



**Full Council**

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

**Subject: Update position on work to develop an Environment & Sustainability Strategy for the Council**

Report by:

Cllr Tracey Coulson; Member Champion for Environment and Climate Change

Contact Officer:

Corporate Governance and Policy Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Purpose / Summary:

To provide an initial scoping document to allow an "interim" update in progressing the Council resolution to consider environmental and other implications associated with climate change and report back with a strategy development plan within the requested timeframe.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- 1. Members support and endorse the work to date the Working Group has undertaken in this subject matter**
- 2. Members to approve the approach suggested to develop the strategy**

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:** The UK Climate Change Act of 2008 was the first piece of legislation to legally mandate a nation to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions - in this case by 80% of 1990 levels by 2050. Many countries have subsequently introduced their own equivalent legislation and in 2015, the Paris Agreement was signed by 197 countries with the aim of limiting “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels”. The 2018 Special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on the impact of a 1.5°C rise in global temperatures above pre-industrial levels further highlighted the urgency with which GHG emissions must be reduced to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. In May of 2019, the UK Government declared a non-legally binding Climate Change Emergency declaration and the Committee on Climate Change recommended a new emissions target for the UK: net-zero greenhouse gases by 2050. This was made a statutory target in June through the Climate Change Act (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019.

### **Financial: FIN/185/20/TJB**

An initial sum of £25k is requested to support the development of the Strategy. This money will be used for any consultancy/research input required and will be met from the corporate management budget 2020/21.

Any future funding requirement for initiatives identified to support the Strategy will be subject of future reports.

**Staffing:** There may be a requirement for external expertise to provide technical input and capacity as the strategy develops

### **Equality and Diversity including Human Rights: None**

*NB: Please explain how you have considered the policy's impact on different groups (for example: young people, elderly, ethnic minorities, LGBT community, rural residents, disabled, others).*

### **Data Protection Implications: None**

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:** Will be considered within the context of strategy development

**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations: None**

**Health Implications: None**

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Wherever possible please provide a hyperlink to the background paper/s  
If a document is confidential and not for public viewing it should not be listed.

**Risk Assessment: None**

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

**Yes**

**No**

**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

**Yes**

**No**

## **Executive Summary**

If the main body of your report is longer than 4 sides of A4 then you are required to complete an executive summary. Please summarise the entire content of the report, its purpose and the decisions you require on one side of A4.

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the November 2019 meeting of Full Council, a cross party motion recognising that the impacts of climate change are a cause of serious environmental issues both locally and around the world, was put forward and accepted.
- 1.2 Members noted the research and conclusions of the 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C', published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in October 2018, but also that policies to reduce environmental damage caused by human activity can also have associated health, wellbeing and economic benefits.
- 1.3 As a result, Members resolved to:
  - Make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2050, in line with the UK Government's target
  - Ask the Prosperous Communities Committee to develop a new strategy on sustainability, climate change, and the environment for the Council, with an initial outline being presented to the next Annual Council, looking toward achieving the above target.
- 1.4 As part of the development of this strategy, the Council asked that a number of points should be given specific consideration:
  1. Achieving 100% clean energy across the Council's full range of functions by 2040 (see Appendix A for current work and low carbon interventions being delivered and achieved to date);
  2. How to ensure that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2050, working to ensure that the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan review embraces this approach;
  3. How to support and work with all other relevant agencies towards making the entire area net zero carbon within the same timescale;
  4. Suggestions for budget actions and a measured baseline;
  5. How the Prosperous Communities Committee can consider the impact of climate change and the environment when reviewing Council policies and strategies;
  6. Any available research (that is expected to be forthcoming) from APSE relevant to this work;
  7. Report on the level of investment in the fossil fuel industry that our pensions plan has;

8. Ensure that all reports in preparation for the 2021/22 budget cycle and investment strategy will take into account the actions the Council will take to address this agenda;
  9. Call on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and ask local MPs to do likewise.
- 1.5 The effect of these resolutions is to seek consideration from Prosperous Communities Committee on the detailed reporting and action plan for referral back to Full Council.
  - 1.6 This report is the formal interim update on the progression of this.

## **2.0 WORKING GROUP**

- 2.1 The Prosperous Communities Committee, at the meeting held on 03/12/19, established an Environment and Sustainability Working Group to progress this activity.
- 2.2 The Working Group meets formally and reports findings and recommendations directly to the Prosperous Communities Committee. The Working Group considers and reviews all of the individual points referred to in the November meeting of the Council in developing the strategy and action plan.
- 2.3 The Group will provide a presentation update to invited Members as well as the first formal update report in May. This interim report to Council provides a summary update of the work to date. Final draft recommendations will be reported to the Prosperous Communities Committee in Spring 2021, which will then make recommendations to the Annual Council meeting.
- 2.4 The Working Group comprises of six Elected Members including the Member Champion for Environment and Climate Change; Councillor Tracey Coulson. Formal Terms of Reference and membership of the group have been agreed by the Prosperous Communities Committee and these are appended to the report (Appendix B).
- 2.5 The inaugural meeting took place on 9th January 2020 and there have been three meetings to date with further meetings scheduled to the end of the year.

