

# South Lakeland District Council

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> August 2019

### Green Team Progress

---

**Portfolio:** Cllr Dyan Jones - Environment Portfolio Holder

**Report from:** David Sykes - Director of Strategy, Innovation and Resources

**Report Author:** Dan Hudson – Strategy Lead Specialist

**Wards:** (All Wards)

**Forward Plan:** Not applicable

---

#### 1.0 Expected Outcome

1.1 To update members on the Green Team’s work to coordinate Council activity to combat the effects of Climate Change and promote Biodiversity.

#### 2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the committee:-

(1) Note the report.

(2) Consider and comment on the draft Biodiversity policy attached as Appendix 1.

#### 3.0 Background and Proposals

3.1 With the declaration of a Climate Emergency and the adoption of a Climate Change Policy at the beginning of this year and the resolution on Biodiversity at Council on July 23rd, South Lakeland District Council is demonstrating strong commitment to this deeply concerning issue.

##### *Climate Change and Carbon Emissions in South Lakeland*

3.2 Climate change is an increasingly important area of concern both in terms of the global impact of South Lakeland in terms of our greenhouse gas emissions (primarily CO<sub>2</sub>) and more locally in terms of becoming more resilient to the impacts of Climate Change and extreme weather events in particular. The table below demonstrates emissions in South Lakeland and how these are changing over time.

Year	Industry and Commercial Total	Domestic Total	Transport Total	*N. LULUCF Net Emissions	Grand Total	Population ('000s, mid-year estimate)	Per Capita Emissions (t)
2005	486.2	325.1	438.4	-80.1	1,169.6	104.3	11.2
2010	454.4	317.3	392.5	-90.4	1,073.8	104.1	10.3
2011	367.7	276.3	384.9	-91.8	937.1	103.7	9.0
2012	418.5	294.3	380.7	-90.5	1,003.0	103.5	9.7
2013	396.3	282.5	379.6	-90.1	968.3	103.6	9.3

2014	<b>366.8</b>	<b>237.3</b>	<b>383.0</b>	-91.7	<b>895.5</b>	103.5	8.7
2015	<b>334.6</b>	<b>231.3</b>	<b>396.9</b>	-95.4	<b>867.4</b>	103.8	8.4
2016	<b>302.9</b>	<b>216.0</b>	<b>408.9</b>	-94.6	<b>833.1</b>	103.8	8.0

\*LULUCF means land use change and forestry – which generally absorbs CO2.

### Local Authority CO2 emissions estimates 2005-2016 (kt (kilotonnes) CO2)

Source: DEFRA South Lakeland District

- 3.3 Emissions are falling. Total emissions fell by 29% between 2005 and 2016 with large falls in emissions from industry and domestic emissions. Emissions from transport have fallen more slowly and have started to rise again between 2014 and 2016. Emissions per head have fallen from 11.2kt in 2005 to 8kt today. South Lakeland's emissions comprise 21.4% of County-wide emissions. Emissions per head at 8kt is just above the County average of 7.8.
- 3.4 South Lakeland District Council's own corporate Carbon footprint has been estimated at around 3,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum, made up of 1,504 from transport and 1,492 from gas and electricity in 2018-19. We have cut emissions from gas and electricity by nearly 400 tonnes since 2013-14, a fall of 21%. Emissions from transport have fluctuated but in 2019, were slightly higher than their 2013-14 level. In 2018-19, around 5800 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were prevented through kerbside recycling.
- 3.5 The Green Team initiative has prompted further work both at District and County level to develop an improved understanding of our carbon footprint and we will update members on this work as it progresses.
- The Green Team*
- 3.6 The Green Team is a multi-disciplinary member and officer team, established last year to look at how the Council can respond to the challenges of climate change and wider environmental challenges. It includes members, specialists in planning, public health and air quality, parks and open spaces, property and buildings, waste collection, parking and street scene.
- 3.7 Following public consultation in the summer of 2018, a wide range of ideas were put forward by stakeholders and members of the public.
- 3.8 The initial list of measures was shortlisted into deliverable actions and these were consolidated into a 25 point Action Plan including
- Actions to be implemented by SLDC;
  - Actions seeking to influence the behaviour of others;
  - Actions to inform and engage the public on climate change;
- 3.9 The overall aim is to ensure that climate change is at the heart of the Council's decision making processes.
- Actions to Date*
- 3.10 That 25 point Action Plan is in the course of delivery and outstanding and ongoing actions are being rolled forward into a refreshed and expanded action plan. Key Actions to date include
- The adoption of a corporate policy on Climate Change (Background Document 1 and declaration of a climate change emergency by Council in February 2019;

