



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – CLIMATE CHANGE,
BIODIVERSITY AND CARBON REDUCTION**

MONDAY, 23 MAY 2022

Report of the Executive Director - Place

Embedding Environmental Sustainability in Council Activities

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the ways in which environmental sustainability is embedded in Council activities, policies, and strategies, with a specific focus on climate change considerations.
- 1.2 The report focuses on those measures and activities that are in place, or in development, and are relevant across the whole Council. Therefore, the information provided is not exhaustive, with further examples available at Departmental and Service levels.

2. Information and Analysis

- 2.1 Derbyshire County Council is committed to putting the principles of sustainable development into action in everything the Council does, so that development meets the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Council recognises the impact it has on the environment and society through the delivery of its operations and is committed to protecting the environment by minimising any adverse environmental impact, while creating opportunities for enhancing positive environmental effects to improve the quality of life for people.

2.2 The following sections provide a summary of the measures and activities in place and in development, split into a series of headings, these being:

- Policy and Strategy
- Governance
- Targets, Actions and Reporting
- Communication and Engagement
- Recruitment, Skills, and Training

Policy and Strategy

2.3 To guide delivery of climate change and wider sustainability projects and initiatives across the Council, and when working with its public sector partners, its business supply chain, and the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector, a series of strategic policies and strategies have been approved, which include the following:

- **Corporate Environment Policy:** The Policy sets out the Council's commitment to continual environmental improvement. The Policy is communicated to all employees and contractors working for or on behalf of the County Council.
- **Environmental Management System:** The Place Department has an Environmental Management System (EMS) certified to the international standard BS EN ISO 14001:2015. The EMS is managed and maintained to provide a structured way of managing the significant environmental aspects and impacts of the Council's work in line with the Council Plan and the Corporate Environment Policy.
- **Derbyshire County Council Climate Change Strategy: Achieving Net Zero (2021-2025):** The Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 14 October 2021 (Minute No. 166/21 refers) and published shortly thereafter. The Strategy commits the Council to playing its role in delivering Net Zero buildings, expanding local renewable energy generation, changing transport choices, generating green jobs, and preventing waste being sent to landfill. The Strategy covers the period 2021-25 and will be reviewed and updated fully in 2025 to provide a Strategy beyond 2025.
- **Sustainable Procurement Policy:** This Policy sets out how the Council will achieve value for money and deliver environmental, social, and economic benefits through the procurement and

commissioning of goods, works and services. The Policy is due to be presented to Cabinet for approval in June 2022. The Policy aims to embed good practice in sustainable procurement in day-to-day working and as part of the procurement process, and assist in measuring, understanding, monitoring, and promoting positive environmental, social and economic impacts from procurement activities.

- **Single Use Plastics (SUP) Policy:** The Council's SUP Policy was approved by Cabinet on 14 October 2021 (Minute No. 167/21 refers). The Policy sets out the Council's commitment to remove the use of SUP in its operations and services where practical and to reduce the use of SUP where its use cannot be avoided. An action plan has been drafted and is due to be presented to the Corporate Management Team for approval in May 2022. The action plan will support the implementation and monitoring of this policy, with targets to be agreed.
- **Climate Change Risks, Adaptation and Resilience:** Work has commenced to establish and assess the risks facing the Council and the services it delivers from the changing climate, for example, the impacts associated with an increased frequency of heatwaves and heavy rainfall events. This will help to inform the actions that need to be taken within the Council to adapt and build resilience to the risks. Although this work is not expected to deliver a formal strategy or policy, the outcomes (to be developed over the next nine months) will be incorporated within corporate and departmental-level plans and processes.

Governance

- 2.4 The approach to reducing emissions from the Council's estate and operations, and across the County, and the priority actions presented in the Strategy, have implications for all Council departments. As such, a clear governance and delivery structure has been established. The governance structure is shown in Figure 1.

