

<b>Report to</b>	Corporate Governance and Audit Committee
<b>Date of meeting</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> September
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	Cllr Brian Jones, Cllr Tony Thomas & Cllr Graham Timms / Judith Greenhalgh
<b>Report author</b>	Helen Vaughan-Evans
<b>Title</b>	<b>Having regard to tackling climate and ecological change in Council decision making</b>

## **1. What is the report about?**

- 1.1. This report is about the amendments proposed to the Council's Constitution to support the Council in having regard to tackling climate and ecological change when making decisions.

## **2. What is the reason for making this report?**

- 2.1. To outline the amendments proposed to the Council's Constitution and supporting documents and processes and the timeline for implementing these changes, if approved by Full Council, including the roll out of Carbon Literacy Training.

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

- 3.1 That the Committee recommend approval to Full Council to amend Section 13.2 of the Council's Constitution- Principals of Decision Making to include an additional bullet point under "*All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles*" with the following wording: "*having regard to tackling climate and ecological change*".
- 3.2 That the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix A) as part of its consideration.

## 4. Report details

- 4.1. The Council declared a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency on 9th July 2019. Please see appendix B for background information and relevant wider context.
- 4.2. A number of pieces of work have been identified by the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency working group as “kick start” actions to be completed in 2020/21 which are practical, feasible and affordable and have the potential to make a significant difference. These were included in the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Declaration progress report to Full Council on 28th January 2020. This included the action to have sufficient regard to tackling climate and ecological change in Council decision making with the example to include ‘environmental’ implications on all reports.
- 4.3. In lessons learned of previous large projects (e.g. SC2 and 21st Century Schools Band A) delivered by the Council it is also recognised that earlier and fuller consideration of tackling climate and ecological change in decision making on funding for the project and development of the project would have influenced the final outcome for the better.
- 4.4. By having regard for tackling climate and ecological change in decision making we hope to limit the Councils impact on further exacerbating climate and ecological change and maximise on the opportunities to make a positive contribution.
- 4.5. Following consultation with the Monitoring Officer, the change proposed is to Section 13.2 of the Council’s Constitution- Principles of Decision Making. It is the addition of a bullet point under “*All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles*” with the following wording: “*having regard to tackling climate and ecological change*”. Full detail of the change is provided in Appendix C.
- 4.6. To support the organisation and its Members in “*having regard to tackling climate and ecological change*” in their decision making it is proposed a number of documents and processes are amended in consultation with officer leads. See Appendix D for a description of the potential change per document/ process. If approved at Council, these changes would be rolled out from November with appropriate communication and support for officers and Members.

- 4.7 An investment in Carbon Literacy Training is proposed for all Councillors and key officers to support them in enacting the principals of decision making as amended- having regard to tackling climate and ecological change. This will be an accredited 1-day training course with providers being able to deliver it remotely on an online video conference platform. It is intended that the procurement process for this training will start in September and training undertaken throughout Autumn and Winter.

## **5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

- 5.1 The Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan, by having regard to tackling climate and ecological change in decision making, and supporting officers and Members in assessing options and making decisions to the benefit of addressing the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency will make a direct contribution to the current Environment Priority within the Corporate Plan 2017-2022.
- 5.2 It will also provide a significant contribution towards the Council achieving its aim of becoming Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive by 2030 in response to the Climate Change and Emergency declared by the Council in 2019 and in line with the Welsh Government policy for the public sector to be carbon neutral by 2030 and the Councils statutory duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to “seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity”.

## **6 What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

- 6.1 The action to the change the Council Constitution and supporting documentation will not incur any additional cost to the Council aside from staff time. From indicative quotes, Carbon Literacy Training would cost c.£70 per head. There is a one-off budget set aside for 2020/21 in order to help progress the net carbon zero and ecologically positive work which includes provision of staff time and up to £15,000 for Carbon Literacy Training.

## **7 What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?**

- 7.1 The DCC's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan in its very nature of combating climate and ecological change has protecting and improving the well-being of generations now and in the future at its heart. Having regard to tackling climate and ecological change in decision making is a key enabling action for the Council to contribute to mitigating climate and ecological change impacts now and for future generations and the development and delivery of the 9-year programme will continue to maximise on the opportunities, taking a long term view, to do just that.

## **8 What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

- 8.1 The proposed change to the Principals of Decision Making Section of the Council's Constitution has been developed in consultation with the Council's Monitoring Officer and engagement with regard to the amendments of the supporting documentation and process has been undertaken with all relevant officers.
- 8.2 These proposals have been discussed and agreed in principal by Cabinet and Group Leaders in July. The Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Working Group, chaired by Cllr Graham Timms, have provided monthly oversight on these developments and agree with the proposals.

## **9 Chief Finance Officer Statement**

- 9.1 The report is supported in principle. The proposed changes to Council processes and forms will ensure that this key target is embedded in decision making. It is expected that a budget pressure will need to be included in the 2021/22 budget proposals in order that progress can continue in this area.

## **10 What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

- 10.1 Notable risks are included in Appendix D.

## **11 Power to make the decision**

- 11.1 See Appendix E.