- Commissioning CAfS to prepare a costed programme for a whole place transition to becoming carbon neutral, set up a panel of inspirational speakers on delivering low carbon energy, delivering a Low Carbon events programme and a business event, supporting low carbon community initiatives and developing a low carbon knowledge hub
- The adoption by Council of new development management policies in March 2019 including up to date policies on flood mitigation and seeking the use, where appropriate of;
  - Permeable surfaces, and other features that reduce flood risk.
  - Requirements for environmental net gain for biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure;
  - Biodiversity features such as bat boxes, swift bricks and hedgehog highways and other features that create or enhance locally relevant biodiversity habitats ensuring that provision reflects local biodiversity evidence base.
  - Sufficient and well-designed visually unobtrusive space for bin collection/recycling and adequate cycle storage either within the curtilage of a dwelling or building or through formal parking provision where communal buildings are provided.
  - Orientating buildings where they can optimise energy efficiency, solar gain and maximise daylight levels.
  - Maximum and practical use of sustainable and reused and recycled locally sourced building materials.
  - Water saving devices such as water butts.
  - Features that contribute to a greener, healthier environment and improve air quality including living/green walls and roofs and roof gardens and electric vehicle charging points both within on-site and off-site parking.
- The secondment of an expert from the Lake District National Park Authority to assist in refining metrics to quantify our organisational carbon footprint and measures to further drive down emissions from our own activities;
- Working with CAFS (Cumbria Action for Sustainability) to establish the potential for additional solar panels on SLDC buildings;
- Promote the provision of additional electric vehicle charging points;
- Promoting tree planting;
- Incorporating the consideration of environmental issues within procurement conditions
- Working with the County Council to promote safe routes to school;
- Implementing the Kendal Air Quality Management Plan;
- Working with the County Council to identify and improve the District Cycle Network to promote the use of pedal and electric cycles for short trips.
- Council decisions to be subject to climate change proofing.
- Using the Councils website and communications functions to raise awareness of climate change on an ongoing basis. For some weeks now, the Communications team has been regularly putting out social media communications to support the Green Team agenda, including promoting and helping to deliver electric vehicle charging points in the district, our partnership work with LEAP and guidance on use of wood burners.

- Incorporating an energy saving strategy within the Property and Land Management Strategy which seeks to reduce the Council's carbon emissions by reducing our energy use, through the efficient management of our land and buildings and be an exemplar to others and ensure that the potential impacts of climate change are understood for the entire life cycles of all of SLDC's property and land assets. For each asset, the new strategy will include:
  1. Undertaking a comprehensive energy audit which includes:
    - Assessing energy usage over a series of years and where data exists, analyse energy usage by facility and by site management activities / staffing / public use, broken down into heating/hot water, electricity and lighting. This will enable an understanding of which activities/facilities are high/low energy users and on a per capita basis for staff / members of the public.
    - Assessing performance of building envelopes (thermal insulation, building tightness, surface and orientation of the glazed surfaces etc.);
    - Assessing behaviour (how the buildings are used and how visitors and staff interact with the building on a day-to-day basis);
    - Assessing efficiency of the existing technical installations and evaluating any existing or potential energy management systems; quality of the regulation and maintenance of the technical installations (are the technical installations managed and maintained in such a way as to maximise their efficiency and minimise their overall usage);
    - Assessing ability to benefit from heat gains in the winter and limit them in the summer.
    - Assessing ability to benefit from natural lighting;
    - Determine Efficiency of electrical appliances and lighting.
    - Determine potential for installing automating systems for smart energy management
  2. Undertake a renewable energy audit which includes using the findings from the energy audit on energy usage, advising on appropriate renewable energy system deployment and locations across the SLDC estate. Any work on SLDC's estate should be in conjunction with the Council's upcoming carbon reduction strategy-