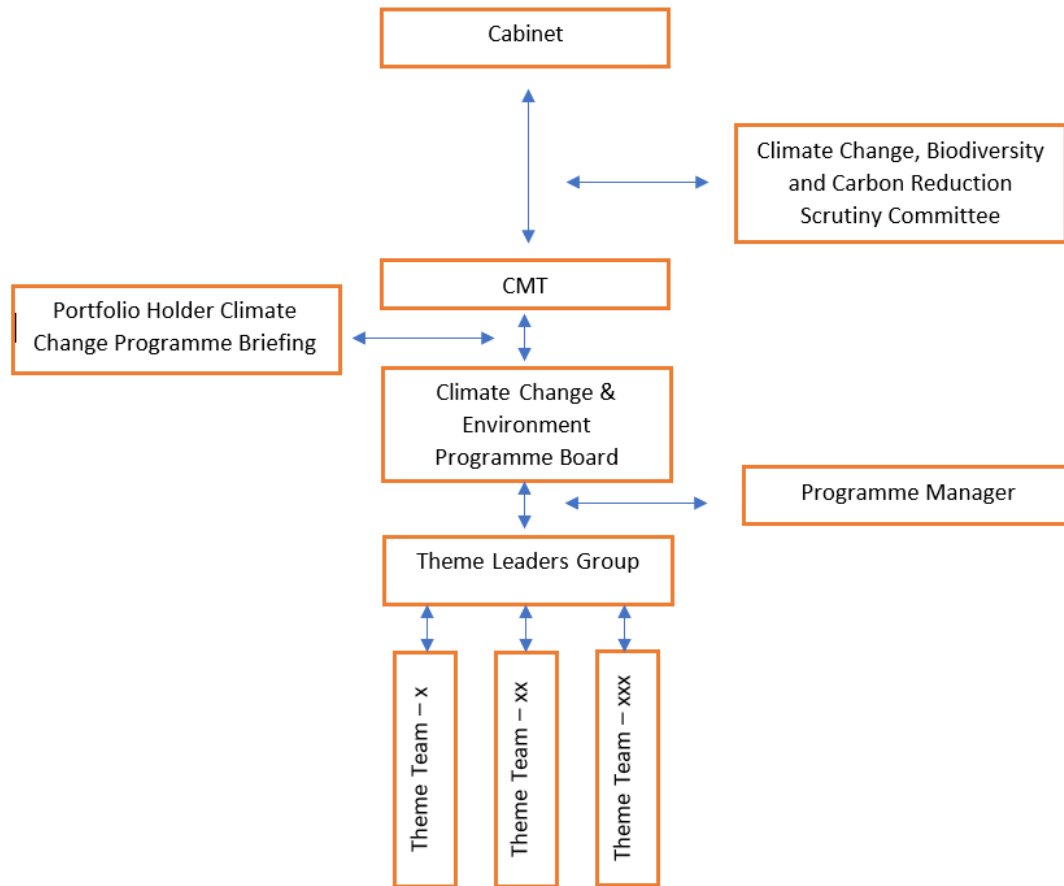


Figure 1: Derbyshire County Council Climate Change Governance Structure

2.5 A Climate Change and Environment Programme Board (CCEPB) has been established to provide strategic oversight and direction for the delivery of the climate change programme within the Council. The Board's primary purpose is to ensure the successful delivery of the programme's outcomes, and to provide assurance that the programme is aligned with the Climate Change Strategy and is delivering the required outcomes.

2.6 To deliver the actions and priorities within the Climate Change Strategy, a series of 12 Theme Leads have been established, these being:

- Derbyshire County Council property and estate
- Procurement
- Highways
- Fleet
- Schools
- External transport and travel
- Low carbon economy
- Planning

- Internal engagement and training
- External engagement
- Natural Capital
- Waste

2.7 Theme Leads are senior Council officers who are responsible for overseeing the climate change projects and activities relevant to their strategic theme. A Theme Leaders Group, comprising of the Theme Leads, and the Climate Change Programme Manager, coordinates activities across the themes, and the Programme Manager provides the link between the Theme Leaders Group and the CCEPB.

Targets, Actions and Reporting

2.8 In addition to the strategies and policies summarised above, climate change and wider environmental sustainability measures and deliverables are included within the Council Plan and Service Plans. This helps to ensure sustainability is firmly embedded within corporate decision making, performance management and reporting.

