

**Decision Session - Executive Member for
Environment**

10th August 2015

Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services

Resilient Council to Climate Change and Climate Risks

Summary

1. This report highlights how taking timely actions to build climate resilience that deliver multiple benefits across council services makes good business sense. It also recommends CYC, if selected, takes part in a new Targeted Adaptation Support for Council (TASC) programme.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member for the Environment is asked to consider:
 - 1) Formally recognising the risks climate change may pose to CYC / City services and operations, and how taking timely, cost effective action makes good business sense.

Reason: Continue to develop as resilient council to climate change and climate risks

Background

3. In 2010 City of York Council (CYC) committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the city and better prepare and adapt York's communities and businesses for the likely impacts associated with climate change. In order to meet this long term commitment a climate change framework and action plan were approved in 2010 by the Council's Executive.
https://www.york.gov.uk/download/.../climate_change_summary.pdf
4. The Action Plan aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and also to better prepare our city for climate change. The latter stream

of work is also sometimes referred to as climate adaptation or climate resilience and is the focus of this paper.

Why build climate resilience?

5. The record breaking severe weather that we've seen over recent years in the UK highlights the urgent need to prepare and adapt our communities and businesses and the infrastructure that we all rely on. The overall financial cost to businesses of the flooding in 2012 was up to £200 million. However, heat and draught also have considerable economic and social costs. Combined, flooding, droughts and heatwaves are set to become more common with a changing climate and it will cost us considerably more if we fail to take timely, proactive responses.
6. The Government through its National Adaptation Plan has been doing work with key sectors across the UK to help them understand climate risks and build resilience against a changing climate. In 2010 CYC received government funding to assess our current and future vulnerability to a changing climate. We also carried out a high-level risk assessment to determine key services that could be at risk now and in the future. Adapting to a changing climate is also embedded into major current strategies and services / operations including: Development Management policies, emerging Local Plan, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Flood Risk Management Strategy, Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme.
7. Like any business, City of York Council will face a variety of climate risks. They will impact on supply chains, operations and our customers across the city. It's the variability and intensity of these types of weather events that are likely to offer the biggest challenge. See Annex 1 which illustrates some of the possible risks associated to a changing climate for CYC / city.
8. Figure 1 illustrates why it also makes good business sense for council's to manage the impacts of severe weather and climate change, including flooding, storms, erosion, heat waves, extreme cold, water stress and drought.

3. Action to develop climate resilience delivers multiple benefits across different council service areas.

The key benefits to councils include:

- a. **Avoiding costs and making savings.** Developing greater resilience to climate impacts can help to avoid costs to councils and lead to savings in the costs of service provision. At one development site in Cambridge, sustainable drainage measures are projected to avoid costs to council services, homeowners and industry of £5.8m through measures costing £2.1m.
- b. **Supporting economic growth.** Climate-related risks to sites and infrastructure can hinder economic growth but a focus on climate resilience can generate economic opportunities. Liverpool City Council and the Liverpool Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are seeking to create the world's first sustainable coastal city region cluster ('AquaFutures'), specialising in marine impacts, river clean-up and water smart infrastructure.
- c. **Safeguarding vulnerable residents.** It is often the most vulnerable in society who are most affected by climate impacts and who will, therefore, most benefit from council action to develop climate resilience. A scheme in Islington identifies households most vulnerable to heat and cold through a 'seasonal health referral network', whereby those providing services from the voluntary or community sector are able to refer service users' details to the Seasonal Health & Affordable Warmth team at the council.
- d. **Protecting and enhancing the natural environment.** The natural environment can play a key role in developing resilience, e.g. through improving air quality or providing flood or drought alleviation, and significant environmental benefits can be delivered by initiatives to develop climate resilience. Research involving Birmingham and Coventry City Councils illustrates a wide range of potential benefits of water sensitive urban design and integrated catchment management, including combating of extreme heat, improving air quality, increasing council tax income and creating jobs.

4. Many actions which develop climate resilience are low-cost.

Hampshire County Council, in conjunction with partners, have invested officer time in developing community resilience in areas affected by flooding. This has significantly reduced the level of response needed from external agencies during floods, saving significant sums of money for the council.