### **3.0 WORK TO DATE:-**

3.1 As a result of the meeting of the Working Group a number of tasks have been undertaken:

- Reviewed previous and ongoing WLDC carbon reduction activity and the Carbon Management Plan
- Collated all WLDC environmental and climate change activity (Waste management, renewable energy generation, Homes Energy Conservation Act, Private Sector Enforcement, etc.)
- Taken on research from organisations such as APSE and the Local Government Association good practice advice for Councillors
- Reviewed other council approaches and best practice publications
- Collated a list of external consultees with expertise and insight and invited them to feed information into the working group and strategy
- Agreed on the scope of the work and an intent to define what is required for WLDC to become carbon net neutral
- Begun to develop an engagement/communication plan for leading/championing others within the district
- Reviewed potential for renewable energy generation within the district
- Begun to explore carbon offsetting potential/opportunities
- Reviewed the "Ashden" Local Authority Climate Change Toolkit and used it to help define priority projects (see Appendix C for more information)
- Begun collating a list of "quick-wins" to include in the final action plan
- Attended events and conferences where appropriate to help progress this work
- Conducted a legislative and policy review including considering relevant proposals contained in the Environment Bill published 15 October 2019
- Begun to draft a suggested and costed action plan and implementation timetable for consideration at Full Council
- Drafted a framework to ensure that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2050

3.2 Additionally, work has been undertaken to provide initial responses to the nine points raised by Council (see 1.4 above.) In some instances significant levels of detail have been provided. All content is set out in Appendix D.

### **4.0 INTERIM FINDINGS**

- 4.1 Councils are well placed to drive and influence action on climate change through the services they deliver, their regulatory and strategic function and their roles as community leaders, major employers, large-scale procurers and social/commercial landlords.
- 4.2 Action on climate change can deliver many local benefits, including lower energy bills, economic regeneration and creation of local jobs, reductions in fuel poverty and improved air quality. Furthermore, increasing resilience to climate change risks can result in avoided costs from flood damage to buildings, infrastructure and services, enhanced green spaces and improved health.
- 4.3 However, making a commitment to deliver a zero carbon and 100% clean energy target is multifaceted and Members will want to be well sighted on the policy, process, financial and other considerations such as a timetable in making environmental commitments.
- 4.4 The Working Group is making good progress and is well placed to report formally and meet the timetable established at Full Council. Between now and the report being presented at Full Council, the focus of the Working Group activity will be to finalise a series of recommendations to be considered. Whilst it is currently premature to provide specific detail, the following areas are likely to form the basis of potential future recommendations:-
- A carbon reduction programme which is aspirational and deliverable in the soonest possible time range
  - All Council policies and practices to consider environmental impacts
  - Lobby for additional resources and support to deliver the carbon neutral agenda
  - A commitment and action plan to show geographical and community leadership
  - Recognise and acknowledge the excellent achievements of the Council
  - Council buildings and asset audits and action plans
  - Recommendations for the Council's procurement practices
  - Communications/Engagement plan

## **5. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

- 5.1 Benchmarking or comparative analysis among local authorities is considered to be of little meaningful use due to the high number of variables between one Authority, or geographical area, to another. Additionally, determining an appropriate source(s) and set(s) of data is



also problematic as there are many competing research bodies producing reports and statistical analysis

5.2 However, for interest the following information obtained from the [Office for National Statistics](#) has been obtained. It tracks by local authority region, carbon dioxide emissions per capita between 2005 – 2017.

5.3 The following table is a data extract pertaining to Lincolnshire Authorities. It shows the per capita emissions during the period 2005 – 2017 for each authority and the overall % reduction.

LA	Per capita emissions (t) 2005	Per capita emissions (t) 2017	% Change
Boston	8.0	4.6	-42.5
East Lindsey	7.7	5.2	-32.5
City of Lincoln	6.2	3.5	-43.5
North Kesteven	8.2	5.2	-36.5
South Holland	8.7	5.4	-39.0
South Kesteven	9.1	6.2	-42.8
West Lindsey	8.4	5.7	-32.0

5.4 Reductions are recorded across all Lincolnshire Authorities. However, Members should be minded to not draw any inferences as to whether any authority is 'out performing' any other due to the difficulty in accurately comparing 'like for like'.

## 6. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

6.1 The Working Group have considered how best to formulate and develop an Environment & Sustainability Strategy for the Council. Having taken account of the guidance and research currently available, it is proposed that the Council's strategy be based around the ten topic areas outlined by Ashden. This provides a robust framework around which the strategy will be built.

6.2 The Working Group have diarised monthly meetings over the next 12 months and have determined to dedicate each meeting to a specific topic area. This will enable the Council's current position/thinking against each topic to be reviewed, with future desired outcomes

identified. Actions required to achieve such outcomes will then be drawn up to form the Strategy's Action Plan.

- 6.3 It is considered that this work will result in the development of an Environment & Sustainability Strategy for the Council by May 2021.
- 6.4 At the meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Members reviewed the work completed so far and supported the recommendation to use the Ashden framework as a basis to formulate the strategy.

## **7. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS**

- 7.1 It is anticipated that consultancy support, research and officer/Member attendance at relevant seminars will be required to support this work. Consequently there is a requirement for resources to be allocated and used for such purposes.
- 7.2 To support this work an initial sum of £25k has been set aside. This money will be used for any consultancy/research input required and will be met from the corporate management budget 2020/21.
- 7.3 Any future funding requirement for initiatives identified to support the Strategy will be subject of future reports.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Committee is asked to:
  - a. Support and endorse the work to date the Working Group has undertaken in this subject matter.
  - b. Approve the approach suggested to develop the strategy.

## **Appendix A: Overview on the Council's achievements to date and actions already implemented to deliver carbon emission reduction.**

### **1. Waste Operations & Recycling**

As members of the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership (LWP), West Lindsey officers helped develop Lincolnshire's Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) which was adopted by all Lincolnshire Districts and LCC earlier this year.

