

Report to:	CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	John Greenbank, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser
Date of meeting:	7 February 2023

CLIMATE ADAPTATION SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL

1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 To consider an update on the meeting of the Climate Adaptation Scrutiny Review Panel held on 14 December 2023.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 To consider the update, the recommendations made and identify any further work to be undertaken regarding Climate Adaptation.

3.0 Reason for recommendation(s)

3.1 To ensure the Committee has an overview of ongoing work.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy 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 relevant Council priority is:

- 'Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience'

6.0 Background and key information

6.1 On 14 December 2023 members of the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee held a scrutiny review panel meeting to consider work in relation to Climate Adaptation being undertaken by the Council.

6.2 The meeting was chaired by Councillor Simon Cartmell and the following members were present.

Councillor Adrian Hoyle
Councillor Julie Jones

Councillor Portia Webb

6.3 Also in attendance were Mr Scott Butterfield, Strategy and Ms Grace Naylor, Climate Lead and Policy and Strategy Officer.

6.4 Members were informed that climate change had caused adverse impacts nationally through the increase in extreme weather, such as heatwaves and storms. A comparison of the annual climate averages for Blackpool between 1961- 1990 and 1991-2020 shows that temperatures have increased by approximately 1 degree Celsius and the average amount of rainfall has increased by 33 millimetres.

6.5 In response to this, the Council had undertaken an exercise with services to prompt consideration of Climate Adaptation work, which could reduce the risks from the adverse impacts of climate change. This included reacting to the changes that have occurred but also preparing for the following further changes expected in the future:

- Warmer and wetter winters
- Hotter and drier summers
- More frequent and intense weather extremes
- Increased sea-level rise

6.6 The review panel noted that due to the scale of climate change Blackpool, as with everywhere else in the UK, could not fully address all the risks associated with climate change but could ensure that there was a better ability to guard against them.

6.7 A Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) had been conducted. The first phase of this had been to identify the risk through engaging with Council services and its Wholly Owned Companies (WOC). This exercise had identified the following over-arching risks;

- Risks to human health, wellbeing and productivity
- Increased disruption to services delivery
- Increased demand for services
- Damage to infrastructure
- Increased costs

6.8 Following this the second phase of the CRVA had been to prioritise the identified risk and the third phases had been to develop an action plan. This was undertaken in consultation with key officers to identify actions that would help build resilience and

address the risks identified.

- 6.9 Work was already underway in some areas to build resilience, such as the planned improved coastal defences and the current review of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy agreed in 2019.
- 6.10 Challenges to Climate Adaptation were also identified in the uncertainties in climate projections, limited resources and the shared responsibilities of addressing climate change.
- 6.11 The review panel had been provided with a copy of the draft action plan as part of the meeting agenda. It was noted that a substantial number of actions had red impact scores, demonstrating the severity of the risk posed. This highlighted the level of work needed to improve resilience in Blackpool, and the need for the Council to show leadership within the town on the issue of climate change. A key part of this would be community engagement with the work taking place and education on the benefits that climate adaptation work would bring.
- 6.12 Tree planting and other measures to improve the porosity of the town centre were noted as being an important high profile benefit to the community, through recognised improvements in public health and wellbeing green spaces created, in addition to their climate change adaptation benefits. It was important therefore that the Council showed that this had been the case and demonstrated how and why money was being spent on climate adaptation and the beneficial outcomes for the community.
- 6.13 Members also discussed the management of waste by the council and its WOC, Enveco. It was explained that the company had been exploring the separation of food waste and how this could be used in a way beneficial to Blackpool. Opportunities included the use of food waste as compost for residents and the use of waste in energy generation.
- 6.14 The importance of the buy-in from all Council services was recognised, with Members expressing support for the engagement of all departments in ensuring Climate Adaptation was considered in their planning going forward.
- 6.15 Mr Butterfield also highlighted that Members and the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee in particular should ensure that there is adequate challenge in relation to the information included in all Council reports in relation to climate change. It was noted that all reports had a "Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations" section and members should ensure information provided is sufficient where the issues are relevant to either Climate Adaptation or Climate Mitigation.
- 6.16 The engagement of the business community was also discussed, with member of the review panel noting that their buy-in of the Council's climate agenda would be essential to ensuring its success. Similarly to engagement with the public it was recognised that

demonstration of the benefits to business of Climate Adaptation and the role they could play in improving Blackpool should be emphasised. It was noted that the Shared Prosperity Fund is now being used to assist with de-carbonisation projects with local businesses within the town, demonstrating what could be achieved through joint working, and that the service had made a request that this also considered prompting businesses to consider adaptive measures

- 6.17 The review panel asked that its support for the Climate Adaptation work being undertaken and planned be noted. It was also asked that any comments on the action plan provided as part of the agenda parts be provided to Ms Naylor following the meeting.
- 6.18 Further to this it was agreed that a further update on progress should be sought later in 2024.
- 7.0 **Recommendations**
- 7.1 **That any specific comments on the Climate Adaptation Action Plan be provided to Ms Naylor.**
- 7.2 **That the review panel supports the work being undertaken in relation to Climate Adaptation and encourages engagement by all partners, local businesses and the community with the process.**
- 7.3 **That a further update on the progress of Climate Adaptation work be brought to a future meeting.**
- 7.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No
- 8.0 **List of appendices**
- 8.1 None.
- 9.0 **Financial considerations**
- 9.1 None.
- 10.0 **Legal considerations**
- 10.1 None.
- 11.0 **Risk management considerations**
- 11.1 None.

12.0 Equalities considerations and the impact of this decision for our children and young people

12.1 None.

13.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations

13.1 Covered in the main body of the report.

14.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken

14.1 None.

15.0 Background papers

15.1 None.