Climate Ready Councils, Climate Ready et al (2015)

http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/climate-local//journal_content/56/10180/5832192/ARTICLE

Free targeted support for local authorities

9. Through Climate Ready's TASC project there is an unique opportunity to receive free support and guidance on how to increase resilience to climate change and climate risks for one council. See Annex 2 for details.
10. On 31st July 2015, CYC formally applied to take part in the TASC programme. A summary of the work is detailed below:

Key actions of TASC programme

- Series of 1:1 briefing sessions for key service / operational managers
- Workshops to 1) understand climate risks and 2) plan mitigation measures session with senior operational officers / managers
- Creation of a CYC climate adaptation plan broken into service areas and embedded into services

Key services to take part

Existing staff from Education, Economic Development, Transport and Highways, Public Health, Social Care, Flood Risk, Planning, Housing, People and Communities, Emergency Planning, Sustainability.

Benefits

- Up-skilling of existing senior / operational officers currently working in this area
- Builds on existing work and the work carried out in 2010
- Refreshes CYC understanding of it's exposure to adverse weather and future climate risks
- A new assessment of current risks and adaptation interventions per service area
- A comprehensive list of directorate actions to embed and mitigate current and future climate risk
- Creation of a new refreshed Corporate Adaptation Plan for CYC
- Enable CYC to share this work with partners and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) across the city to help raise awareness and reduce future adverse socio-economic impacts across the city.

Outcomes

All services across CYC understand climate risks and have measures in place now and in the future to ensure resilience to a changing climate

11. Should the Executive Member accept the recommendation in the report, and should CYC be selected to take part in the TASC programme, then CYC will need to allocate a small amount of existing resources to support this programme (30 – 35 days in total of officer time (across the whole council)).

Consultation

12. The following areas of the council have committed to support the TASC project: Public Health, Flood Risk, Housing, Communities, Sustainability, Transport, Highways and Waste and Planning.

Options

13. Option 1. The Executive Member for the Environment formally recognises that climate resilience makes good business sense and CYC take advantage of the TASC support (if selected) to ensure CYC is a resilient council to climate change and climate risks.

Option 2. The Executive Member for the Environment does not wish to support the policy recommendation above.

Analysis

14.

<i>Option</i>	<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
1.	Free service that will: up-skill senior / operational officers currently working on these areas across the council Builds on existing work and the work carried out in 2010 Refreshes CYC Increase understanding of CYCs exposure to adverse weather and future climate risks	Small amount of officer time required to support the programme (~30 – 35 days worth)

	<p>Create a new assessment of current risks and adaptation interventions per service area</p> <p>Create a comprehensive list of directorate actions to embed and mitigate current and future climate risk</p> <p>Creation of a new refreshed Corporate Adaptation Plan for CYC</p> <p>Enable CYC to share this work with partners and SME across the city to help raise awareness and reduce future adverse socio-economic impacts across the city.</p>	
2.	No additional officer time required.	<p>None of the above benefits as per para 10 delivered.</p> <p>Continue a business as usual approach to adaptation.</p>

Council Plan

15. This work directly contributes to the new draft Council Plan's commitments to embed environmental sustainability into everything that we do and to reduce carbon emissions.

Implications

- 16.
- **Financial** – *N/a at this stage*
 - **Human Resources (HR)** – see para 11 requiring 30 – 35 days of officer time to take part in TASC programme (if CYC is selected)
 - **Equalities** – *N/a at this stage.*
 - **Legal** – *N/a at this stage*
 - **Crime and Disorder** - *N/a at this stage*

- **Information Technology (IT)** - N/a at this stage
- **Property** - N/a at this stage
- **Other** - N/a at this stage

Risk Management

17. This work will help CYC to take proactive, timely, cost-effective approaches to building a resilient council. The TASC programme will help reduce CYC's vulnerability to current and future climate risks.

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**Report
Approved**

Date 31/07/2015

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

1. Summary of possible key climate risks (City of York Climate change risk assessment 2010)
2. TASC programme