

AGENDA ITEM NO 9

REPORT NO 349/22

ANGUS COUNCIL

3 NOVEMBER 2022

PUBLIC BODIES' CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES: ANGUS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, DIRECTOR OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES & SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

ABSTRACT

This report relates to the period 2021/22, 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 Council:

- (i) approves the contents of this report in accordance with the Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020;
- (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 Climate Change Duties Report summary report (Appendix 2) to be housed on the Angus Council website and used for wider communication purposes.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

- 2.1 The Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Reporting is aligned to the following place and economy priorities in the Angus Council Plan: 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, and make Angus a low-carbon, sustainable area.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Angus Council has statutory 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 excel template to ensure consistency between bodies and over time.

The Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Order 2015 officially commenced the mandatory annual reporting on compliance with climate change. Angus Council submitted its first mandatory report in November 2016, covering the period 2015/16. In response to the global climate emergency and Scotland's net zero by 2045 target and following public consultation in 2019, the Order was amended in 2020 to include additional annual reporting requirements with effect from 1st April 2021.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The report template covers the following mandatory topics: profile of reporting body; governance, management, and strategy; emissions, targets, and project data; adaptation; procurement; validation and declaration. 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 2021/22.

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 Transition to Net Zero Working Group and subgroups operate, and how climate change action is managed and embedded within the Council. 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.

Emissions, targets and projects

Since the baseline year of 2012/13 to this current reporting year 2021/22, Angus Council's carbon emissions have reduced by -2.5%. The baseline year was originally 2010/11, but 2012/13 was when the full CO₂ emissions data set became available and is the most accurate baseline to measure against.

Scope 1 emissions:

These are direct fuel combustion emissions from sources Angus Council own or control – emissions from buildings (gas, oil, LPG, and biomass) and diesel for fleet vehicles. Since 2012/13 scope 1 emissions have reduced by -12.5%.

Scope 2 emissions:

These are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased electricity that is consumed in Angus Council owned or controlled operations – emissions from buildings, streetlighting and other infrastructure. Since 2012/13 scope 2 emissions have reduced by -65.4%.

Scope 3 emissions:

These are indirect emissions from the value chain, upstream and downstream activities – emissions from business travel, homeworking, waste disposal, recycling, composting, anaerobic digestion and emissions resulting from the transportation and distribution of electricity and water. Since 2012/13 scope 3 emissions have reduced by -79%.

Operational emission reduction targets were added to the report submission as per the recently approved Angus Council - Transition to Net Zero Action Plan 2022 to 2030. The Angus Council operational emission reduction targets are a -75% reduction by 2030, a -90% reduction by 2040 and Net Zero by 2045. The targets are in line with the Scottish Government national targets.

During 2021/22, the essential works backlog from Covid-19, contractor issues and staffing issues affected planned building related energy efficiency projects. However, some LED lighting projects were completed; these projects are due to payback in 4 years.

In 2019 Waste Management removed the non-recyclable waste skips from the smaller recycling centres which increased the recycling rate across recycling centres in Angus. This initiative continues to provide good results, with a recycling centre recycling rate of 64.27% in 2021.

Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation seeks to mitigate the negative impacts of global warming and create climate resilient communities and landscapes.

Nature-based solutions, at many scales, continue to be developed and delivered across Angus. In 2021/22, in both rural and urban areas, Angus Council has worked with communities and wider stakeholders to deliver woodland expansion, natural flood management, grassland regeneration, wetland creation and green network connectivity projects.

The River South Esk Catchment Partnership continues to work with the Cairngorms National Park Authority and partners in a National Lottery Heritage Fund project to deliver the £50 million project 'People and Nature Thriving Together' in three river catchments focussing on Potentially Vulnerable Areas identified in the Tay Estuary and Montrose Basin Local Flood Risk Management Plan.

The Scottish Government Nature Restoration Fund has allowed the development of ambitious nature-based projects from the uplands in the Angus Glens to Angus urban centres. Our 'Strathmore' amenity spaces and wider nature network is being enhanced in partnership with Buglife Scotland as we expand our Space for Nature grassland and pollinator projects.

Action in 2021/22 is linked to ongoing policy delivery such as the Local Development Plan's policies on managing flood risk, water quality and greenspace enhancement and the Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-26. Partnership work to mitigate against urban, coastal, river and estuary flood management continues via the Tay Estuary and Montrose Basin Local Flood Risk Management Plan and at Montrose Bay, via the Scottish Government's Dynamic Coast project.

Procurement

Sustainable Procurement is recognised by both the Council and the Procurement & Commissioning team as an important issue and is included in procurement documents where relevant & proportionate to do so. The Scottish Government regularly publish updated policy documents around this subject with these being actioned as appropriate.

Officers are in the process of revising all templates and guidance documents, along with training for those undertaking procurement activity on behalf of the Council. Sustainable Procurement will be represented as appropriate in reflection of both legislative and corporate requirements.

To support this the officers will support the delivery of appropriate training and guidance to the local supply base also so potential bidders understand what is required from them as part of the process.

All such activities will be reported annually as part of the Annual Procurement Report.

Validation

The report has been validated by the Transition to Net Zero Working Group.

Recommended reporting on area wide issues

In this section wider influence targets are detailed including: partnership working, other notable activity surrounding food & drink, biodiversity, water, active & sustainable travel and sustainability.

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 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

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

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed – see Appendix 3

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 Bodies Climate Change Duties Reporting 2021/22 submission.

Appendix 2: Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Reporting 2021/22 Summary Report.

Appendix 3: Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Reporting 2021/22 EIA.