

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting17th March 2022

1. Title of Item/Report

Environmental Sustainability & Carbon
Reduction Strategy 2022-32

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet was invited to approve a proposed Environmental Sustainability & Carbon Reduction Strategy for 2022-2032.

Climate change posed a real threat to society and over time would impact on all residents of Stockton on Tees. Efforts to limit climate change by reducing carbon emissions and promoting environmental sustainability would need to be widespread and sustained. The Council delivered services which contributed to greenhouse gas emissions, and Council policies set the parameters in which other companies and individuals acted and which themselves impacted on the environment, and the Council had influence on residents in ways which affect their environmental impact. In each of these aspects, the strategy aimed to shape our policies and actions to make a positive difference.

For Stockton Borough Council, work on environmental sustainability was not new and much had already been achieved. Overall, between 2009/10 and 2019/20 the Council achieved a 57.6% reduction on its net greenhouse gas emissions. However, to play our part in achieving the UN Climate Change target of keeping global warming within 1.5°C, the Council were obligated to do a lot more.

The Environment Act 2021, defined a number of targets and committed the Government to setting additional targets across the priority areas of air quality, water, biodiversity, resource efficiency and waste reduction. It was expected that many of these targets would apply to the work of Local Government and our performance was likely to be monitored.

The proposed Environmental Sustainability & Carbon Reduction Strategy (ES&CRS) reflected the structure of the Act and set out areas of work that might contribute to the achievement of national targets.

The suggested timeframe of the ES&CRS was 10 years, many scientists

considered the next decade to be crucial, but the Council's efforts to address climate change would need to continue over a much longer timeframe. The suggested approach was similar to that adopted by the Council in relation to the Equality Strategy; it sought to influence and realign activity across the spectrum of Council Services, rather than pursue environmental sustainability and carbon reduction exclusively through isolated programmes of work.

It was clear that the national and international response to climate change needed to be fundamental and radical. In some aspects it was possible to calculate the potential costs of the changes that might be required, but in many the cost was not yet known.

The ES&CRS set out the direction we should take and describes the actions that would contribute to the achievement of a set of overarching objectives. In some cases targets had already been quantified and could be adopted, but in many cases the setting of the timeframe within which objectives could be achieved, or the quantum of change we can deliver, was dependent on resources.

Through the Environmental Sustainability & Carbon Reduction Strategy, Stockton Council would commit to the principles and goals of carbon reduction and environmental improvements and undertake to pursue the resources necessary to achieve our objectives.

RESOLVED that the Environmental Sustainability & Carbon Reduction Strategy 2022-2032, be approved.

3. Reasons for the Decision

The Environmental Sustainability & Carbon Reduction Strategy 2022-32 will provide a framework within which the Council will work to reduce its own emissions and also influence others to do so. The development of an ambitious environmental sustainability strategy was a priority identified in the 2020/21 Council Plan.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight - Friday 25th March 2022

Proper Officer
21 March 2022