

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	8th June 2023
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Barry Mellor (Lead Member for Environment and Transport)/Gary Williams (Corporate Director - Governance and Business & Climate and Ecological Change Programme Senior Responsible Owner)
Head of Service	Nicola Kneale (Interim Head of Service- Strategy & Performance, Projects, Climate Change)
Report author	Helen Vaughan-Evans (Climate Change Programme Manager)
Title	Review and Refresh of Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22-2029/30)

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 To advise scrutiny of the review and refresh of the Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy that is taking place during 2023/24.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 To share and seek support for the process that will be undertaken and anticipated timescales.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee:

- 3.1 provides observations on the commencement of the review and refresh of the Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy that is taking place during 2023/24; and

3.2 supports the approach that will be taken when reviewing the Strategy and for adopting a refreshed Strategy in early 2024.

4. Report details

4.1 Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22-2029/30) was adopted in February 2021 following the declaration of a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency by Council in July 2019. The full strategy can be accessed [here](#).

4.2 Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22-2029/30) is scheduled to be reviewed and refreshed every 3 years. The first official review and refresh of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy is during 2023/24. Delivery of the strategy does not stop whilst this review is taking place; work continues at pace concurrently with the review to deliver Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council and reduction in supply chain emissions.

4.3 The review and refresh will involve appraising:

- a) the scope of the current strategy.
- b) the target pathways to achieve the 2030 targets of Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council.
- c) the actions within the strategy - what needs to be changed and what needs to be added.
- d) the measures of success - whether any need to be added or changed.
- e) the information provided about finance, governance, partnership working and sharing learning.

4.4 The strategy will be updated and added to in consultation with others. The following engagement is planned:

- a) An online survey in Spring 2023 open to the public, councillors and staff to complete giving their views on what they like and don't like about the current strategy and what they would like the strategy to cover and include. Survey promoted within School Councils.
- b) Independent assessment on the financial, legal and regulatory drivers relevant to the strategy, the opportunities to pursue, the risks to manage, the gaps to address, and any change needed from current approach.

- c) Engagement with councillors via the re-establishment of the cross party Climate Change and Ecological Emergency political working group and meeting up to 3 times over 2023/24 to input into this review.
- d) Engagement with Staff Council in June.
- e) Engagement with all Service heads and senior management teams along with key Service personnel via workshops over the summer.
- f) Workshop with external environmental interest groups over the summer.
- g) Updates to Cabinet Briefing and Senior Leadership Team through out.
- h) Engagement with Budget Board/Capital Scrutiny Group in Autumn.
- i) An online survey in Autumn/Winter 2023 open to the public, councillors and staff to complete giving their views on the final draft of the refreshed strategy. Survey promoted within School Councils.
- j) Engagement with Performance Scrutiny Committee on the refreshed strategy before taking it to Cabinet and Council for adoption in early 2024.

4.5 The intention is for the refreshed strategy to be adopted by Council in February/ March 2024 to feed into Service Business Plans for 2024/25. It is intended for the refreshed strategy to be presented to Performance Scrutiny Committee prior to taking it to Cabinet and Council.

4.6 The Climate Change Programme Manager will work with Corporate Communications throughout to ensure timing and appropriate internal and external communication during the strategy review.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?

5.1 Ensuring the strategy remains relevant, up to date and bought into is integral to delivering upon the Council's Climate Change and Ecological Emergency declaration (2019) which committed the Council to become Net Carbon Zero by 2030 and improve biodiversity in Denbighshire. Refreshing the targets, achievement pathways and activities regularly helps to maintain the focus and ambition required to deliver on the adopted Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021-2030, by supporting the reduction in carbon emissions, increase in carbon sequestration and improvement of species richness of our land so that the Council can achieve its 2030 goals of Net Carbon Zero, Ecologically Positive and 35% reduction in supply chain emissions.

5.2 By progressing and completing the activities within the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021-2030 will directly contribute towards the following themes in the Corporate Plan 2022-2027: A greener Denbighshire and A better connected Denbighshire

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 There are no costs arising directly from this report. Servicing of the review can be met within existing staff and financial resources.

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

7.1 Not needed for this paper. There is a WIA for the Climate and Ecological Strategy which is available on request. This will be updated in light of the updated Strategy during 2023/24 and before the refreshed strategy is taken to Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council for adoption.

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

8.1 The approach for the strategy review and refresh has been discussed with the Leader, Lead Member, Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group, Chief Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team and Climate and Ecological Change Programme Operational Board.

8.2 The requirement for a mechanism for Member involvement was discussed at the Governance and Audit Committee in March, and the recommendation to re-establish the cross party Climate Change and Ecological Emergency political working group was supported by the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group in April.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 The Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy has involved significant financial investment over recent years and will continue to require investment going forward. However, the financial pressures that the Council is now facing may impact on the available funding in the next few years. Although the review itself can be contained within existing resources, it is important that the programme

continue to work through the revenue and capital budget setting processes of the Council when additional resource requirements are identified.

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

10.1 There are no additional risks arising from this report.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000

11.2 Section 7.4 of the Council's Constitution outlines Scrutiny's role in policy development and review.