

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

1 November 2022

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 13 December 2022

Report of: Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management

Title: The Devon Carbon Plan

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.1 Exeter City Council notes the recently released Devon Carbon Plan, produced by the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership.

2. Recommendations:

That Executive recommends to Council:-

2.1 To note the Devon Carbon Plan;

2.2 Given that the Devon Carbon Plan target for Net Zero is 2050, in line with the Government's Goal for the country, Members may wish to reflect on the implications for the City of Exeter's goal of a net zero Exeter 2030. Transport is one of the largest sources of carbon emissions for the city and county and the consequences of reductions to net zero by 2030 are profound. Members may wish to satisfy themselves that the 2050 goal provides a supportive policy context for the city of Exeter's net zero plans:

2.3 To continue to work in collaboration with the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership in reducing county carbon emissions;

2.4 That Projects led by Exeter City Council, in the implementation of the Devon Carbon Plan, are scrutinised by Exeter City Council's Strategic Scrutiny Committee;

2.5 An annual update is presented to Strategic Scrutiny on progress made in delivering the Devon Carbon Plan; and

2.6 Members reflect and discuss the ambition of the Devon Carbon Plan and how it reflects the ambition of the region focusing on a clean growth region.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 To acknowledge and thank the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership in the work undertaken in researching and producing the Devon Carbon Plan.

- 3.2 To ensure Exeter City Council has representation in revised governance structures in the delivery of the Devon Carbon Plan.
- 3.3 The Devon Net Zero target of 2050, will potentially have a detrimental impact on the delivery of Net Zero for Exeter by 2030.
- 3.4 Members have an opportunity to scrutinise Exeter City Council led projects in the delivery of the Devon Carbon Plan.
- 3.5 Members are kept informed of progress made in delivering the Devon carbon Plan, and any conflicts that arise with delivering Net Zero by 2030 for the City Council and Exeter.
- 3.6 Members to reflect on the Devon Carbon Plan and its target of 2050, does it show ambition for the County. Does the Exeter net zero 2030 target need consideration.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources

- 4.1 Inclusion in future governance arrangements will be overseen and managed by the Director for Net Zero Exeter & City Management, with activity delegated to the Service Lead for Net Zero & Business.
- 4.2 There is no financial contribution from Exeter City Council to deliver the Devon Carbon Plan. If projects require funding from Exeter City Council, a report will be brought to committee.
- 4.3 For projects listed in the Devon Carbon Plan Action Plan, external funding will be sought to support its delivery, led by the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for Council to consider.

6. What are the legal aspects?

- 6.1 None identified.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

- 7.1 This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Development of the Devon Carbon Plan:

- 8.1 The Devon Carbon Plan is the roadmap for how Devon will reach net-zero emissions by 2050 (at the latest), and was officially launched 27 September 2022. It divides action to reduce Devon's emissions into five sectors: economy and resources; energy supply; food, land and sea; transport; and the built environment.
- 8.2 The Devon Carbon Plan is a landmark piece of work for the County to help realise and achieve county aims of becoming net-zero by 2050, at the latest. The Devon Climate Emergency Partnership, secretariat role by Devon County Council, has led the collaboration and alignment of almost 30 organisations across the county – a challenging undertaking.

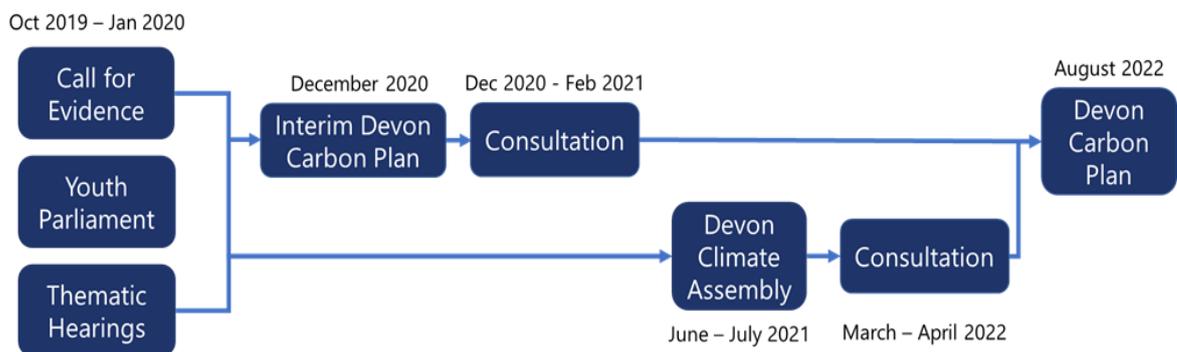
8.3 The Devon Carbon Plan will principally be an online document, which can be viewed on the [Devon Climate Emergency website](#). There are 3 versions of the Devon Carbon Plan available (link above):

- The full plan – 42,000 words
- A summary version – 20,000 words
- A quick read – 18 pages, Appendix One

8.4 The day to day management of evidence gathering, bringing together interested parties and the writing of the Devon Carbon Plan has been overseen by officers within the Environment team at Devon County Council. Representation from Exeter City Council has attended meetings on a monthly basis.