Strategic Vision (see beginning of JMWMS Chapter 1) – Protecting the environment is at the heart of the LWP's vision: To seek the best environmental option to provide innovative, customer friendly waste management solutions that give value for money to Lincolnshire.

Strategic Objectives (see JMWMS Section 1.4) – All 10 objectives are aimed at helping the LWP to protect the environment, for example:

- To explore new opportunities of promoting waste minimisation and of using all waste as a resource in accordance with the waste hierarchy
- To contribute to the UK recycling targets of 50% by 2020 and 55% by 2025
- To find the most appropriate ways to measure our environmental performance, and set appropriate targets
- To seek to reduce our carbon footprint

Matters that are specific to West Lindsey include:

- Plans will shortly be submitted for a new depot which will reduce our carbon footprint by improving round efficiencies and decreasing mileage. Two energy inefficient depots will be replaced with one more efficient building
- All lorries are now Euro 6 emission standard (the highest available) with collection round reviews and driver behaviour training designed to reduce fuel usage and emissions
- Recycling communications delivered to all households, talks delivered to community groups/schools etc to encourage behaviour change.

### **2. Procurement**

Procurement embraces throughout its procurement processes the themes contained within the Social Value Act 2012, where applicable. Amongst its many themes is protecting and improving our environment; a key outcome of this theme is that 'climate impacts' are reduced. A suppliers approach to local supply chains, transportation, use of energy, use of and commitment to renewable energy sources are all factors taken account of during evaluation.

Procurement Lincolnshire has appointed a Social Value Champion and he is in the process of drawing up guidance for all officers, which will include various topics including climate change impact, for use by the districts in the New Year.

Procurement training for staff has recently been held and included key environmental considerations to take into account when undertaking procurement exercises.

### **3. Key targets from the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Report (2018/2019).**

This is in respect to Building & Street Lighting, Transport Fleet & Business Mileage.

A new Carbon Measurement Plan 2016 to 2021 was approved in July 2016 by Prosperous Communities Committee and Corporate Policy and Resources Committee: the plan includes a new five year target to reduce our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by a further 17% so the total planned reduction will be 35% from our baseline year of 2008/9.

This year, we have seen our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions decrease by 126.41t to 1,346.59t. This represents good progress towards WLDC achieving its target emissions level of 1,323t of CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2021. There is a remainder of 23.59t to reach the targeted goal.

### **4. Local Authorities on limited resources and finances to implement carbon reduction programmes.**

Whilst it is fully recognised that austerity and budget cuts have hindered the ability of local authorities to act on Climate Change interventions, there is still a lot they can reasonably do or contribute to within their particular constraints.

Strategically, the Council is currently working with the GLLEP and other participating authorities in developing a Local Industrial Strategy that will aim to address issues affecting low productivity and socio-economic inequalities whilst setting clear defined priorities on how local geographical areas (and their communities) can exploit their strengths and opportunities in order to realise their potential.

This is being achieved by using a Place based approach informed by robust economic evidence and analysis from each of Greater Lincolnshire's economic areas, which takes into account their spatial and geographical characteristics, economic profile, performance and demographics. The **Climate change agenda**, alongside the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, globalisation and demographic changes, is very much embedded in the way the LIS is intending to future proof our economy and improve the living standards of the GL communities.

The Council is a key partner and collaborates already in a number of initiatives with other stakeholders and Local Authorities in driving forward the green agenda. It has been involved in contributing towards the production of a Utilities Study led by LCC which looked at barriers for future housing and employment growth in relation to utilities and infrastructure provision.

This was also looked at from the perspective of emerging trends and expectations in greater energy efficiency solutions and sustainability that would relieve pressure and capacity on current infrastructure and utilities suppliers. The above studies set the baseline for further work which has now led to the production of a wide GLLEP Energy Strategy. It is recommended that any Council Energy/Green Strategy be aligned where possible to the overarching strands and key drivers of this Strategy.

Future on Rural Mobility and Sustainable Transport – implications for West Lindsey. As a member of the Rural Services Network the Council is fully engaged in any debates and aspects of rurality and sustainability. In addition to the above, the Growth Team is also exploring the opportunity to develop a more localised Rural Pathfinder Project with associated Strategy and Toolkit that would help assess current economic, societal and environmental challenges/barriers on mobility in rural places and provide technical and non-technical options that would make those places more resilient.

Refresh of the Council's Economic Growth Strategy (2014-2034). The Review will involve increased adaptability of this Strategy to the environmental challenges and climate change pressures with a vision "to put development of a low carbon economy at the heart of the Council's local economic plan" (stronger emphasis on skills and training in low carbon and renewable energy industries and business investment in green technologies).

The Strategy will reflect both the methodology and the emerging priorities set out by the LIS with a West Lindsey "Places" Approach. The Strategy will champion and promote the transition from a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) to a more circular economy (a system which is designed to re-use, repair and recycle as many of its products (including waste products) as possible).

West Lindsey Corporate Plan and supporting Strategies – Local authorities are well placed to positively influence action and behavioural shifts on climate change through the delivery of their services.

The Net Zero target should not be perceived as a legally binding obligation set by Central Government. Its underlying concepts are already enrooted in the vision, values and mission of the Council's Corporate Plan. Ultimately the ambition is to improve the quality of life for all of us. It impacts and affects health and wellbeing, social equality/cohesion, economic growth and regeneration, resilience of places and their communities. Any emerging WL Service Strategy or Policy Plan should be fully integrated with those principles and careful scrutiny (depending on resources) should be given to the merit of developing carbon reduction pathways (prior to progressing those Strategies) and carbon audits to identify any climate change impact.