2.9 For example, deliverables and measures within the Council Plan include the following items, which are closely monitored and reported on at a corporate level:

Deliverables i.e. projects and services:

- Reduced carbon emissions from Council property and vehicles, street lighting and procurement.
- Developed and commenced implementation of a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan which sets out priorities to reduce the County's carbon emissions.
- Explored initiatives to tackle climate change including low carbon local energy generation schemes and working with partners to provide further publicly accessible electric vehicle charge points.
- Developed and delivered a strategic approach to sustainable travel and transport across the County, including the promotion of cycling and walking

Measure, i.e. performance target to measure the impact of the Deliverables:

- Percentage reduction in carbon emissions from Council land and operations from 2010 baseline.

- 2.10 Similar environmental sustainability deliverables and measures also exist within Departmental Service Plans. In order to ensure robust carbon reduction targets are embedded within corporate reporting and Departmental Service Plans, emissions data modelling and analysis is currently underway to establish annual emissions reduction targets for the Council's corporate property, street lighting, core fleet and grey fleet mileage. This modelling is due for completion in 2022-23.
- 2.11 Ensuring effective and timely delivery of the Council's Climate Change Strategy is central to the successful delivery of the Council's Net Zero ambitions and helps to ensure priorities and performance are understood across the Council. As such, a series of monitoring and reporting processes have been established, as summarised below:
- **Annual Performance Report to Cabinet:** Summarising performance against delivery of the Strategy and the Council's Net Zero targets, as well as outcomes of an annual review of the need to refresh and update the Strategy.
 - **Quarterly Council Plan and Service Plan Reporting:** As part of the reporting requirements associated with the Council Plan and Service Plans, officers report on quarterly basis on a range of climate change deliverables and measures.
 - **Reporting to the Climate Change and Environment Programme Board (CCEPB):** On a quarterly basis, the CCEPB receives a Climate Change Programme Performance Dashboard that provides details on performance against delivery of actions within the Climate Change Strategy.
- 2.12 To help ensure environmental sustainability is embedded within Council decision-making, a section on Environmental Sustainability has been added to the Implications section (Appendix 1) of the Cabinet report template. This prompts report authors and their reviewers to ensure the impact that any recommendation or decision will have on environmental sustainability, and in particular climate change, is fully considered, and to state these impacts within the report. The guidance provided to report authors includes an instruction to engage with the Climate Change Team if further guidance and support is needed.

Communication and Engagement

- 2.13 Environmental sustainability issues, priorities, initiatives, and updates are communicated with Council employees on a regular basis. This is primarily delivered through a fortnightly 'Journey to Net Zero Derbyshire'

(previously 'Go Green Derbyshire') feature in Our Derbyshire – an email newsletter that is distributed to all Council employees with a Council email address.

- 2.14 To further support internal engagement, an Environmental Sustainability Community of Practice (ESCoP) is in place to allow officers to interact to share and promote best practice and build common capability in environmental sustainability across the organisation. The ESCoP meets three times per year to identify linkages and opportunities for collaborative and technical climate change and sustainability projects across the Council, share information and knowledge, highlight challenges and opportunities facing Council departments and services in tackling climate change, and provide constructive feedback to the CCEPB on any environmental sustainability matters relevant to the Council.
- 2.15 Membership of, and attendance at ESCoP meetings, is open to officers working in roles or service areas that have a particular connection with climate change and sustainability, or who have relevant experience or interest and willingness to contribute to the ESCoP.
- 2.16 A Climate Change Engagement Plan has been developed and was approved by the Cabinet Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture and Tourism and Climate Change, and Leader of the Council, Councillor Barry Lewis in December 2021. The Plan sets out how the Council will engage with its communities to establish and agree delivery mechanisms and communicate crucial climate messages and information to Derbyshire's residents and businesses. A small number of relevant actions from the Climate Change Strategy have been identified to begin the detailed engagement process, with further relevant actions being delivered on a rolling basis as part of delivery of the Climate Change Strategy. Although focussed on external engagement, the Plan establishes the mechanisms for climate change engagement and the format and processes for messaging and communication.

