

Devon County Council's Updated Corporate Energy and Carbon Strategy

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet and County Council (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Recommendations: That County Council be recommended to:

- (a) **Declare that the Authority will be carbon neutral by 2030 through:**
- Corporate Carbon Footprint**
 - **Reducing its 2012/13 corporate carbon footprint by 70% by 2030**
 - **Retaining its existing target to source 30% of its energy requirement from renewable sources by 2030**
 - **Incrementally increasing the percentage of the remaining carbon footprint that is offset, from 5% in the current year to 100% by 2030**
 - Supply Chain Carbon Footprint**
 - **Engaging with contract providers to reduce carbon emissions from their operations and offset the remainder by 2030. As a first step, engage the ten highest-value contract providers.**
- (b) **Delegate Authority to the Cabinet Member for Community, Public Health, Transportation and Environmental Services and the Environmental Performance Board to incorporate these principles into a revised Energy and Carbon Strategy.**

1. Summary

This report recommends an approach for setting a revised energy and carbon strategy for Devon County Council's (DCC) operations in response to the climate emergency.

2. Background/Introduction

DCC's corporate carbon footprint has fallen by almost 40% since 2012/13. The current target is to reduce the 2012/13 emissions by 50% by 2030, which is likely to occur by 2021 and so a more ambitious target is needed, with consideration of when and how to achieve carbon neutrality.

Additionally, having signed the Devon Climate Declaration, the Authority explicitly needs to increase its efforts to reduce the emissions from its supply of procured goods and its commissioned services – these are not currently included in the corporate carbon footprint, but their carbon footprint is estimated each year and published separately.

3. Proposal

The Authority should elect to be carbon neutral by 2030 by implementing the following activity within its corporate carbon footprint and supply chain carbon footprints:

3.1 Corporate Carbon Footprint

A 70% reduction in the corporate carbon footprint on 2012/13 levels by 2030 is a challenging target that will require the set of projects in Appendix 1 to be implemented. This includes measures to meet the existing target for 30% of DCC’s energy needs to be met by renewable sources by 2030.

To achieve carbon neutrality, the remaining emissions can be offset, initially using existing government-certified schemes that plant trees. Given time there is an opportunity to pool the carbon-neutrality aspirations of organisations involved in the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to create a market for local offsetting projects in Devon, which doesn’t currently exist. Such local investment would generate environmental and economic benefits, in addition to carbon sequestration, and could include a broader range of offset projects, such as peatland or culm grassland restoration.

It is recommended that the authority begins to contribute to building this market immediately by incrementally increasing the percentage of the remaining carbon footprint that is offset, from 5% to 100%, each year between 2019 and 2030 as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Ramped approach to offsetting the residual corporate carbon footprint

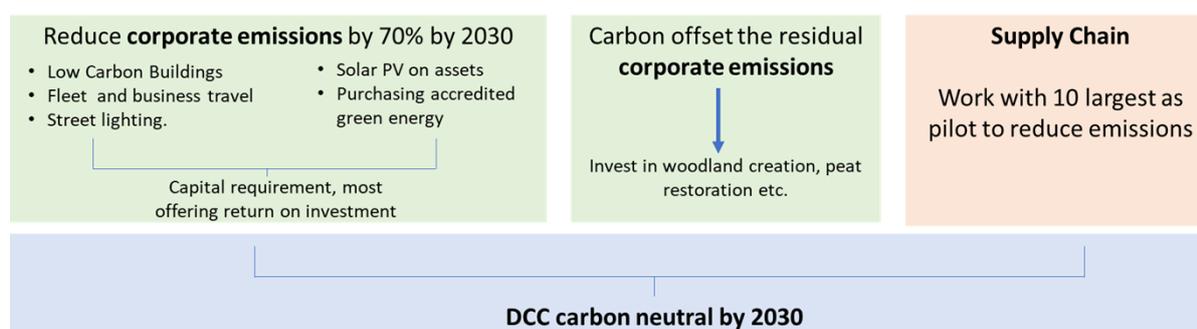
Year	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
% offset	5%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

3.2 Supply Chain Carbon Footprint

The supply chain carbon footprint is estimated to be thirteen times larger than the corporate carbon footprint and these emissions come from a large number of providers of goods and services e.g. civils contractors and care-service providers. In order to declare that the Authority is carbon neutral by 2030, these supply chain emissions will also need to be neutralised alongside the activity to neutralise the corporate carbon footprint. Addressing supply chain emissions is one of the specific expectations of the Devon Climate Declaration, to which this Authority is a signatory.

It is therefore recommended that the Authority commits to making the supply chain carbon neutral by 2030. This will involve contractors implementing measures to reduce direct emissions and using carbon offsets. As a first step, DCC should engage the ten largest contracts by value to understand how the contract providers can assist with the decarbonisation agenda. Learning from this pilot, an approach can be refined and rolled out to engage further contractors in due course.

3.3 Proposal Summary



Meeting a 70% corporate carbon reduction target by 2030 will be challenging yet achievable. Committing to offset the residual corporate emissions and to decarbonise the supply chain by the same date demonstrates further leadership from this Authority.

4. Financial Considerations

Reducing the corporate carbon footprint by 70% by 2030 will avoid £3.4m in energy costs in comparison to the existing 50% target. The costs of meeting the target are currently unknown due to uncertainties about the speed at which technologies will be brought to market and their cost competitiveness; but there will be costs, some of which will offer a return on investment and others won't.