8.5 Creating the Devon Carbon Plan involved five main phases, with a visual representation of the process below;

- During the first phase, the Net Zero Task Force took a robust, evidence-led approach, with an open call for evidence from the public and organisations wishing to contribute which received 893 submissions from the public
- Six Thematic Hearings (meetings) gathered expert input about barriers to reaching net-zero; and a Youth Parliament Climate Summit with 75 students from 15 primary and secondary schools across Devon was convened
- Next, the Interim Devon Carbon Plan was developed. The Devon Climate Emergency Partnership asked for public feedback during a consultation which received 1322 responses.
- The more controversial climate topics and action areas were set aside to be deliberated through a representative Citizens Assembly which was organised and chaired by a third party in the summer of 2021.
- Following the successful completion of the Citizens' Assembly, a further public consultation took place on the actions developed in response to the assembly's recommendations in spring 2022.



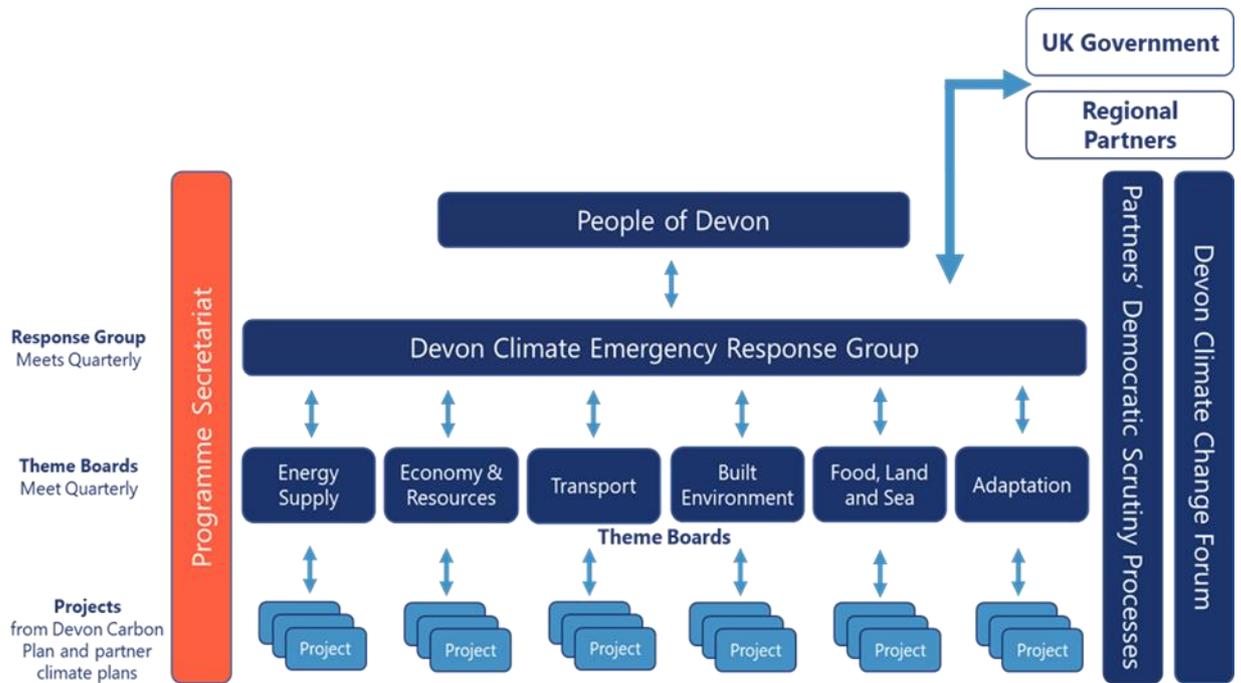
8.6 The development of the Devon Carbon Plan has followed a robust science led process, involving thematic experts as well as including public consultation and a representative Citizens Assembly.

8.7 The Devon Carbon Plan highlights the barriers that need to be overcome, the resources required (whether they are existing or required) and where collaboration with national government is needed to do so.