The Strategy seeks to ensure that where any Capital investment is considered on SLDC property and land, energy management must be a key consideration.

#### *Next Steps*

- 3.11 The work of the green team is iterative and a key priority is responding to issues arising out of the current set of roadshows including the critical area of biodiversity. An updated Action Plan is in preparation and that will draw on responses from the current consultation.

#### *Biodiversity*

- 3.12 Biodiversity is the variety and variability of life on earth at all levels. It is often measured through 'species richness'. The Council made the following declaration on July 23<sup>rd</sup>....

*This council notes in the recent report from the UN intergovernmental panel on biodiversity and ecosystem services. The report outlines the deterioration in*

*biodiversity globally and the serious consequences of a further decline in biodiversity.*

*This council further notes the UK government's failure to achieve agreed targets on biodiversity (the Aichi targets).*

*Council therefore*

- 1. Calls on the government to urgently take action to achieve the Aichi targets;*
- 2. Commits to a review of how this council's activities can ensure biodiversity protection while at the same time delivering services, housing and climate change protection to the residents of the district; and*
- 3. Calls on our local authorities in the county to jointly address the highly serious issue of the future deterioration in biodiversity*

3.13 Widening the scope of the team to address the related issue of biodiversity is a critical area. Climate change is a threat to many species, habitats and interactions between them both globally and locally. Conversely, thriving habitats, and woodland and wetlands in particular, are critical 'carbon sinks' which absorb and sequester carbon.

3:14 There are many biodiversity related issues arising out of the current series of roadshows. Much is already being done. The principle of biodiversity net gain is enshrined in our new planning policies, we are engaged in a large scale tree planting programme. We are increasingly managing our parks and open spaces to maximise biodiversity, changing mowing regimes to promote more diverse and species rich swards and working with community groups and volunteers to plant wildflowers in our parks and open spaces. Together with the County Council, we are investigating the scope for approaches to grass verge management to improve diversity

However, as a starting point, a draft corporate policy on Biodiversity has been drafted. This seeks to maximise the ways in which the Council can use its direct and indirect influence to ensure that the impact of human activity within South Lakeland on biodiversity is as positive as it can be. The policy is intended to be considered by Council in the early autumn and the Committee's views on it are invited.

#### Longer term issues

3:15 Opportunities include development of local energy networks, monitoring the impact of changing transport technologies such as electric cars, shared vehicles and greater automation and managing parking to minimise emissions and maximise active travel.

3:16 The Council cannot do this on its own and lobbying for action from Government – for example for national standards on zero carbon homes – will continue to be important, both by SLDC and in combination with other local authorities and partner organisations.

3.17 The Council Plan has a strong emphasis on climate change. The Climate Change policy adds weight to it. Tackling climate change is at the heart of the Cumbria Health Strategy and the recently adopted Parks and Open Spaces strategy. Work is just starting on the next local plan and minimising climate change and ensuring that new development is resilient will be at the heart of the new plan as it will with local plans in the National Parks which will shape development in large parts of the District.

#### **4.0 Consultation**

4.1 An initial series of roadshows were held in the Summer of 2018 at which suggestions were invited from stakeholders and members of the public for actions that the Council could take to reduce its impact on, and increase the resilience of the District to

climate change. A second series of roadshows were held in July of this year. These were attended by more than 250 people. More than 150 suggestions of measures were received in relation both to carbon reduction and to biodiversity and these are currently being processed. Additional suggestions have been received from a number of residents following the events. It is anticipated that these will feed into the next round of action planning.

