

Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee

Climate Change Standing Overview Group

10:30 am 20th October 2020

Virtual Meeting on Teams

Notes from the session

Membership – all Members of CIRS Committee.

Present
Councillors A Dewhirst (Chair), P Colthorpe (Vice-Chair), Y Atkinson, K Ball, J Berry, J Brook, A Eastman, R Edgell, J Hodgson, J Hook, R Radford, C Slade and C Whitton. R. Croad

Response group has been meeting monthly, chaired by Phil Norrey. The tactical group has also continued to meet and the draft consultation is a product of this group. When consultation goes live in Dec the document will be easier to download.

Timetable of the project

Task force's proposal for net zero earliest credible date – 2050 should be the date at the latest with interim carbon budgets. Incorporating a 45% reduction of 2010 emissions by 2030.

The slide below extracted from the presentation summarises the challenges for the timeframe:

Devon's Timeline to Net-Zero Carbon

- Centre for Alternative Technology
 - "Without national-scale, systematic transition in place, time is now very tight. 2030 ... is now becoming a hugely challenging delivery timeline"
- Committee on Climate Change
 - 2050 is "the earliest credible date". "It is feasible, but will only be deliverable with a major strengthening and acceleration of policy effort"
- Centre for Energy and Environment, University of Exeter
 - The net-cost of meeting net-zero in 2030 to the Devon economy is almost three times higher than 2050 (4.2% of Devon's GDP, vs 1.5% of Devon's GDP)
- There isn't enough land available in Devon to offset the emissions associated with nationally-regulated activity between 2030 and 2050 (assuming tree planting is the preferred method)



Comments and questions from Members included:

- Concern for the specifics of funding for Devon?
- A: 2% GDP every year to reach net zero, but difficult to be specific at a macro level. Before the consultation actions with funding status will be published.
- Q. Will clear targets be specified on the course to 2050?
- Chapter 12 details indicators to monitor progress.
- Q. We should have a date before 2050 and should be strengthening our ask to government to support net zero before this date.

- Q. 45% 2030 – wasn't this raised as an issue previously?

Draft Interim Carbon Plan

Economy and resources:

Stretch target for recycling. 70% recycling by 2025.

Reward businesses and householders if they are acting in positive ways for the environment e.g. green mortgages or reduction in business rates.

Members comments and questions:

- Linked with similar initiatives in the region 5 mil boost LEP funding. LEP announced that the chancellor has not backed this with funding.
- What about efforts to reduce packaging on purchases to support the circular economy?
- Partnerships with big organisations which could improve recycling rate.
- Investment – significant opportunity to redirect pension fund to green initiatives locally.
- Explore carbon credit for Council Tax.
- Textiles recycling could be hugely increased, but reduction in buying is more important, but very difficult to achieve without societal shift.
- How is Devon County leading by example?

Citizens assembly will discuss financial incentives for householders.

Energy supply:

Need capacity on peaks – or possibly change when those peaks are.

Need to store energy

Need to deploy more renewable energy as fast as possible. Need for a energy strategy for Devon.

Members comments and questions:

- Difficulty in getting buy-in for landscape energies - but might help to put in context of alternatives.
- Increasing the use of hydrogen in daily life.
- Plan for ensuring that houses are well insulated

Issue for Citizens Assembly – onshore wind energy.

Built environment

Keen to build on the examples already taken place in South West for low carbon.

Behaviour change required

Retrofit buildings, need centralised Devon-wide advice service to offer independent impartial advice.

Net zero construction.

Members comments and questions:

- Retrofitting costs are prohibitive for older buildings, including those that are listed.

- Implications of central government planning changes and how this will be incorporated in new development.
- Need to proactively lobby government to incorporate net zero in new buildings.

Food land and sea

Develop a land use framework – establishing land use principles. Bringing activities together under a coherent strategy. Implement trees for Devon initiative. Create a Devon Carbon investment platform.

Question to Citizens Assembly Livestock farming – require a 20% reduction in beef, lamb, and dairy consumption. What does this mean for Devon?

Members comments and questions:

- Include National parks in the discussion.
- Livestock in Devon might be part of the solution, not the problem. Local food production should be part of the solution over and above importing food with lower welfare and safety standards.
- Consult with Natural England, who have just changed regulations for sheep farmers on Dartmoor, with limited consultation.
- The role of supermarkets – farmers having to sell into the market which supermarkets dictate. Need for a switch from supermarkets to local.
- Introduction of a Devon brand

Transport

Technology and relocalisation of services reduce the need to travel. Live, work and use services locally. Improve strategic cycle routes. Increase electric vehicle charging points throughout Devon.

Member comments and questions

- Need to reflect on the realism of reducing the need to travel in highly rural communities. Rural isolation considering the average age profile is a particular issue in Devon.
- Public transport is critical but will never get to some of the rural areas in Devon.
- Support low-emission vehicles particularly in rural areas.
- Improved cycle routes are positive but should also create new cycle routes.
- Constituents do travel for the sake of travel, particularly retired.
- Need to have pandemic proof public transport.
- Local transport hubs.

Making the plan a reality

Detailed funding that is available, planned and needs to be found. Have performance indicators relating to the plans objectives.

Member comments and questions

- Green mapping so people can share experiences and ideas