

<b>Local Members Interest</b>
N/A

## **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tuesday 21 June 2022**

### **Climate Change Working Group Update Report**

#### **Recommendation(s)**

That the Committee:

- a. Note the progress of the Climate Change Working Group
- b. Agree the Chairman for the Climate Change Working Group for 2022-23

#### **Report of the Climate Change Working Group**

#### **Summary**

1. The Committee is being asked to note the progress of the Climate Change Working Group and to agree the Chairman for the municipal year 2022-23.

#### **2. Report**

#### **3. Background**

4. The County Council declared a climate change emergency in 2019 and set up an all-party group to review progress made to date and suggest initial ideas to reduce the County Council's CO2 emissions further. This work resulted in the publication of a Climate Change Action Plan 1 (CCAP 1) in November 2020.
5. An internal project group, with officer representatives from all appropriate teams, has been meeting regularly since December 2020 to monitor progress of the Action plan and develop Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2).
6. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee 7th September 2021 considered the Climate Change Annual Report (2021) and the draft Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2). Cabinet agreed the plan on 20 October 2021 which is current to 2025. It will be reviewed yearly to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose.

7. Although the Annual report noted a 25% reduction in carbon emissions from 2018/19 to 2019/20, this significant reduction in annual emissions is unlikely to be replicated going forward and future reporting is likely to show slower progress due to the nature of the challenge before the authority.
8. The Committee agreed to establish a Working Group to scrutinise and inform Staffordshire County Council's approach to Climate Change chaired by the then Vice Chair for Overview, Councillor Conor Wileman.
9. Membership: Charlotte Atkins, Tina Clements, Jeremy Pert, Bernard Peters, David Smith, and Conor Wileman (Chair).
10. The Working Group (CCWG) has met on three occasions :
  - a. 17 November 2021 – Scene setting and CCWG focus
  - b. 7 January 2022 – Scope and prioritisation of Key Lines of Enquiry
  - c. 3 March 2022 – Evidence gathering : Inquiry session
11. At the first meeting CCWG identified several key lines of enquiry including:
  - a. Embedding Net Zero commitment in Staffordshire County Council
  - b. The transition from petrol/diesel vehicles to electric, hybrid and hydrogen vehicles in Staffordshire
  - c. The decarbonisation of heating buildings and District and Borough Council local plans
  - d. The advantages of the green revolution – innovations and skills
  - e. The Waste Strategy best practice and links to the Climate Change Action Plan
  - f. District and Borough Councils working together on Climate Change
  - g. Carbon sequestration
12. The CCWG agreed not to look at the following:
  - a. Biodiversity and natural environment
  - b. NHS's approach to Climate Change
13. At a meeting on 7 January 2022 the Work Group considered a scope report and prioritised reducing the County Councils carbon footprint, at the first inquiry session which was held on 3 March 2022.
14. At the inquiry session members considered an overview of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board terms of reference, presented by the Cabinet Member, and invited the Directors of Corporate, Economy Infrastructure and Skills, Families and Communities, and Health and

Care to provide presentations and respond to questions on the approach to Climate Change:

- a. What has been achieved so far?
  - b. What has been done well?
  - c. What are the barriers/blockages?
  - d. What more can be done?
15. Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee invited the Chair of the CCWG to attend its meeting when a report and presentation relating to the NHS approach to Climate Change was considered on 11 April 2022. Findings will feed into the evidence base to inform the CCWG final report.

### **Next Steps**

16. The next meeting of the CCWG will receive evidence from the Local Government Association (LGA) and other Local Authorities to consider LGA climate change support for Councils and best practice case studies relating to 'reducing the County Councils Carbon footprint.'
17. The meeting has been delayed due the need to appoint a new Chairman. The membership of the Corporate O&S Committee was revised at Annual Council in May 2022.
18. Once evidence gathering is complete the CCWG will meet to consider its findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on the evidence gathered, and to draft a report to be considered by the Corporate O&S Committee.

### **Link to Strategic Plan**

19. The information in this report has a direct link to the Council's Strategic Plan as Climate Change is one of the four core principles which help shape all that we do.

### **Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

20. In preparing their report, the Working Group has taken into consideration any work undertaken by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee where Climate Change Action was considered.

## Contact Details

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