



REPORT TO: ECONOMIC GROWTH, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE ON 16 FEBRUARY 2021

SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: PUBLIC SECTOR CLIMATE CHANGE REPORTING 2019/20

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the Council's 2019/20 Climate Change report.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (A) (49) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the formulation and review of Council wide policies, strategies, priorities and objectives in standards and levels of service.

2. BACKGROUND

Energy Consumption

- 2.1 The Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Order 2015 requires Public Sector Bodies to publish annual climate change reports. This is intended to demonstrate compliance with Public Sector Bodies' climate change duties, to engage leaders and encourage action.
- 2.2 Moray Council has a duty under Section 44 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to contribute to reducing Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions, contribute to helping Scotland adapt to a changing climate and to act in a way it considers most sustainable. Moray Council submitted its first mandatory report on its Climate Change duties to the Scottish Government in November 2016, covering the period 2015/16 and has subsequently submitted annual reports each November.

3. PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 A copy of the report on the Council's Climate Change duties submitted to the Scottish Government in November 2020 is contained in **APPENDIX I**.

Template

3.2 The reporting template covers the following mandatory topics:

- Profile;
- Governance, management and strategy;
- Corporate emissions;
- Targets and projects;
- Adaptation; and
- Validation.

Profile

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

Governance, management and strategy

3.4 A Climate Change Strategy is currently in preparation with an expected implementation date of March 2021, (delayed from April 2020 due to the impact of Covid-19).

3.5 A public consultation was undertaken in October 2020 with feedback considered by the Council's Climate Change Strategy working group.

3.6 It is proposed that the strategy will report bi-annually to committee. The draft Strategy defines key governance roles as follows:

- Elected Member (currently the Chair of the Strategy Working Group) will be the organisation's Climate Change Champion.
- The Chief Executive will be the corporate champion and have responsibility to promote the Climate Change Strategy at Corporate and Community Planning level.
- The Depute Chief Executive (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) will be the lead officer for co-ordination and management of the Strategy internally within the Council supported by the Head of Housing and Property Services.

3.7 No specific climate change plan or strategy document was in place during 2019/20. Each service included their direct actions to address climate change in their strategy documents/action plans and reported to appropriate committees on progress.

Emissions, targets and projects

3.8 Council priorities to address climate change included continuing to reduce energy consumption in non-domestic properties by 2% per annum, implementing a LED replacement street lighting programme, preparing a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) with Aberdeen City and Shire and Angus Council and working in partnership with Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils to deliver a joint Energy from Waste facility in Aberdeen.

3.9 In 2019/20, the Council's carbon emissions for its non-domestic properties amounted to 9,237 tonnes of CO₂e - a decrease of 898 tonnes of CO₂e (9%) compared to 2018/19.

- 3.10 The following are significant contributory factors to reductions in carbon emissions levels:
- Lower consumptions for oil;
 - Reduced carbon intensity of grid electricity; and
 - More street lighting provided from LED technology.
- 3.11 Over 30 individual energy saving projects and initiatives were carried out in 2019/20.

Adaptation

- 3.12 The Moray Local Development Plan 2020 provides the policy framework for promoting climate change adaptation and it is taken into consideration when determining development proposals. There is a specific policy on coastal erosion and requirements for biodiversity enhancement and compensatory tree planting in Moray.
- 3.13 The Moray Local Development Plan 2020 promotes a masterplan approach to the development of large scale sites and work in partnership with key agencies such as NatureScot and SEPA to embed climate change adaptation into development through blue and green networks, biodiversity and habitat connectivity. A specific biodiversity policy requires all new development to enhance biodiversity with developments of 10 or more houses required to submit a biodiversity plan.
- 3.14 Through surface water management plans the Council will aim to reduce the amount of surface water and infiltration entering the combined sewers, promote sustainable drainage solutions in development proposals aimed at maximising the ecological and amenity benefit. Flood protection schemes are currently designed with a 20% allowance for climate change. However, this allowance is currently under review and is likely to increase in future.

Procurement

- 3.15 Sustainable procurement is recognised by both the Council and the Procurement Team as an important issue. The Council's Procurement Strategy 2019 – 2020 states: *The Council commits to improve our management practices to reduce our impact on the environment.*
- 3.16 Procurement objectives in this area link to the Council's ten year strategic plan and include:
- Increase the areas recycling rates;
 - Reduce the biodegradable waste to landfill;
 - Reduce greenhouse gases by considering delivery and transportation issues, utilising zero or low carbon technologies;
 - Support the development of sustainable construction;
 - Encourage our contractors to care for the environment by minimising environmental impacts;
 - Reduce energy use; and
 - Promote the use of renewable energy sources.

- 3.17 During 2019/20, 15 tendered contracts included specific terms in respect of sustainable construction, greenhouse gases, energy efficiency and waste disposal, that contribute to climate change duties.

Validation

- 3.18 With effect from 2020/21 the content and submission of the Annual Public Sector Climate Change Report is expected to be linked to the emerging Climate Change Strategy monitoring, governance and reporting arrangements.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

This reporting demonstrates the Council's progress in contributing to Scotland's ambitious greenhouse gas emissions targets.

The Energy Policy and Strategy and actions to minimise the Council's energy use support the aim of the Corporate Plan of a financially stable Council.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024 identifies the environment as a key principle in the delivery of the Council's priorities.

“Environment – look after the world we live in to protect it for the future”

and for Moray Council to be

“A resource efficient, carbon neutral council that works with partners to mitigate the worst effects of Climate Change, to create a resilient, fair and more sustainable future for everyone within Moray”.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Order 2015 introduced mandatory reporting on climate change.

(c) Financial/Risks Implications

There are no financial implications.

(d) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications.

(e) Property

There are no property implications

(f) Equalities

There are no equalities implications.

(g) Consultations

The Acting Head of Housing and Property, the Chief Financial Officer, the Head of Development Services, the Legal Services Manager, the Equal

Opportunities Officer and Lissa Rowan, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and any comments incorporated in this report as appropriate.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The submission of the report on its Climate Change duties by the Council to the Scottish Government in November 2020 fulfilled its statutory reporting obligation.

Author of Report: Ronnie Macdonald, Energy Officer
Background Papers: As referred to in this report.
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