

ANGUS COUNCIL

2 NOVEMBER 2023

PUBLIC BODIES' CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES: ANGUS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

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

ABSTRACT

This report provides an overview of the Council's compliance with its climate change duties. The report also provides an update on the progress made in relation to the Council's measures to improve performance relating to sustainability and climate change.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

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; and
- (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 priorities in the Angus Council Plan 2023-2028.

Caring for our Place

- Take action to mitigate against climate change by delivering our Transition to Net Zero Action Plan 2022 to 2030 and leading on the delivery of a Sustainable Energy Climate Action Plan (SECAP) for Angus to reduce area wide emissions.
- Reduce our energy use through a reduction in our property estate coupled with good management to reduce wasting energy.
- Delivery efficient waste services and encourage more recycling and cleaner streets.
- Enhance and restore Angus Biodiversity, corporately and with a range of stakeholders.

Angus Council is Efficient and Effective

- Continue to develop our approach to agile working.
- Deliver our change programme.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The 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.

- 3.2 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, 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 2022/23.

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

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

Governance, management and strategy

- 4.3 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 considerations across the board.

- 4.4 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

- 4.5 Since the baseline year of 2012/13 to this current reporting year 2022/23, the Council's carbon emissions have reduced by 58%. The baseline year was originally 2010/11, but 2012/13 was when the full CO_{2e} emissions data set became available and is the most accurate baseline to measure against.

Scope 1 emissions:

- 4.6 These are direct fuel combustion emissions from sources the 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 23.5%.

Scope 2 emissions:

- 4.7 These are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased electricity that is consumed in Council owned or controlled operations – emissions from buildings, streetlighting and other infrastructure. Since 2012/13 scope 2 emissions have reduced by 69.8%.

Scope 3 emissions:

- 4.8 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 79.9%.

- 4.9 Operational emission reduction targets were added to the report submission in line with the Council's - Transition to Net Zero Action Plan 2022 to 2030. The Council's operational emission reduction targets are required by legislation to have a 75% reduction by 2030, a 90% reduction by 2040 and Net Zero by 2045.

- 4.10 During 2022/23, LED lighting upgrades were completed at Grange Primary School, Whitehills Primary School, Forfar Community Campus, Websters Theatre and a number of Sheltered Housing schemes. Installations were carried out to various sheltered housing complexes to replace inefficient heating systems with new energy efficient electric Quantum Heaters which provide zero direct-emissions heating.
- 4.11 Property and Capital Projects teams are looking to determine 'whole building' approaches and specific action plans for each that can be used to transition the Council's building stock towards Net Zero. The availability of resource to progress this work has impacted on progress in this area.
- 4.12 The Council's fleet vehicles continue to decarbonise. During 2022/23, the number of Angus Health & Social Care Partnership community cars and community meals vans were reduced, and their diesel predecessors replaced with electric cars and vans. This has achieved a saving of approx. 74 tonnes of CO_{2e}/year. The Council only has 3 diesel cars and 7 small diesel vans left to convert away from combustion engine by 2025, which is the target year for phasing out petrol and diesel cars and vans in the public sector fleet.
- 4.13 In 2021, the Council was the fifth highest performing local authority in Scotland with a household recycling rate of 54.7% and a carbon impact of 105,955 TCO_{2e}, which was the tenth lowest carbon impact in Scotland. The Council had a landfill rate of 3.1% which was the third lowest in Scotland. During 2022, the Council recycled 62.41% of waste accepted at recycling centres which was slightly down on the 2021 rate of 64.27%.

Adaptation

- 4.14 Climate Change Adaptation seeks to mitigate the negative impacts of global warming and create climate resilient communities and ecosystems.
- 4.15 Nature-based solutions, addressing both the climate and biodiversity crises, continue to be developed and delivered at all scales across Angus. In 2022/23, in both rural and urban areas, the Council has continued to work with communities and wider stakeholders to deliver woodland expansion, natural flood management, grassland regeneration, wetland creation and green network connectivity projects.
- 4.16 The River South Esk Catchment Partnership continues to work with the Cairngorms National Park Authority and partners in the 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.
- 4.17 The Scottish Government Nature Restoration Fund has allowed the development of ambitious nature-based carbon sequestration projects from the uplands in the Angus Glens to Angus urban centres. An ambitious project 'The River South Esk: A Climate Resilient & Nature Friendly Catchment' was successful in securing largescale funding for a development phase. River restoration expertise and innovation in Angus was acknowledged in early 2023 when the 'Rottal Burn Restoration' was awarded the UK River Prize by the River Restoration Centre.
- 4.18 Our amenity spaces and wider nature networks are being enhanced in partnership with Buglife Scotland as we expand our Space for Nature grassland and pollinator projects and continue to be a key partner on the B-Lines project 'Strathmore People and Pollinators'
- 4.19 Action in 2022/23 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, in the Scottish Government's Dynamic Coast project. Work is underway to incorporate National Planning Framework 4 and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy into future policy development and project delivery.

Procurement

- 4.20 Sustainable Procurement is recognised by both the Council and the Procurement & Commissioning Service 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.

- 4.21 Support for Sustainable Procurement has been strengthened as part of the new Procurement Standing Orders; clear plans are in place for 2023/24 which will be reflected in the next update.

Validation

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

Recommended reporting on area wide issues

- 4.23 In this section wider influence targets are detailed including: partnership working, other notable activity surrounding food & drink, biodiversity, water, active & sustainable travel and sustainability.
- 4.24 The 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 (SECAP).
- 4.25 The Public Bodies Duty Report is a comprehensive technical report and requires to be submitted in the format as set by Scottish Government which is included at Appendix 1. To make the content of the 2022/23 report accessible and useful for communities and partner agencies a summarised version has been produced. The report will be available on the Council's 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 and is contained within Appendix 3 to 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.

REPORT AUTHOR: Caren Webster, Project Officer - Climate Change

EMAIL DETAILS: planning@angus.gov.uk

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Reporting 2022/23 submission.

Appendix 2: Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Reporting 2022/23 Summary Report.

Appendix 3: Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Reporting 2022/23 EIA.