Central Lincolnshire Local Plan – the Local Plan review is using the opportunity to balance our growth targets with the climate change agenda and is striving to

ensure we deliver sustainable and inclusive growth. Member steering groups to direct this work are in place.

Development of Specific Projects – Gainsborough Open Space and Green Infrastructure Strategy to support preservation of local Natural Capital Resources.

## **Appendix B: Environment and Sustainability Working Group Terms of Reference - Approved by Prosperous Communities Committee 3/12/19**

### **1 Background**

The Council notes that the impacts of climate change are a cause of serious environmental issues both locally and around the world. The 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C', published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in October 2018

- (a) describes the enormous harm that a 2°C average rise in global temperatures is likely to cause compared with a 1.5°C rise, and
- (b) Confirms that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector

Policies to reduce environmental damage caused by human activity can also have associated health, wellbeing and economic benefits.

Council, at its meeting, passed a resolution to make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2050, in line with the UK Government's target.

### **2 Purpose of the Working Group**

To develop a new strategy on sustainability, climate change, and the environment for the Council

Such a strategy will also consider:

- Achieving 100% clean energy across the Council's full range of functions by 2040;
- How to ensure that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2050, working to ensure that the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan review embraces this approach;
- How to support and work with all other relevant agencies towards making the entire area zero carbon within the same timescale;
- Suggestions for budget actions and a measured baseline;
- How the Prosperous Communities Committee can consider the impact of climate change and the environment when reviewing Council policies and strategies;
- Any available research (that is expected to be forthcoming) from APSE relevant to this work
- Report on the level of investment in the fossil fuel industry that our pensions plan has.
- Ensure that all reports in preparation for the 2021/22 budget cycle and investment strategy will take into account the actions the council will take to address this agenda;
- Call on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and ask local MPs to do likewise

### **3 Membership of the Group and Chairmanship and Appointments**

- 3.1 The Working Group shall comprise six Members including the Member Champion for Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Tracey Coulson.
- 3.2 The remaining five Members will be made up from serving Members of either the Prosperous Communities Committee or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.3 Membership will comprise cross party representation.
- 3.4 The Working Group shall be chaired by the Member Champion for Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Tracey Coulson
- 3.5 For continuity purposes the Membership of the Group shall remain in place until Annual Council 2023. Re-appointments will be made each Election Cycle, until such time as the Group's work has concluded. \*

\* Members who are designated to serve on the Working Group should give this work priority. Should any Member find that they are unable to maintain commitment, the Chair will liaise with the respective Committee Chairmen to identify alternative representation. Change in representation by this means will be reported to the Prosperous Communities Committee.

- 3.6 Other elected Members may attend the Working Group, but their level of contribution will be at the discretion of the Chairman.
- 3.7 The working group may commission the services of experts, residents, and partners as it considers necessary. Such attendees will not be voting Members of the Working Group but will be present on an information sharing/gathering basis.

### **4 Frequency of Meetings and Quorum**

- 4.1 The quorum for a meeting shall be 4 members.
- 4.2 The Working Group shall determine its own meeting frequency dependent upon need. Meetings will be called with at least 7 days' notice.
- 4.3 Members may be required to engage with partners and gather information between meetings.

### **5 Reporting Lines and Accountability**

- 5.1 The Working Group is directly responsible to the Prosperous Communities Committee.
- 5.2 The Working Group has no direct decision making powers and will make recommendations to the Prosperous Communities Committee.



## **6 Resources**

- 6.1 The Working Group does not have a supporting budget. Budgets will be identified on recommendations made to the relevant Policy Committee.
- 6.2 Officers will support the Working Group and provide advice, information, guidance and logistical support.
- 6.3 Administrative support will be provided by Democratic Services and notes from each meeting will be retained.

## **7 Milestones**

- 7.1 Full Council have requested an initial outline of the Strategy be presented to Annual Council in May 2020.
- 7.2 The draft Strategy will be considered by Prosperous Communities Committee at its March Meeting
- 7.3 The Group will be required to report at least every 9 months on any progress (if it has not recommendations within that period)
- 7.4 Additional Milestones will be identified, once an Action Plan has been agreed (again by the Prosperous Communities Committee)

## Appendix C: Climate Change Toolkit Available for Councils

Ashden (a sustainable energy and environmental charity) and Friends of the Earth have developed an evidence-based toolkit and 50-point Action Plan\* of the most effective steps Councils can take on climate change. This easy to use check list highlights the co-benefits for each action, whether it be better health and wellbeing, growth in low carbon economy, reduction in poverty and inequality and resilience. This approach ensures that any action on climate change by the public sector is fully embedded and valued in their policy and decision-making process and not treated as an issue to be tackled in isolation. Cumulative impact for each action is measured in terms of carbon savings, affordability and co-benefits realisation.

Actions will be more or less relevant depending on the different needs, geography and demographics of the local area so it is down to each Local Authority to select which are more viable (both financially and resourcefully). Also, it will very much depend on the type of Local Authority and tier of Government and the functions they are responsible for.

In terms of District Councils, areas for review and consideration would include: Building Regulations; Council Tax and business rates; Economic Development; Environmental Health; Housing; Parking; Development Management, Local Plans (and Neighbourhood Plans); Sports and Leisure Centres, Parks, Playing Fields and Green Spaces; Waste Collection and Recycling.

