

PUBLIC

**MINUTES** of a meeting of **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – CLIMATE CHANGE, BIODIVERSITY AND CARBON REDUCTION** held on Monday, 13 February 2023 at Committee Room 1, County Hall, Matlock.

## **PRESENT**

Councillor W Major (in the Chair)

Councillors B Bingham, S Bull, A Clarke, M Ford, G Kinsella and D Taylor.

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillor R Redfern, A Hayes and T Kemp.

Officers present: Joe Battye (Director - Economy & Regeneration), David Beard (Head of Projects), Rupert Casey (Assistant Director - Climate Change and Environment), Andrew Marsh (Head of Employment and Skills (Place)), Juliette Normington (Democratic Services Officer) and Caroline Toplis (Programme Manager - Climate Change).

### **1/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **2/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED** – to confirm the non-exempt minutes of the meeting of the Improvement & Scrutiny – Climate Change, Biodiversity and Carbon Reduction committee held on 28 November 2022.

### **3/23 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

#### **Question from Keith Venables:**

In the DCC climate change strategy achieving net zero 2021 -2025, which was signed off in October 2021, section 9.0 Monitoring and Reporting, states the following:

- Publishing annually the progress on reducing emissions across each action area set out in the Strategy, how this contributes to the national emissions inventory sectors and national target and how this has been achieved.
- Seeking to develop five-yearly delivery plans with sector specific emissions reduction targets and report against their progress.

So has the report for 21-22 been published and if so what progress has been made? and have 5 year delivery plans been made and if so again what progress has been made?

**Response from the Chairman of the Committee:**

Thank you for your question, Mr Venables.

The Derbyshire County Council Climate Change Strategy: Annual Review of Progress for 2021-22 was presented to Cabinet on 12 January 2023 and can be found [here](#). This gives an overview of the progress in delivering the Climate Change Strategy: Achieving Net Zero plus an update on wider climate change initiatives including climate adaptation and natural capital.

The Council's Climate Change Delivery Plan is based around the 32 priority actions set out in the Climate change Strategy. These are monitored and reported quarterly through the Climate Change Performance Dashboard and then reviewed and updated in full as part of the annual review. Sector specific emissions reduction targets are reflected in the targets within the strategy and are largely based on national targets and data. They are also reviewed and reported annually. Any delivery plans are also produced by the Council service leading on delivery of the target. For instance our transport team have produced the Bus Service Improvement Plan which can be found [here](#) and the forward programme for delivering the Low emissions Vehicles Infrastructure Strategy is shortly to be presented to Cabinet.

4/23

**THE COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE GROWTH OF LOW CARBON SKILLS, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

Joe Battye, Director of Economy and Regeneration introduced the report together with Councillor Tony King and Andrew Marsh, Head of Employment and Skills (Place). The report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and provided an overview of the Council's role in the growth of low carbon skills, employment, and training in Derbyshire. It was accompanied by a presentation that gave more detail on the key work programmes currently being delivered.

The report set out the strategic context faced by the Council which had a multi-faceted role to play. As Facilitator, it was bringing together key partners, identifying issues, delivering programmes and offering funding through schemes such the Green Entrepreneurs. Twelve themes had been established to develop, implement, manage and monitor delivery plans however the main focus was on schools, low carbon economy, internal engagement and training and external engagement. Much had

already been achieved, with the Council continuing to develop the county-wide green narrative, being mindful of existing sectors and the skills base, greening and decarbonising jobs.

Councillor King reinforced the narrative around education and skills with work being done to put together an accredited qualification for the people of Derbyshire. Great strides had been made with green initiatives and around the hydrogen agenda – changes were radical and outcomes would be seen in the near future.

Committee members welcomed the report and the work being done. The apparent low number of 77 gaining employment was explained in that just 187 of the total stated were seeking actual employment, with the remainder seeking different types of support. The Council was speaking with businesses but it had to be recognised that it had little influence or control of private business.

