

Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	15 January 2020
Title of Report:	Declaration on Climate Emergency
Lead Member:	Councillor Sue Dann (Cabinet Member for Environment and Streetscene)
Lead Strategic Director:	Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place)
Author:	Paul Barnard, Service Director for Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Kat Deeney, Head of Environmental Planning, Strategic Planning & Infrastructure
Contact Email:	Kathryn.deeney@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	200115 Climate Emergency Report_Scrutiny
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To update the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress with the Motion on Notice agreed at its meeting on 18 March 2019 in relation to the declaration on climate change:

1. Declare a 'Climate Emergency'.
2. Pledge to make Plymouth carbon neutral by 2030, and commit to working with other councils with similar ambitions.
3. Request the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible; and commit to working with other councils with similar ambitions.
4. Work with other governments (both within the UK and internationally) to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5°C.
5. Continue to work with partners across the city and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans.
6. Report to Full Council within six months with a climate emergency action plan and new corporate carbon reduction plan.
7. Request the Leader to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer stating the concern of the Council with respect to the above, the likely national impact on the economy and on the wellbeing of citizens, and requesting Government funding be made available to implement swift appropriate actions in response.

Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Note the progress that has been made since the declaration on climate emergency.
Reason: To acknowledge that action has already been taken by the City Council and its partners since the Motion on Notice agreed at the meeting held on 18 March 2019 (Minute 89 refers).
2. Support and endorse the Corporate Carbon Reduction Action Plan 2019-2024.
Reason: To set the direction of travel for the decarbonisation of City Council services and activities, encourage the submission of funding bids to deliver the commitments set out in the plan, and to facilitate stakeholder engagement for further revisions to the plan.
3. Support and endorse the 2019 Climate Emergency Action Plan.
Reason: To set the direction of travel for the decarbonisation of Plymouth, encourage the submission of funding bids to deliver the commitments set out in the plan, and to facilitate stakeholder engagement for further revisions to the plan.
4. Support an annual review of the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan 2019-2024 and Climate Emergency Action Plan by the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Reason: To enable a detailed review of the commitments and actions contained in the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan 2019-2024 and 2019 Climate Emergency Action Plan by the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a view to making recommendations to the Cabinet for its yearly review of each plan.

Alternative options considered and rejected

To not prepare a report in response to the Motion on Notice – This was rejected because this would not meet the expressed wishes of the City Council in approving the Declaration of Climate Emergency Motion on Notice agreed at the meeting held on 18 March 2019.

To delay preparation of a report in response to the Motion on Notice – This was rejected as the document will continually evolve over time and although further work is necessary to undertake business planning and identify the resources needed to implement all the commitments set out in the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan and the Climate Emergency Plan any delay in continuing to take action would itself be inconsistent with the expressed wishes of the City Council in approving the Declaration of Climate Emergency Motion on Notice agreed at the meeting held on 18 March 2019.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

There are a total of 14 references to climate change in the Plymouth Plan. The Plymouth Plan includes “A Green City” theme which contains numerous references to topics of relevance to the climate emergency, and sets a clear golden thread setting out the agenda to run through the whole plan. Climate Change issues are already embedded within the Plymouth Plan, including references in the “Growing City” theme showing that the plan is attempting to balance growth with climate emergency. Bearing in mind that the Plymouth Plan is a plan which was designed to be short and succinct, summarising strategic approaches to key issues, it is notable that there is a whole policy devoted to climate change: “Policy GRO7 - Reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change” which sets out a range of measures based around the aim to halve carbon emissions on 2005 levels by 2034. Given the Declaration of a Climate Emergency, as the Climate Emergency Action Plan is developed further to reflect the desire to move towards carbon neutrality by 2030, this may necessitate considering an early review of the Plymouth Plan and/or Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan.

The actions being proposed in this report are consistent with the themes and values of the Corporate Plan 2018-2022.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan and Climate Emergency Action Plan both set out the strategic direction and necessary focus for the Council and its partners in relation to climate change issues for the 11 years of the emergency, with a detailed focus on the next two years. As both the documents are strategic in nature the finance and resourcing implications will be assessed against each individual action as they are progressed. As the Corporate Plan starts to take shape the Council will need to consider the financial implications arising from the delivery. Budgets will need to be reassessed and capacity released to enable delivery. It is proposed to set aside a small sum in next year's budget to be used to fund some of the start up work not already funded. It should be noted that a number of the actions are already in place with funding secured either through the use of existing budgets or externally generated.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

Plymouth's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in 2016 were 1,164 ktCO₂e. Between 2008 and 2016 emission fell 26%. However, much of the reduction was in the power sector which benefits from national renewable electricity production. If the power sector is excluded, GHG emissions fell 3% between 2008 and 2016 but emissions and rose 4% between 2011 and 2016. The dominant sectors in 2016 (83% of emissions) were buildings (31%), transport (28%) and power (23%). Projections show that in the absence of any carbon reduction policy GHG emissions in Plymouth would rise 19% (to 1,385 ktCO₂e) in 2050.

Climate science is clear that to a close approximation, the eventual extent of global warming is proportional to the total amount of carbon dioxide that human activities add to the atmosphere. So, in order to stabilise climate change, CO₂ emissions need to fall to zero. The longer it takes to do so, the more the climate will change. Emissions of other greenhouse gases also need to be constrained. In the Paris Agreement, governments agreed to keep global warming 'well below' 2 degrees Celsius, and to 'make efforts' to keep it below 1.5°C. The UN Environment Deputy Executive Director Joyce Msuya stated - *"The science is clear; for all the ambitious climate action we've seen – governments need to move faster and with greater urgency."*

The Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan and the Climate Emergency Action Plan will drive the efforts to ensure Plymouth is playing its part in meeting net zero carbon by 2030 and will therefore have a very positive environmental outcome.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

The report recommits the City Council to promote a fairer, more equal Plymouth by investing in communities, putting citizens at the heart of decision making, promoting independence and reducing health and social inequality. By embedding this commitment within the next Corporate Plan the City Council is acknowledging the importance of ensuring all communities have an opportunity to thrive in a zero carbon world.

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	CEAP & CCRP Scrutiny Update Report							
B	Climate Emergency Action Plan							
C	Carbon Reduction Plan							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Carbon Neutral Plymouth - Centre For Energy And The Environment, University of Exeter (October 2019)							

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Paul Barnard, Service Director for Strategic Planning & Infrastructure											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 07/01/2020											
Cabinet Member approval: <i>Approved by Councillor Sue Dann</i>											
Date approved: 07/01/2020											