Joint actions can be considered with partnering Authorities including County Councils once a draft strategy with associated action plan is in place and priority areas identified.

It is suggested that the working group uses the 50-point Plan as a starting point to initiate discussions with the purpose of developing a Strategy which is in line with the areas for consideration as outlined in the West Lindsey Climate Change Resolution.

The Action Plan is categorised into 10 main topic areas, each having a set of proposed interventions:

**Decision Making** – ensure that climate change and sustainability are well integrated in the Council’s policy and decision making process

**Raising Money** – ensure we have sufficient resources to meet our net zero carbon targets

**Protect the Most Vulnerable** – ensure we have robust plans in place to support and protect the most vulnerable communities from the effects of climate change (i.e extreme heat or flooding)

**Buildings** – contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in encouraging energy efficiency in privately-owned homes and on new residential developments

**Transport** – consider all available options and initiatives that would help reduce carbon emissions and promote the transition to greener and more sustainable transport solutions

**Power** – support the growth and use of renewable energy

**Waste** – to become a zero waste area where all waste is minimised, recycled and reused as part of a circular economy approach

**Influencing Others** – to work collaboratively with other relevant organisations and partners in achieving our zero carbon goals

**Land Use** – influence decisions on how to use land more effectively to mitigate climate change impact and nature loss

**Campaigning and Lobbying** – lobby national government in order to secure more regulatory powers, finance and resources to deliver our Strategy targets.

*\*the 50-point Action Plan is available to members for circulation if they wish to look at the document*

## **Appendix D: Response to Points Raised in Council Resolution**

### **Environment and Sustainability Working Group**

Make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2050, in line with the UK Government's target

- to ask the Prosperous Communities Committee to Develop a new strategy on sustainability, climate change, and the environment for the Council, with an initial outline being present to the next Annual Council, looking toward achieving the above target.

Such a strategy will also consider:

#### **o Achieving 100% clean energy across the Council's full range of functions by 2040:**

The Council's main energy usages are identified in the Carbon Management Plan. WLDC do not have a large balance of assets when compared to other Councils and many of the buildings that we do have are new and energy efficient already and have been the subject of a renewable energy assessment.

Following this work and the projects that have resulted, solar panels have been fitted and there is an ongoing contribution to reserves each year of £17k from the use of these panels on Guildhall, Leisure Centre, MR Festival Hall and Trinity Arts Centre. We'll need to understand their energy contribution and the contribution of energy that comes from other renewable sources through our new green energy tariff.

There is a feeling that 'low hanging fruit' may have been picked already in this area, but work will now need to be revisited and should include the new Crematorium, MR Leisure Centre and proposed Central Depot. Assessments could also be carried out on WLDC's investment properties to ascertain their suitability for renewables. WLDC previously investigated the development of a large scale Civic solar farm in the district as a commercial investment. This work should be revisited and other commercial clean energy projects should be investigated.

Outside of WLDC's buildings the big carbon usage and emissions is in fuel for the fleet, in particular the waste collection vehicles. There are emerging technical innovations that significantly reduce carbon emissions, but these are currently expensive and have severe service limitations. The technology limitations are such that the current replacement fleet procurement is based on diesel fuel vehicles. However, the life replacement period (circa 7 years) means that electric and biofuel options for the waste collection vehicles are likely to have been advanced to allow alternative consideration as part of the next round of fleet replacement. This is not the case for other fleet vehicles such as vans and the pool cars for which there may be opportunities to switch away from diesel and petrol to electric or other lower carbon emission vehicles as they become due for replacement. The current civic vehicle is a hybrid car for example. Such action would also support the council's drive to be leaders on the green agenda and demonstrate in a potentially highly visible

way the council's commitment in terms of both carbon reduction and air quality.

**o How to ensure that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2050, working to ensure that the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan review embraces this approach:**

Current Position – Climate Change and the opportunities the Local Plan Review presents in relation to responding to this emerging political and social issue is subject to robust scrutiny at present. Two of the partners in Central Lincolnshire have declared a Climate Emergency, which provides focus and impetus to explore all opportunities to 'combat Climate Change.'

After a recent Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (CLJSPC) a workshop style event was held to understand the political will around this issue and to also try and capture high level options and opportunities which may be supported as part of Local Plan policy going forward.

Given the nature of the topic, the discussion and points captured were extremely wide ranging. Heads of Planning (HoPs) have since committed to some further scoping and refinement of the topic area, based on the question: "To what degree should the emerging LP embed climate change issues into its strategic approach, how could it do so, and what resource is required?"

There is a requirement in existing Planning Policy for Local Plans to have policies to support and encourage development which provides measures to combat carbon emissions. As such, the current Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP) does already contain these requirements, however they do not go as far as to give decision makers a clear ability to refuse a development on climate grounds or place a mandatory burden on the developer to provide additional measures as part of a development.

Therefore, next steps are to scope options and assess the skills, resource and cost of these options, both in terms of cost to the Council(s) and cost to the developer. What needs to be clear is how additional obligations may affect the delivery of growth and the provision of more traditional infrastructure such as roads, schools etc.

Equally there is quite a lot of activity in Central Government around this issue too, which means guidance, regulations and legal changes could impact on how planning policies respond to climate change outside of Corporate Priorities. For example, there has recently been a publication by government of a new consultation on extending the building regulations to deliver higher energy efficiency adaptation standards in buildings.

The brief is broad and the opportunities endless, therefore it is important that the CLLP establishes planning policy requirements that fit into wider corporate initiatives across the three District Councils. The Local Planning Authority cannot work alone and needs to link up to a wider approach and complement

the activities of the wider Council(s) priorities for combatting and adapting to climate change.

