

ANGUS COUNCIL

ANGUS COUNCIL – 4 NOVEMBER 2021

PUBLIC BODIES' CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES: ANGUS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT BY INTERIM DIRECTOR OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

ABSTRACT

This report relates to the period 2020/21, 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 Committee:

- (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 (Appendix 1) 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;
- (iii) Approves the annual production of a Public Bodies Duty Report summary report (Appendix 2) to be housed on the Angus Council website and used for wider communication purposes.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COUNCIL PLAN

- 2.1 Climate change underpins all Council activity and specifically contributes to the priorities in the Angus Council Plan, which are:

Economy: We want Angus to be a go-to are for business

- Make Angus a low-carbon, sustainable area

Place: We want our communities to be strong, resilient and led by citizens

- Continue to reduce the council's carbon footprint with the aim of reducing our net carbon emissions to zero by 2045

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 and other notable reportable activity. The report is largely retrospective, scrutinising performance over the period 2020/21.

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 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 carried out in June 2019 which examined how prepared Angus Council was to meet national climate change targets and identified strengths and areas for improvement. The 2020/21 self-assessment exercise was not carried out due to the Covid19 pandemic. Recommendations in 2019, many of which are still ongoing, included production of an Angus Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan, ensuring that climate change is embedded in the Corporate Risk Register, strengthening sustainable procurement, finalising the new draft Carbon Management Plan and exploring the fleet management contract to determine how sustainable, strategic support service can be provided.

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 49%. Since the previous report on period 2019/20, there was a further 8.8% reduction in carbon emissions from buildings. Street lighting continues to make significant strides with carbon emissions now down by 82% since 2010/11.

During 2020/21, Covid-19 affected planned building related energy efficiency projects. However, some internal LED lighting projects were completed. Projects were funded from a capital budget bid and are due to payback in 5.5 years

From the baseline year of 2010/11, this reporting year of 2020/21 has seen the Council's overall CO2 emissions decrease by 34%. A truer reflection of change comes from year 2012/13 when the full CO2 emissions data set became available. It is the first year of good quality data and realises a 55% decrease in the Council's overall CO2 emissions.

In 2019 Angus Council had the second highest household recycling rate in Scotland at 59.1% and sent the second lowest amount of waste to landfill of any Scottish authority at only 5.1 tonnes. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) calculated the carbon Impact (TCO2e) at 100,813. 2020 waste data cannot be verified by SEPA until December 2021 thus cannot be confirmed for the 2020/21 reporting period.

A review of recycling centre provision in Angus and the resultant removal of general waste skips from four out of seven recycling centres in February 2019 resulted in a significant increase in the recycling rate achieved, from 52.79% for the year March '18-February '19 to 60.54% for the year March '20-February '21.

Adaptation;

Adaptation seeks to lower the risks posed by the consequences of climatic changes. Action in 2020/21 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 seven 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. Work is ongoing to develop Adaptation & Resilience plans for each site, based on detailed assessments.

Large scale nature-based solutions continue to be developed and delivered including woodland expansion and natural flood management. Delivered in partnership by agencies and landowners including Forestry Scotland this work aims to reduce peak flows and increase upland water storage. In 2020/21 riparian planting and river enhancement at five sites in Glens Clova and Doll was delivered via the Biodiversity Challenge Fund. The River South Esk Catchment Partnership are joining the Cairngorms National Park Authority and partners in a Heritage Lottery Fund project to deliver the £50 million project 'People and Nature Thriving Together'. In 2021/22 the initial phase of nature-based climate focussed projects on the Rivers South Esk, North Esk and Kinnordy Loch catchment, totalling £530,000 were developed. If the final project bid is successful, in 18 months the project will run to 2028.

Procurement;

Sustainable procurement is recognised by both the Council and the Procurement Team as an important issue and has been included in procurement documents where practicable. This will be a standing Agenda item on Corporate Procurement Group. Angus Council Procurement Team

undertake to implement a sustainable procurement plan by end of financial year 21/22.

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 and through delivery of the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan. The issue of emissions out with 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, active travel programmes, nature-based solutions to adaptation and ultimately the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan can be reported on annually.

The Public Bodies Duty Report is a comprehensive technical report. To make the content of the 2020/21 report accessible and useful for communities and partner agencies a summarised version has been produced. The report will be available on the Angus Council Climate Change webpage and will include a link to the full report on the Scottish Government platform.

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:

Appendix 1: Public Sector Climate Change Duties 2021
Appendix 2: Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Summary Report: Angus Council