Officers agreed to publish good news stories around Green Entrepreneurs in the regular electoral update. The next Strategy update would focus on how to engage with small businesses.

**RESOLVED** to note the approach being taken to the Council's role in the growth of low carbon skills, employment and training.

**5/23**

### **CLIMATE CHANGE PERFORMANCE REPORTING - 2022-2023 Q3**

Caroline Toplis, Programme Manager – Climate Change introduced the report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting and presented the Climate Change Programme Dashboard for Quarter 3 2022-2023. The Dashboard had been developed to provide details on performance against delivery of the Council's Climate Change Strategy: Achieving Net Zero (2021-2025) (the 'Strategy').

The report was accompanied by a presentation that highlighted the key points. It was noted that no priority actions had been allocated and the focus areas being concentrated on being:

- Council estate and operations;
- Low carbon economy – a lot of work was being done around skills alongside the D2N2 LEP;
- Decarbonising the domestic sector – using avenues such as signposting;
- Transport, travel and infrastructure – funding had been secured and emphasis was being placed on improving access to charging points; and
- Waste – a great deal of work was being undertaken with district

and borough councils.

Steps were being taken to bring the 15 Review-rated actions back on track, in particular those that had the potential for the biggest negative impact on achieving net zero. Many of the 27 targets in the Strategy were outside the direct control of the Council, with progress being reviewed annually. Interim targets were introduced where possible and would be reviewed again in Autumn 2023.

Committee posed a number of questions. No date was available for the publication date of the Local Energy Plan however it was imminent. Concerns were expressed around the scoring of some of the actions provided; these were taken on board by officers. The retro-fitting and carbon reduction of homes was currently influenced by what was available locally.

The Committee agreed to look into how to further reduce emissions and 'the grey fleet'; these would be included to the Committee's work programme.

**RESOLVED** to note the content of the Climate Change Programme Dashboard detailed in Appendix 2.

6/23

### **PROGRESS REPORT FOR PROPERTY DECARBONISATION - REVIEW OF CARBON REDUCTION TARGETS**

David Beard, Head of Projects introduced the report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting and provided progress on the targets to decarbonise the Council's estate. It included a review of the targets in the Climate Change Strategy (the Strategy) and the subsequent development of additional or enhanced targets by Corporate Property.

Some elements of the report were highlighted:

- Target T2 – procurement of 100% renewable electricity would not be met however, measures to reduce electricity demand would reduce the base carbon footprint.
- Target T3 – to reduce emissions from heating buildings to less than 700tCO<sub>2</sub>e. Interpreted as a reduction of 90%, it was noted that that level was not possible. The Committee was directed to Section 2.7 of the report where the adjusted figure included the procurement of green energy and other offsetting measures. The Strategy targets had been superseded by new annual emissions targets.
- Target T4 from the Strategy - for microgeneration of energy from

renewable sources on corporate buildings. It was expected that this target would be achieved and exceeded five-fold.

The report and supporting illustrative slides were very much welcomed by the Committee. Committee members posed questions around the type of solar panels available and potential sites for small discreet farms in Derbyshire.

**RESOLVED to:**

1. Endorse the proposed targets; and
2. Support the proposed strategy for the decarbonisation of corporate property.

**7/23**

**WORK PROGRAMME (VERBAL UPDATE)**

Members were invited to submit future items for the work programme for the remainder of 2022/23 and into 2023/24.

The Chair had met with representatives of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust who were undertaking some very important biodiversity work. It was agreed that they should be invited to attend the next meeting to discuss their work. Other topics proposed for future meetings were electric vehicle programmes and to facilitate zero emissions and the Local Energy Plan.

**RESOLVED to:**

1. Invite representatives of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to attend the meeting in May; and
2. To update the work programme to include consideration of the electric vehicle programmes and to facilitate zero emissions and the Local Energy Plan.

The meeting finished at 4.06 pm