Heads of Planning are currently considering three questions:

1. What, genuinely, is the political will to do something more than 'do minimum' (current CLLP approach) in respect of climate change mitigation and adaptation? And if there is the will, do politicians prefer some aspect over another (e.g. is it energy efficiency; renewable energy generation; embodied energy of construction; adaptation; or...)?
2. What resource and commitments are being made corporately in each Council, such as declaring a Climate Emergency/proposing a Climate Change Motion, and the actions proposed as a consequence and how could such resource help with the CLLP?
3. Depending on the above, what additional resource, if any, is available for the CLLP? How it is then spent depends on the choice made as to what is of most interest. It could require greater officer time and/or consultants?

There will be a paper going to Central Lincolnshire Steering Group (CLSG) and then CLJSPC in relation to budget setting for funding the CLLP Team for the next three years from 2020/21 and HoPS have proposed some of the resource implications are explored as a part of that. It is likely that the budget will require more than the £98,500 currently paid in by each Local Authority within the partnership where Climate Change mitigation/adaptation becomes a priority.

In summary the possibilities to impact Climate Change within the CLLP are significant and professionally there is support too. However, any measures need to be supported/led corporately and jointly by the respective Local Authorities and acknowledgement of the resource implications and specialist skill sets needs to be properly realised, as well as the potential impact on growth.

The timeline for adoption of the revised CLLP is September 2021. However, significant focus on climate related matters within it is likely to extend this deadline. There would be possible implications on five-year land supply and potential speculative development.

One possibility is to seek representation of officer/Members involved specifically in climate related work onto the CLLP working group. WLDC's HoP can investigate this further on behalf of WLDC.

At a meeting in January of the CLJSPC on Climate Change, consideration was given to the prioritisation of a number of climate related options (with a further number of sub-options detailed). Once preferred options have been determined they could be hard-wired into the review of the CLLP as key considerations, to ensure that the outputs of the review are as climate friendly and support sustainability as is possible.

On a wider note, planning policy favours sustainability in terms of fewer vehicles, better drainage, ecological benefits and permeable surfaces. Renewable energy sources such as solar panels and heat sources are governed by permitted development. However, many funding streams (feed in tariffs) have gone or have reduced in value.

**o How to support and work with all other relevant agencies towards making the entire area zero carbon within the same timescale:**

This work would be best suited once the Council has identified its own response to the issue and is in a position to consult and communicate this. The intention would be to obtain consensus among all relevant agencies on a collaborative approach. We would also have to identify who the key relevant agencies are.

**o Suggestions for budget actions and a measured baseline:**

A Carbon Measurement Plan 2016 to 2021 was approved in July 2016 by Prosperous Communities Committee and Corporate Policy and Resources Committee: the plan included a new five-year target to reduce our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by a further 17% so the total planned reduction will be 35% from our baseline year of 2008/9. Progress is monitored and calculated internally, with the results externally audited and validated.

This year, we have seen our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions decrease by 126.41t to 1,346.59t. This represents good progress towards WLDC achieving its target emissions level of 1,323t of CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2021. There is a remainder of 23.59t to reach the targeted goal for 2021 and this current position can be seen to represent the baseline. However, the plan will need to be redrawn and actions identified to meet the ambition of zero net CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2050.

Whilst significant carbon emission reductions will be necessary, carbon offsetting will be a critical element of achieving net-zero carbon. Net-zero carbon means balancing carbon dioxide emissions with the removal/sequestering of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, to make up for carbon dioxide emissions elsewhere. Reaching net-zero carbon therefore relies on a combination of reducing carbon emissions and carbon offsetting.

Financial implications

As part of the Carbon Management Plan it was agreed that a pot of £200k be set aside from Invest to Save reserves; £170,727.68 has been spent on carbon projects to date and the remaining £29,272 was earmarked for carbon projects at Trinity Arts Centre.

The 'carbon management pot' (RE68) showed year-end balance in 2018/19 of £61,600. However, the carbon management fund was always intended to be self-sustaining, with identified projects repaying for their outlay in energy saving costs or income from the Governments Feed in tariff Scheme – a guaranteed 20 year payment subsidy, designed to incentivise the take up of renewable energy technologies. There is an ongoing contribution to reserves each year of around £17k from the use of solar panels on The Guildhall,

Leisure Centre, MR Festival Hall and Trinity Arts Centre and as such, the forecast balance of (RE68) for year end 2019/20 has increased to £78,600.

Due to the departure of key staff members, new projects are no longer being developed under the carbon management plan and the carbon management pot has now been amalgamated into the Maintenance of Assets reserve (RE01)

All projects identified and carried out as part of the Carbon Management Plan to date have been delivered within the existing revenue budget combined with associated external grant funding received and continue to provide savings and income to WLDC. It should also be said that energy savings that the projects have delivered have not yet been properly quantified and the financial benefits that they have delivered to the authority are likely to be far greater than outlined above.

Although the future activities and recommendations outlined within the final report will involve use of budgets and resources from both across the Council and with partner organisations, it is likely that not all activity necessary for successful delivery of the programme can be contained within existing budgets. On-going work of this group will be to identify priority projects and identify costs for all work to be undertaken. Where there is an additional cost impact of this work, it will be included within a future Committee Report for consideration as appropriate. Resurrection of the carbon management invest to save fund is one avenue officers will investigate.

