

ANGUS COUNCIL

ANGUS COUNCIL – 5 NOVEMBER 2020

PUBLIC BODIES' CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES: ANGUS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES

ABSTRACT

This report relates to the period 2019/20, 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 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 to be housed on the Angus Council website and used for wider communication purposes.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COUNCIL PLAN

2.1 This report contributes to the priorities in the Angus Council Plan, which are:

Economy
People
Place and
Our Council.

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 2019/20.

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 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. Recommendations 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 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 44%. Since the previous report on period 2018/19, there was a further 5% reduction in carbon emissions from buildings. Street lighting continues to make significant strides with carbon emissions now down by 78% since 2010/11.

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 65.12% for the year March '19-February '20. The reconfiguration saw the tonnage of recyclate collected increase by 9.41% and general waste reduced by 34.12% over the period.

In 2019/20 there was investment in LED lighting projects. The projects are due to payback in 5 years and will reduce the lighting electricity consumption by approx. 38% across the sites. The councils SALIX Recycling Fund was used to fund the projects.

From the baseline year of 2010/11, this reporting year of 2019/20 has seen the Council's overall CO2 emissions decrease by 27%. 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 50% decrease in the Council's overall CO2 emissions.

Adaptation;

Adaptation seeks to lower the risks posed by the consequences of climatic changes. Action in 2019/20 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 Glens Clova and Doll, a 165 Ha (£3.2million) contour tree planting project is in progress. In November 2019 additional funds for montane planning and river enhancement at five sites in Glens Clova and Doll was secured through the Biodiversity Challenge Fund adding value to ongoing work. Efforts continue to form a 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 and has been included in procurement documents where practicable. 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 and through delivery of the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan. 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, 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 2019/20 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:

Appendix1: Public Sector Climate Change Duties 2020 Summary Report: Angus Council