

11th May 2022

Decision Session – Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change

Report of the Assistant Director of Policy and Strategy

Climate Change Action Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 York Climate Change Strategy will be published in October 2022. The Strategy provides a framework for the city in tackling climate change. It sets out our approach against the council ambition for York to become carbon neutral by 2030, including: how we can reduce carbon emissions that are under the council's direct control, how we can use our influence to reduce emissions across the city and how we can create a city that is resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- 1.2 The Climate Change Action Update (Annex A) demonstrates our commitment to taking action to deliver significant emissions reductions. The Update shows the progress that has been made against our climate change ambitions and begins to indicate the short/mid-term priorities, which will support and inform further work on a subsequent Action Plan. The developing Action Plan will be reviewed, including engagement with scrutiny, and will be updated annually to incorporate new actions that are required to achieve the ambitions in the Strategy.
- 1.3 The Climate Change Action Update currently covers most activity that is within the direct influence of the council or activity in which the council is the lead partner. Delivering the ambition of the Climate Change Strategy will require contributions from the whole city, not just the council. It is envisaged that the subsequent Action Plan will incorporate city-wide actions, including activities already underway through city partners, businesses, communities and the Climate Commission.

- 1.4 The Action Update reflects activity across eight priority themes and incorporates around £345m of investment that has already been committed to council-led projects and programmes and is already having a positive impact on reducing emissions and the effects of climate change in York.
- 1.5 Quantifying the carbon reduction impact of actions can be challenging. Where information is available, an indication of annual carbon reduction is given. Further work will be undertaken to better understand the carbon impact of individual actions.
- 1.6 As the Climate Change Strategy and subsequent Action Plan are currently being developed and worked through, a draft will be shared with scrutiny prior to any decision being taken later in the year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive Member is asked to:
 - i. Note the significant progress being made so far to take action on climate change and to note this Climate Action Update (Annex A), next steps, and contents of this report.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Climate Change Action Update includes council projects that have been delivered since 2019 that are having a positive impact on carbon emissions and climate resilience in York. It also includes planned projects and actions that have been approved or are in the pipeline for the next 18 months to 3 years.
- 3.2 Delivery of the actions are managed through different programmes within the council, with the internal Climate Change Programme providing strategic oversight and direction, progress monitoring and driving partnership working to maximise opportunities and achieve delivery of the strategy.
- 3.3 Where it is known, the level of investment has been included in the table. Investment comes from a range of sources including council budget, external grant funding and private finance. All levels of investment in the Action Update have been committed or are from

known/expected sources. In total, the Action Update incorporates around £345m of climate change related activity.

- 3.4 The Action Update provides a timescale for delivery against each action and, where possible, quantifies the emissions reduction impact.
- 3.5 It is proposed that this comprehensive summary of actions undertaken so far will form the basis for developing the later Action Plan to accompany the Climate Change Strategy and to deliver on its goals. It is envisaged that the Action Plan will include benchmarks to assess progress and will be reviewed and updated annually. Over time, the Action Plan will incorporate citywide projects and programmes, with responsibility for delivery extending beyond the council.
- 3.6 Progress against the Action Update will be subject to scrutiny from the Climate change Policy Scrutiny Committee.

4. Council Plan

The Climate Action Update reflects the ambitions of the Council Plan:

Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy

- 4.1 Actions include projects that increase green jobs and green skills across the city; providing new employment, training and increasing capacity in the supply chain
- 4.2 Actions support our ambitions of reducing fuel poverty and future-proofing our local economy to the impacts of climate change.

A greener and cleaner city

- 4.3 Actions support the ambition of the Climate Change Strategy for York to be a net zero carbon and climate resilient city by 2030.
- 4.4 Activity includes reducing waste, tree planting, carbon emissions reductions and reducing flood risk.

Good health and wellbeing

- 4.5 Projects are promoting physical activity through sustainable modes of transport, reducing exposure to cold or damp housing and providing more green space across the city.

Creating homes and world-class infrastructure

- 4.6 The Housing Delivery Programme will deliver high-quality housing to Passivhaus standards. The home retrofit programme is improving the quality of housing across the city and reducing resident energy bills.
- 4.7 Projects are minimising the carbon emissions from new infrastructure and large capital projects.

An open and effective council

- 4.8 The Climate Action Update demonstrates transparently the steps that we are taking to tackle the climate emergency.

5. Implications

- 5.1 Full implications are considered below:

- Financial – The action plan itself can be reviewed and updated within current resources. The action plan identifies a large number of projects that have been agreed through their own financial approvals (these are referenced in the Climate Action Update). Updates are provided through usual project monitoring including Verto reports and quarterly revenue and capital monitoring reports.
- Human Resources (HR) – Staffing issues are considered through the action's own programme structures.

On approval of the Strategy and Action Plan, relevant aspects will be communicated to the workforce with a focus on how CYC as an employer can make a difference and how employees can change the ways they can work or contribute to the action plan.

For example, the climate change actions can also link to employee wellbeing by communicating and promoting greener commuting and business mileage options.

- Equalities – The actions listed in the action plan are delivered through different programmes. These programmes/projects will develop their own Equalities Impact Assessments to assess and minimise any potential negative impacts.
- Legal – The Climate Change Strategy will be approved by Council in October 2022.

The York Climate Change Strategy and subsequent Action Plan will enable the Council to comply with its obligations under government's Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, published in October 2021

The projects listed in the Climate Action Update are delivered through different programmes in accordance with the Constitution and appropriate delegated approvals

- Crime and Disorder – No implications
- Information Technology – No implications
- Property – No implications
- Other – No implications

6. Risk Management

6.1 The following risks have been identified:

- The Climate Action Update reflects the current level of activity and financial commitment. Delivering these actions will not achieve our net zero ambition. The developing Action Plan will need to be regularly reviewed to consider its delivery against the Strategy once, published. This will include evolving the Action Plan to include actions across the city and identify additional sources of investment.

- Individual projects and programmes in the action plan consider specific risks to delivery of the action assigned to them. They are managed through their own delivery governance.

Contact Details

Author:

Shaun Gibbons

Head of Carbon Reduction
Policy, Intelligence, Carbon
and Communications
07923 222971

Officer Responsible for the report:

Claire Foale
Assistant Director Policy & Strategy

Report Date 29/04/2022
Approved

All

Wards Affected: [List wards or tick box to indicate all]

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

The Action Update (Annex A) includes links to relevant background papers for specific actions

Annexes

Annex A – Climate Change Action Update