

ANGUS COUNCIL

ANGUS COUNCIL – 17 OCTOBER 2019

PUBLIC BODIES' CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES: ANGUS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES

ABSTRACT

This report relates to the period 2018/19, giving an overview of Angus Council's compliance with its climate change duties, with measures to improve performance relating to sustainability and climate change.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) approves the contents of this report in accordance with the Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) Scotland) Order 2015;
- (ii) agrees the content of the report for submission to the Scottish Government and notes the progress that the Council has made in embedding climate change and sustainability into its policy and operations.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COUNCIL LOCAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017 2030:

- An inclusive and sustainable economy
- A reduced carbon footprint
- An enhanced, protected and enjoyed natural and built environment

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As members will be aware, Angus Council has duties under Section 44 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and to contribute to reducing Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions; to contribute to helping Scotland adapt to a changing climate; and to act in the way that it considers most sustainable. The Act gave the Scottish Ministers powers to require public bodies to report on their compliance with these duties, using a standardised on-line report template to ensure consistency between bodies and over time. Angus Council submitted its first mandatory report in November 2016, covering the period 2015/16.

4. CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The report template covers the following mandatory topics: profile of reporting body; governance, management and strategy; emissions, targets and projects; adaptation; procurement; validation. Recommended topics relating to wider influence across the Council area are: wider impact and influence on greenhouse gas emissions; other notable reportable activity. The report is largely retrospective, scrutinising performance over the period 2018/19.

A summary of seven key areas scrutinised in the report is provided below, outlining the main strengths and weaknesses of the Council's work:

Profile;

An initial overview of the Council's scale sets the context for the wider report.

Governance, management and strategy;

This section includes an outline of how the Climate Change Member Officer Group and three supporting working groups operate. It also contains a comprehensive list of policy documents and action plans further showing how Services and officers are working to embed climate change consideration across the board. Also covered are findings of a corporate self-assessment which examined how prepared Angus Council was to meet national climate change targets for 2020, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Recommendations included finalising the new draft Carbon Management Plan, ensuring that climate change is embedded in the Corporate Risk Register, strengthening sustainable procurement and pursuing production of a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan.

Emissions, targets and projects;

Since the baseline year of 2010/11, Angus Council's carbon emissions from electricity, gas, oil, LPG and biomass use in buildings has decreased by 41%. Since the previous report on period 2017/18, there was a further 16% reduction in carbon emissions from buildings. Street lighting continues to make significant strides with carbon emissions now down by over 70% since 2010/11.

The shift from landfilling waste to using energy from waste facilities resulted in waste greenhouse gases falling by 74% in 2018 compared with the previous year. In addition to this the Council has the lowest tonnage of waste going to landfill in Scotland.

In 2018/19 there was significant investment in renewable energy projects with three new photo voltaic projects completed at the Digital Reprographics Unit (IT data centre), Bruce House and Montrose Sports Centre. All three projects are due to payback in less than 10 years and will reduce energy consumption by approx. 15.5% across the three sites. The councils SALIX Recycling Fund was used to fund all three projects.

From the baseline year of 2010/11, this reporting year of 2018/19 has seen the Council's overall CO2 emissions decrease by 23%. A truer reflection of change comes from year 2012/13 when the full CO2 emissions data set became available. It can be seen as the first year of good quality data and realises a 47% decrease in the Council's overall CO2 emissions.

Adaptation;

Adaptation seeks to lower the risks posed by the consequences of climatic changes. Action in 2018/19 included ongoing policy delivery such as the Local Development Plan's policies on managing flood risk, water quality and greenspace enhancement. Partnership work to mitigate against urban, coastal, river and estuary flood management continues. Montrose Bay is one of five Super Sites under the Scottish Government's Dynamic Coast project. The project uses innovative mapping and modelling tools to establish the effects of climate change on our coastline.

Large scale forestry and natural flood management, delivered in partnership by agencies and landowners including Scottish Forestry, aims to reduce peak flows and increase upland water storage. In the upland areas of Angus, Glens Clova and Doll, a 165 Ha (£3.2million) contour tree planting project is in progress. In addition efforts continue to strategic approach to adaptation including embedding adaptation in corporate and community risk registers.

Procurement;

Sustainable procurement is recognised by both the Council and the Procurement Team as an important issue. A Sustainable Procurement Working Group was established in 2016, however, due to staff resources and other Service priority changes, plans to develop a Sustainable Procurement Plan have not been taken forward.

Validation;

The report has been scrutinised by the Climate Change Member Officer Group and supporting working groups on Carbon Emissions, Adaptation and Sustainability. In order to monitor the links to the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, updates on activity and performance will be tabled at the Community Planning Partnership board annually.

Recommended reporting on area wide issues;

Angus Council controls only a small percentage of greenhouse gas emissions across the whole of the Council area, however, it can indirectly support and encourage change by working with Community Planning Partners. The issue of emissions outwith the Council control is still under development at a national level.

In this section, work with the wider community such as work on circular economy, fuel poverty, the Smarter Choices Smarter Places active travel programme and ultimately the Sustainable Energy Climate Action Plan can be reported on annually.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the terms of this report.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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List of Appendices:

Appendix1: Public Sector Climate Change Duties 2019 Summary Report: Angus Council