

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 27 NOVEMBER 2018

PUBLIC BODIES' CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES: ANGUS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF COMMUNITIES, PLACE

ABSTRACT

This report relates to the period 2017/18, 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(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) approves the contents of this report in accordance with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009
- (ii) agrees the content of the report for submission to the Scottish Government and notes the progress that directorates have made in embedding climate change and sustainability into their 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

As members will be aware, Angus Council has duties under Section 44 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 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

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 2017/18. The overall picture is positive, with strong and sustained reduction in greenhouse gases, also demonstrating action to strengthen governance in relation to climate change and embed it in policy. Sustainable procurement continues to compare less favourably, with more corporate commitment and resource required to reach a similarly high standard.

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

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 new 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 production and delivery of actions plans on adaptation, carbon reduction and sustainable procurement, with all three contributing to the production of a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan.

Emissions, targets and projects;

Since the baseline year of 2010/11, Angus Council's carbon footprint from electricity and gas use in buildings has decreased by about 20%. Since the previous report on period 2016/17, overall emissions have decreased by just under 4%.

The Council continues to implement carbon reduction projects, particularly LED lighting and control replacement. The installation of 2,900 LED street lighting units over the last year helped to cut lighting energy use by 15% and carbon emissions by 671 tonnes. Changes to how emissions are calculated meant that significant reductions in landfilling of waste were masked by an increase in the tonnes of carbon generated. This reflects the relatively new and evolving methodology of carbon accountancy.

The Council is also invested in the installation of a number of large-scale photo voltaic schemes in buildings that help achieve the best potential for off-setting electricity with its higher carbon emissions factor. The year 2017/18 was 5.5% colder than the previous year and 3.5% colder than the 20 year average and this is reflected in the 5% increase in gas use.

Adaptation;

Adaptation seeks to lower the risks posed by the consequences of climatic changes. Action in 2017/18 included policy work such as the Local Development Plan's policies on managing flood risk and partnership working to mitigate against coastal, river and estuary flood management. Treatment of Invasive Non-Native Species during 2017/18, particularly along river corridors has helped to reduce soil erosion in high spate events, thereby increasing the stability of the river bank during severe weather events. The main opportunity for further development remains in producing a strategic approach to adaptation, 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 and the working group is not currently in operation.

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 out-with the Council control is still under development at a national level. The latest data available shows that CO₂ emissions per capita in the Council area decreased by 28% between 2005 and 2015, due to changes in the national electricity mix, improved energy and fuel efficiency and changes to

agricultural and industrial practices. In this section, work with the wider community such as work on fuel poverty, the Sustainable Local Food Strategy, the Smarter Choices Smarter Places active travel programme, local energy generation and the work of Angus Environment Trust are highlighted.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

8. CONSULTATION

The Strategic Directors of People and Place and the Head of Finance and Legal have been consulted in the preparation 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 Bodies' Duties Report 2017/18