- 8.8 The Devon Carbon Plan action-table includes columns which indicates who an action is most relevant to. Very rarely is an action relevant to a single organisation - the Devon Carbon Plan is a County carbon plan for all, where collaboration and working together is at the core of the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership.
- 8.9 Many of the actions have a degree of flexibility in their language, such as 'where possible', 'explore', 'investigate'. This isn't there to downplay the critical nature of reducing carbon emissions, rather setting out key areas of focus for each type of organisation to contribute to the 2050 net-zero target.
- 8.10 The Devon Carbon Plan doesn't propose to supersede existing democratic scrutiny processes or partners own governance arrangements. It instead is an evidence-led plan which forms a roadmap which encourages each partner organisation, and organisations and communities beyond the partnership, to help deliver it.

9. Devon Carbon Plan New Governance Arrangements

- 9.1 With the launch of the Devon Carbon Plan, a new governance structure will be established during autumn 2022. Reporting on the delivery of the Devon Carbon Plan will be facilitated by the Secretariat, provided by Devon County Council.
- 9.2 The Devon Climate Change Forum will be established to provide independent, impartial, expert oversight and advice on behalf of the people of Devon to all tiers of the governance structure. People will be invited to apply, rather than selecting participants from a known pool of people. This will help bring robustness to the processes by avoiding an 'echo chamber' and introduce a layer of balance to the process. An analogue for this is the Climate Change Committee who provide independent and impartial advice to the UK government on its responsibilities under the Climate Change Act.
- 9.3 Day-to-day implementation of projects will be managed by the organisation leading on a particular project, activity and progress will be reported to relevant Theme Boards. Exeter City Council could be the lead organisation for some projects, especially for those relevant to reducing emissions within the city.
- 9.4 Below highlights new governance arrangements to be established autumn 2022:



9.5 There is the expectation that local authorities' formal democratic scrutiny processes provide challenge to the implementation and to the execution of individual projects their organisations are leading on. Any projects led by Exeter City Council will be presented to Strategic Scrutiny for scrutiny.

10. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

10.1 The Devon Carbon Plan, this report and its recommendations links directly to the Exeter Vision and a number of corporate priorities – especially a 'Leading Sustainable City' and 'Delivering Net Zero Exeter 2030'.

11. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

11.1 Representation from Exeter City Council is included in new governance structures, including the Devon Climate Change Forum and relevant Theme Boards, as highlighted in 9.3.

11.2 An annual report is represented to Strategic Scrutiny on the delivery of the Devon Carbon Plan and support provided by Exeter City Council.

12. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

12.1 In recommending this proposal potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act and an Equalities Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention.

12.2 If Exeter City Council lead on any actions within the Devon Carbon Plan, an additional EQIA will be completed on that particular project/activity.

12.3 An EQIA has been undertaken in relation to the Devon Carbon Plan.

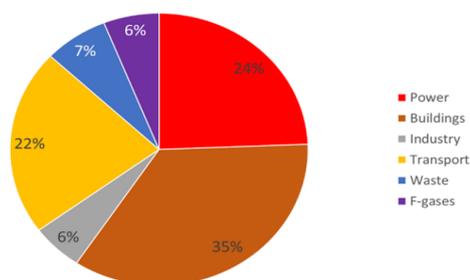
13. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

13.1 Supporting the delivery of the Devon Carbon Plan will, overall, have a positive impact on Exeter's and the City Council's carbon footprint.

13.2 With a difference in net zero target dates (Devon 2050, Exeter 2030), this may have a negative impact on achieving net zero in Exeter by 2030. As an example. As highlighted within the report to Strategic Scrutiny 16 June 2022 'Progress Report from Exeter City Futures and the City of Exeter Greenhouse Gas Inventory' city transport equates to 106,023 tonnes of carbon emissions per year (2019). Transport is overseen and managed by Devon County Council as the Highway Authority and not the City Council.

▶ EMISSIONS TREND

Estimated total greenhouse gas emissions in Exeter in 2019 are 476,221 tonnes of carbon dioxide (t CO₂e). The graph and table gives the breakdown of emissions.



Sector	GHG emissions t CO ₂ e
Power	117,077
Buildings	167,684
Industry	26,795
Transport	106,023
Waste	33,449
F-gases	28,914
Agriculture	948
Land use	-4,669
Total	476,221



13.3 Transport is overseen and managed by Devon County Council as the Highway Authority and not the City Council. Transport is an obviously area where the scale of investment to support the changes required from EV infrastructure, cycling and walking infrastructure, together with the policy landscape all threaten to be non-aligned with the Exeter Net Zero 2030 target.

14. Are there any other options?

14.1 There is the option of not supporting the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership in the delivery of the Devon Carbon Plan, but this may have a detrimental impact on delivering net zero within Exeter.

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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