**o How the Prosperous Communities Committee can consider the impact of climate change and the environment when reviewing Council policies and Strategies:**

There are a range of systems and processes that can be implemented in a more consistent way as part of the policy development process to review and assess the impact of climate change and wider sustainability issues. Gov.uk provides detailed guidance on how to take account of wider environmental impacts in policy appraisal. The same approach can be adopted for strategy development.

A possible recommendation could be that all Council reports, policies and practices incorporate climate change mitigation and environmental impacts as key considerations. Currently, WLDC's standard reporting format does mandate clear consideration of implications in areas relating to climate matters (along with other aspects such as financial consequence, legislation and statutory obligation as well as staffing and equality and diversity.) However, reporting and identifying climate related considerations is not systematic and therefore needs to be strengthened.

If Climate Change and net-zero are to be fully considered in a systemic way, adopting a recommendation of this type can help ensure that proper environmental considerations are reflected in EVERY council policy and report and that the necessary investment is included in the required budgetary provision. The climate implications should also set out the positive health,



financial, economic and other co-benefits of the environmental implications as originally requested in the November 2019 Council motion.

**o Any available research (that is expected to be forthcoming) from APSE relevant to this work:**

Most of the research from this organisation comes from “APSE Energy.” The publications page is [here](#) and the ‘Energy across the Authority’ publication has a number of examples in it.

Some of the publications are open for all to read, others are available only to APSE Energy members, or can be purchased/downloaded at a cost. Membership costs £2200 per annum or £550 per quarter. Email extract from Head of APSE Energy below;

“We are finding a lot of councils coming to us and saying they need to get an action plan in place (most with a climate emergency declaration) to firstly measure emissions and then monitor them, reduce energy use, be energy efficient and generate energy if they can. We are suggesting they do a couple of things but that depends on capacity in house – if they are in a situation similar to yours it is about getting the message out which means holding one or a series of sessions – alternatives are:

- External presentation to management team/Cabinet – the fact that it is external helps get the point over and makes them realise the role of the co-ordinating officer is about co-ordinating rather than doing it all
- Facilitated workshops for senior/service managers, other councillors and partners
- Training for those expected to contribute ideas for an action plan
- Producing a communications strategy.

In terms of actions there are many things to be considered from validating energy bills, to improving new build standards through planning documents to looking at how your main suppliers are addressing the climate change agenda.”

Notes below collated from conversation with Phil Brennan, Head of APSE Energy and from the APSE website:

**Information on APSE and APSE Energy membership**

**APSE** is a local government, not-for-profit membership organisation which is owned by its members (all of whom are councils). In other words, they don’t have any separate legal identity from their members and “work entirely on behalf of the membership.” WLDC are currently members of APSE (but not APSE Energy) meaning all the officers and councillors can take advantage of the benefits of membership. APSE started off by focusing on frontline services such as refuse and cleansing, leisure services, environmental health, fleet management, housing, building maintenance, street lighting, highways, etc. but over time have moved into all areas of local authority service provision. This is relevant for the sustainability/climate change/energy agenda because only by acting across the whole authority will any targets be met or progress made. APSE have been around for 30 years and have 250 councils as

members. They also work with those councils who are not members, but they pay per service rather than as members and so may pay more.

**APSE Energy** Is part of the wider APSE family with the specific aim of getting local authorities back into a position of influence in the local energy market. This could be via generating energy such as through solar PV, low carbon vehicles, energy efficiency in domestic properties, installing biomass boilers or ground source heat pumps, or addressing fuel poverty by delivering a local cheaper tariff for local residents. A paper is in WLDC files and available which outlines the vision (the municipalisation of energy), aims and services of APSE Energy. APSE understand that we won't achieve this vision overnight nor are they expecting it to go on across the UK simultaneously but their view is that there are enough existing and potential schemes to make an impact on a rapidly changing market and they are looking to support and promote local authorities to do more. Every local authority has assets and most understand they can be used for energy purposes, as well as saving money or generating income. The general idea is to keep their members up to date with what is happening across the energy sector and because membership is through the Council, all members and officers have membership (rather than it being an individual that is the member) so the attendees can be energy managers, financial officers, asset managers, housing officers, leisure managers or anyone with responsibilities around the energy agenda.

APSE Energy has over 100 councils as members (see <http://www.apse.org.uk/apse/index.cfm/local-authority-energy-collaboration/join-apse-energy/apse-energy-member-authorities/>) and on this site APSE also list a number of benefits to joining:

“We run about 15 events a year covering different topics, some are repeated in different locations and are often hosted at member councils. Examples include workshops on solar farms, electric vehicles and charging, geothermal energy, Merton Rule/planning, hydro, energy procurement, housing matters, district heating, solar car ports and more. We get entry to a number of exhibitions and seminars for free for APSE Energy members in addition to the quarterly advisory groups we run in Manchester and Scotland and twice yearly in Wales and the south of England which are also free. We provide a platform for those councils who want to talk about projects they have and so promote them across the sector – or indeed for anyone to raise questions/problems and get input from others. Equally, we can respond to requests to look at specific issues which members are having problems with and get speakers along to talk about them.”

The **Big Energy Summit** is a 2-day event held annually in Warwickshire and is free for two reps for APSE Energy members. This takes place in March. All delegate fees, all accommodation and all meals are free of charge. Other events are available too which one rep from members can attend without charge.