## 5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 Not applicable. This is an information report

## 6.0 Links to Council Priorities

6.1 A key cross-cutting theme of the new Council Plan is encouraging a sustainable environment and inclusive economy that builds resilience, grows a green economy and is ready for the challenge of climate change

## 7.0 Implications

### Financial, Resources and Procurement

7.1 The Green Team has focused its consideration to measures which can be delivered within existing resources and budgets.

### Human Resources

7.2 The Green Team has focussed its consideration to measures which can be delivered within existing staff resources.

### Legal

7.3 Not applicable

### Health, Social, Economic and Environmental

7.4 This is an information report

### Equality and Diversity

7.7 This is an information report;

### Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
This is an information report		

### Contact Officers

Dan Hudson, Strategic Lead Specialist, d.hudson@southlakeland.gov.uk

### Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Draft South Lakeland Corporate Policy on Biodiversity

### Background Documents Available

Name of Background document	Where it is available
South Lakeland Corporate Policy on Climate Change	<a href="#">South Lakeland Corporate Policy on Climate Change</a>

Name of Background document	Where it is available

### Tracking Information

Signed off by	Date sent
Legal Services	01/08/2019
Section 151 Officer	01/08/2019
Monitoring Officer	01/08/2019
SMT	01/08/2019

Circulated to	Date sent
Director	24/07/2019
Human Resources Manager	24/07/2019
Communications Team	24/07/2019
Leader	
Committee Chairman	
Portfolio Holder	24/07/2019
Ward Councillor(s)	N/A
Committee	N/A
Executive (Cabinet)	N/A
Council	N/A

## APPENDIX 1 – draft corporate policy on Biodiversity

### Biodiversity

South Lakeland Council is committed to a review of how its activities can protect and enhance local and global biodiversity while at the same time delivering services, housing and climate change protection to the residents of the district and working with local authorities and other strategic partners in Cumbria and elsewhere to jointly address this highly serious issue.

To promote and enhance local and global biodiversity, South Lakeland will

- Ensure where possible that products procured by the Council and its contractors are from sustainable sources and encourage our community and partners to do likewise;
- Through the implementation of its Climate Change Policy seek to minimise the emissions of greenhouse gases which contribute to global warming and habitat degradation by the Council's own activities and by other stakeholders across the County and sub-region.
- Through its policy of avoiding the use of single-use plastics, and through encouraging other stakeholders to do the same to minimise pollution of rivers and oceans.
- Encourage habitat creation, restoration and safeguarding through its planning policies which;
  - Encourage the development of greenspace networks and corridors and develop a green infrastructure strategy;
  - Enshrine the principles of net gain, safeguard important site features and habitats and encourage habitat creation in new development;
  - Require the use of sustainable drainage systems and fit for purpose foul water drainage in new developments;
- Through our Contaminated Land Strategy, ensure that contaminated land is effectively remediated when land is redeveloped and ensure that new development does not have an adverse effect on air or water quality;
- Use its environmental protection powers to ensure that potentially polluting uses and activities are effectively managed;
- Where practical, adopt biodiversity friendly land management and habitat creation in parks, open spaces and other land within its ownership and encourage other public and community landowners to do the same;
- Ensure that existing woodland within its ownership is managed in accordance with current industry best practice to retain tree cover and biodiversity, and improve biodiversity where possible. This will include thinning woodlands to create opportunities for natural regeneration and create habitats for butterflies and moths.
- Work with the Environment Agency, National Park Authorities, the Morecambe Bay Partnership and major landowners to promote sustainable land management including promoting natural flood management;
- Support the Cumbria Wildlife Trust, the Cumbria Local Nature Partnership, the Morecambe Bay Partnership, the National Trust and other conservation bodies in understanding and enhancing biodiversity in South Lakeland.
- Ensure that biodiversity objectives are fully reflected in its own strategies and seek to ensure that they are given due weight in plans and strategies prepared by others.