The cost of the ramped approach to carbon offsetting the residual corporate carbon footprint will cost about £20k in 2019/20 and will increase to £200k in 2029/30 per annum.

Decarbonising the supply chain by 2030 will come at a cost. Some measures will save money – more efficient technology and embracing digital service provision for example – but carbon offsetting, which will be necessary to achieve carbon neutrality, could cost about £3m in the year 2030, which is ca. 0.5% of DCC's supply chain expenditure.

New financial resources will be needed to cover these costs.

5. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

The environmental impacts of the proposals are positive. The proposals will reduce carbon emissions and their associated influence on global warming. Additionally, the opportunity for carbon offsetting in Devon can provide air quality, flood risk, biodiversity and landscape enhancements that in turn can improve community resilience.

6. Equality Considerations

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/ new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

This may be achieved, for example, through completing a full Equality Impact Needs Assessment/Impact Assessment or other form of options/project management appraisal that achieves the same objective.

In progressing this proposal, an Impact Assessment has been prepared which has been circulated separately to Cabinet Members and also is available on the Council's website at: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/corporate-energy-and-carbon-strategy/>, which Members will need to consider for the purposes of this item.

Climate change will affect everybody in the county, and it will affect people less able to adapt the most. These include less affluent people, those living with physical and mental health

conditions, those living in coastal communities or other areas prone to flooding and young people who will live with the effects becoming worse over their lifetimes. Implementing the recommendation will help grow efforts to reduce international carbon emissions and minimise these impacts on everyone.

Furthermore, implementing the recommendation will require fundamental changes to the way the Authority's services are provided, which will need to consider the energy used in buildings, transport and the supply of goods and services. This has the potential to impact negatively and positively on service users depending on the specifics of the proposals. Tactical-level changes to services over the next decade will need their own impact assessment to consider their effect on equality characteristics.

7. Legal Considerations

The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 requires the UK to become carbon neutral by 2050. DCC has a moral obligation to demonstrate local leadership towards achieving or exceeding this requirement.

8. Risk Management Considerations

The potential risks to Devon's communities from climate change beyond 1.5 degrees are profound – e.g. extreme sea level rise, health effects (heat stress, anxiety, vector-borne diseases etc.), increased flood risk, economic shocks and a breakdown of environmental services that provide food, fuel and pharmaceuticals to name just a few.

The effort to minimise these impacts must occur at all scales from the individual to the global. Whilst DCC is unlikely to influence emissions elsewhere in the world, it is vital that the Authority demonstrates local leadership.

The corporate risk register has been updated as appropriate.

9. Options/Alternatives

DCC has three main options available.

- a. Continue with the current target to reduce the corporate carbon footprint by 50% by 2030 from 2012/13 levels with no specific mandate to engage its supply chain.
- b. Implement the recommendation in this report.
- c. Adopt even more ambitious targets than those recommended by this report, regardless of the current uncertainty relating to their achievability or affordability.

10. Reason for Recommendation

The recommendation demonstrates the necessary local leadership to accelerate the decarbonisation of Devon, the UK and, indeed, the globe that is required to avoid the worst effects of climate change on our communities. It also provides an opportunity for wider environmental enhancement and community resilience through the development of carbon offset schemes in Devon. The Environmental Performance Board will monitor achievement against these ambitious and challenging targets, plus any future opportunities to exceed these, and refer these back to Cabinet for review as necessary.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Community, Public Health, Transportation and Environmental Services:
Councillor Roger Croad

Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity, Dr Virginia Pearson

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Doug Eltham

Room No. AB3 Lucombe House, County Hall

Tel No: 01392 383000

Background Paper	Date	File Reference
Impact Assessment for Devon County Council's Revised Corporate Energy and Carbon Strategy	September 2019	https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/corporate-energy-and-carbon-strategy/

da180919cab DCC's Revised Energy and Carbon Strategy
hk 05 260919

**Appendix 1
To PTE/19/35**

The table below shows the set of projects required to be implemented to reduce the Authority's corporate carbon footprint by 70% from 2012/13 levels by 2030.

Sector	Project	Implementation
Buildings	Deep-retrofit of Lucombe House. Technically possible now.	ZebCat 2 Project is at full-application stage. DCC has committed match-funding.
Transport Note: Technology not yet available for all vehicle types but is likely to be by 2030.	Driver aids installed in the whole of the DCC-owned fleet.	Additional investment of £250k required. Payback is 2.5 years.
	Driver aids installed in all school transport contract vehicles.	Additional investment of £500k required. Payback about 2.5 years.
	50% of DCC's owned-fleet converted to electric by 2030 (cars and small vans)	Additional budget will be required to pay for any cost differential against diesel, which is difficult to estimate as the price of the technology is changing rapidly. There is likely to be a business case, but this is currently uncertain.
	100% of school transport contract vehicles with fewer than 8 seats converted to electric by 2030	
Renewable Energy (this package will meet the existing target for 30% of DCC's energy needs to be met by renewable sources by 2030)	0.2MW of solar PV installed on DCC assets.	DELETTI project is contracted and funded. Planning permission required.
	2MW of solar PV installed on DCC assets	Additional investment of £1.8m required, offering an IRR of 5 – 8%. Suitable site and planning permission required.
	Facilitation of a minimum of 23MW new solar PV capacity in Devon enabled through a corporate power purchase agreement between DCC and generators. This is 80% of DCC's projected energy consumption in 2030.	This can potentially be achieved for a similar price to that which DCC pays for 'brown' energy but a modest cost may be required.