Recruitment, Skills and Training

- 2.17 To emphasise the need for all employees to contribute to tackling climate change it is now included in all new posts within the Council, as a 'General Responsibility' within all Job and Person Profiles (JPPs) developed as part of the recruitment process. Depending on the grade of the post, the wording included states that the post must contribute to/promote and role model the Council's corporate responsibility in relation to climate change by considering the environmental impact of

individual and collective actions, working to reduce resource and energy use, minimise waste, and anticipate and enhance the efficiency of services in response to a changing climate.

2.18 To ensure that officers and Elected Members have the knowledge, skills and understanding to implement environmental sustainability within their role, a series of training sessions modules have been developed, with others in development. These can be summarised as the following.

- **Introductory e-learning unit (30 minutes):** As set out as a priority action in the Council's Climate Change Strategy, this introductory climate change training module is to form a mandatory part of the induction process for all employees to strengthen knowledge of carbon emissions, climate resilience and net zero development. The module is also being actively promoted to existing employees.
- **Climate Change - Everybody's Business (2 hours):** A two-hour training module has been developed, suitable for both officers and Elected Members. This session provides attendees with an understanding of the science of climate change and the likely changes in global and local climates, and the key actions which need to be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. These sessions are delivered every two months and are open to all officers, with separate Elected Member sessions delivered upon demand.
- **Carbon Literacy Training (8 hours):** Full certified Carbon Literacy Training is available for Elected Members and officers with a specific climate change focus.
- **Bite-size e-learning units (in development):** A series of short (maximum 30 minute) stand-alone online training modules are in development. These will be made available to any interested officers to undertake to increase their level of knowledge and understanding. Module subjects are to include the science of climate change, impacts of climate change and climate change adaptation.
- **Training Sheets for Specific Services (in development):** To ensure those Council employees without a Council email address are given the opportunity to increase their level of knowledge around environmental sustainability and to understand the action being taken by the Council in this area, a series of downloadable training sheets are in development, focussing on specific job roles, for example, school catering staff.

3. Consultation

3.1 N/A.

4. Alternative Options Considered

4.1 N/A.

5. Implications

5.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

6. Background Papers

6.1 N/A.

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1 – Implications

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- a) Notes the ways in which environmental sustainability is embedded in Council activities, policies, and strategies, with a specific focus on climate change considerations, as set out in this report.
- b) Acknowledges that the information provided within this report is not exhaustive, with further examples available at a Departmental and Service level.

9. Reason for Recommendations

9.1 To ensure the Committee understands and supports the measures in place to embed environmental sustainability in Council activities, policies, and strategies. This will help ensure the Council continues to recognise the impact it has on the environment and society through the delivery of its operations and continue the commitment to protecting the environment by minimising any adverse environmental impact, while creating opportunities for enhancing positive environmental effects to improve the quality of life for people.

Report Author: **Caroline Toplis** **Contact details:** **Caroline.Toplis@derbyshire.gov.uk**

Implications

Financial

- 1.1 Some of the ways in which environmental sustainability is embedded in Council activities, policies and strategies may have financial implications for the Council. These are considered on a project-by-project basis.

Legal

- 2.1 Some of the ways in which environmental sustainability is embedded in Council activities, policies and strategies may have legal implications for the Council. These are considered on a project-by-project basis.

Human Resources

- 3.1 Some of the ways in which environmental sustainability is embedded in Council activities, policies and strategies may have Human Resources implications for the Council. These are considered on a project-by-project basis.

Information Technology

- 4.1 Some of the ways in which environmental sustainability is embedded in Council activities, policies and strategies may have Information Technology implications for the Council. These are considered on a project-by-project basis.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Some of the ways in which environmental sustainability is embedded in Council activities, policies and strategies may have Equalities Impact implications for the Council. These are considered on a project-by-project basis.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 The ways in which environmental sustainability is embedded in Council activities, policies and strategies support the Council's ambition to be a net zero organisation by 2032, or sooner, and for the county to be net zero by 2050.

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental, Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

7.1 Environmental Sustainability

Embedding environmental sustainability in Council activities, policies and strategies will improve the environmental sustainability of the Council and the County and in particular, will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

7.2 Some of the ways in which environmental sustainability is embedded in Council activities, policies and strategies may have other implications for the Council. These are considered on a project-by-project basis.