APSE also provide **briefings, technical notes and newsletters** related to relevant issues. These help to keep members aware of changes. “We find a number of councils have little or no dedicated resource in the area of energy yet it is a fundamental issue for councils themselves and for their residents

and area. We can help provide that resource. We also produce regular research publications of between 30 and 50 pages which go to our members and are excellent reference materials highlighting practical issues and case studies.” See list [here](#). Recent titles include ESCos, climate emergencies, the Merton rule, local authorities investing in electricity and ECO; all written from a local authority perspective.

APSE also run a **consultancy** which has undertaken a large number of projects from a couple of days advice about setting up an ESCo through to a number of weeks looking at mapping and identifying opportunities for renewables projects, providing an options appraisal report and meetings with councillors and officers to ensure buy-in to a renewable energy strategy, help with the early stages on heat networks or production of a business case for investment in a renewables scheme. APSE have provided advice on electric vehicles and charging and have access to industry expertise on low emission vehicles within our consultancy. As a not for profit local government association they bill themselves as being cheaper than most of the other consultancies and use people who have experience of local government as well as being experts in the industry. “Having local government experience, they are fully aware of the political context and the officer-member relationship in local authorities.”

**Climate Emergency Declarations:** Although WLDC have opted not to go down this route yet, they are increasingly common now with 270 out of 410 authorities having declared. They differ in terms of local circumstances but raise similar problems to those we are likely to experience at WLDC – capacity, producing a plan, access data, setting targets and more. APSE are undertaking work on the data and analysis elements of this agenda and are helping a number of councils to write plans and strategies; to get senior managers and councillors on board and to identify priorities. APSE views this as a long-term exercise and something needing full participation from across the local authority, rather than being a strategy that sits on the shelf. APSE have produced a 40 page document as guidance on this topic also.

APSE also provide **training** sessions for councillors or officers about climate change in general, or specific elements of the energy agenda in order to spread the message around the council, engage with different services, boost the profile of the agenda and support officers to create a plan of action.

APSE see themselves as having an **advocacy** role and so speak at many seminars and related events to promote the role of local authorities as organisations tackling fuel poverty, investing in energy infrastructure or energy efficiency, influencing the energy supply in the locality and addressing carbon reduction and gaining community/economic benefits. They are in regular contact with government departments and OFGEM which gives us a further chance to push concerns that local authorities have as well as promoting what the sector is doing. “Being an advocate for local authorities is something we do across all APSE services, so it is more of the same really but with a focus on energy of course.”

There is also a **solar PV framework** that APSE have access to through Nottingham City Council, as well as access via Peterborough City Council for

EPC. "Members can take advantage of these and can save considerable costs in procurement."

APSE are about to launch an **energy price comparison** exercise which enables comparison of prices paid by local authorities for gas and electricity broken down into different categories. "Savings of only 1 or 2% can lead to significant savings but we have found there is no way for councils to compare prices. We are piloting with five authorities; have about another 20 who have shown interest and it will be open and free for APSE Energy members in the new year."

APSE puts forward the pitch that part of being in membership is also about being within a movement to look at alternatives to the big six energy companies, to address energy security and cost issues as well as promoting the local authority as a local leader in this agenda and recognising it has a role to play in place shaping in general. Income generation is often the key to finalising schemes and there are many examples of those who have undertaken schemes and are benefitting financially as a result. APSE is seen as a trusted brand which is part of, but slightly independent from, local government so we are in quite a unique position. The most recent IPCC report has highlighted the need for action to alleviate the worst excesses of climate change and they are promoting the role that local authorities are taking in their localities.

Further advice is available from a number of other bodies; however there are costs aligned to drawing on this. At this stage it is premature to advance any further discussion until the level, type and point at which advice is required is fully established. A clear prioritisation of actions would assist in determining the degree of further information/research required.

**o Report on the level of investment in the fossil fuel industry that our pensions plan has:**

As at December 2019, pension funds held in holdings classified as "Oil, Gas and Consumable Fuels" amounted to £20.7m (0.83%) of the total fund value of approximately £2.5bn.

**o Ensure that all reports in preparation for the 2021/22 budget cycle and investment strategy will take into account the actions the council will take to address this agenda:**

Reducing the organisation's carbon footprint and becoming net-zero carbon is a substantial undertaking which will have profound implications for the Council and its services. It will involve service redesign, procurement changes and the consideration of the environment practices of partners. It will affect all aspects of the Council's operation, fuel/energy use, buildings, supply chain and contractors. The Council will need to commit to embracing relevant technologies and consider the impact on existing strategies and plans.

There will be significant financial implications to deliver net-zero carbon that will need to be properly assessed and understood, although there will also be Invest to Save opportunities which will provide longer-term savings. At this stage, there is no way to accurately calculate the full financial costs. For this

reason, the strategy and net zero declaration may wish to set an aspiration to embed environmental considerations and carbon reduction into **ALL** of the Council's activities from this point.

If this is adopted, all reports will consider environmental aspects at their heart, while also mandating the investment required and carbon reduction co-benefits. The costs of change will inform the decision-making process.

**o Call on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible and ask local MPs to do likewise:**

One of the recommendations of the report would be to lobby the UK Government and request them to provide financial support to Councils to achieve/improve upon their carbon reduction commitments.

In recent years local Councils across the country have experienced unprecedented reductions in their available resources. This is set against a background of growing demand and expectations. Councils cannot achieve their ambition alone. Whilst not all activity will require financial investment there is a need to accelerate action related to cultural change as well as providing sufficient financial resources to make the necessary changes.

Officers and members of this group will need to form linkages with other local and national campaigning organisations to increase the leverage of their efforts and be well sighted of forthcoming changes in policy legislation and any opportunities that may be forthcoming.