUNITIES**
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Relevant Officer: Scott Butterfield, Strategy Policy and Research Manager

Date of Meeting 8 December, 2021

CLIMATE EMERGENCY UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update the Committee on progress regarding the development and delivery of the Climate Emergency Action Plan and associated activity.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 The Committee takes steps to consider the impact of climate change and the environment when reviewing council projects, policies and strategies, and requests similar of the Children and Young People's and Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committees;

2.2 The Committee agrees to receive updates on the Climate Emergency Action Plan every 6 months.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

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

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 The Committee could consider alternative monitoring options. This could involve more or less frequent updates, or the use of a different mechanism such as a review panel.

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 The meeting of Council on 24 November 2021 unanimously approved the Climate Emergency Action Plan and associated monitoring arrangements, requesting that the “appropriate Scrutiny Committees” act towards the implementation of its actions.
- 6.2 In addition to the need for the Committee to oversee progress against the actions in the plan, the Climate Emergency Declaration included a request that “Council Scrutiny Committees consider the impact of climate change and the environment when reviewing Council policies and strategies”. Given the scope and relevance of its work. The Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee has so far overseen the council’s response to the Climate Emergency. However, the declaration would also require the Children and Young People’s and Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committees to consider items in light of the Declaration where relevant.
- 6.3 Work is underway to review current Council strategies and explore how these relate to the Climate Emergency agenda. Following the withdrawal of a placement student from Lancaster University prior to their internship, this work has been delayed, and is now being undertaken in-house with an expected completion date of February 2022. Once finalised, the Committee will be able to use this work to inform its deliberations.
- 6.4 In addition, all Committee reports now have a dedicated section asking Officers to consider “Sustainability, Climate Change and Environment Considerations”. The Council Leadership Team has previously approved a Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) process, by which officers can ensure that sustainability issues around services and projects have been considered and accounted for in this section. These can be explored as a way of ensuring an appropriate balance has been made between sustainability, cost and other benefits.
- 6.5 The Committee will receive updates on progress against actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan every 6 months. Given the breadth and depth of the action plan, updates will focus on actions with an imminent deadline or at a crucial stage of their development, as well as exploring actions that have fallen behind schedule. The report will also include a log of completed actions, enabling a long-term overview of progress and the celebration of achievements, and an overview of newly identified actions, in keeping with the dynamic nature of the plan.
- 6.6 To develop members’ understanding of the issues, the Strategy and Climate Team is offering all Carbon Literacy Training to all Councillors. Developed by the Carbon Literacy Project with Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy funding, the training is available to Local Authorities for an accreditation fee of £10 per delegate. Delivered either virtually or face-to-face when possible, the training is tailored in-house to make it relevant to our town and council. It has a

practical focus on building knowledge around actions that departments can take, as well as asking participants to make their own green commitments. Participation on the course so far has been limited by member availability. As a result, the Strategy and Climate Team will tailor future courses to the individual requirements of Councillors to maximise take up.

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 No immediate considerations, although many of the recommendations in the Action Plan require the identification of funding.

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.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 No immediate implications.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 No new specific equalities considerations arising from this report. An Equality Analysis was reported to Executive and Council as part of the Climate Emergency Action Plan decision-making process.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

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

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 Previous engagement has included an open-access survey to seek the views of the public, a climate assembly representative of Blackpool's population, and a formal consultation on the action plan. Further involvement will continue throughout the lifespan of the action plan.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.