

# DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
SCRUTINY TEAM	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	25 APRIL 2024	14
<b>SPOTLIGHT REVIEW - CLIMATE NEUTRAL ACTION PLAN</b>			

## PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER(S)

This item is within the remit of:

Lead Member for Environment - Councillor Tommy Threlfall.

### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To advise members of the recommendations from the Spotlight Review on the Climate Neutral Action Plan.

### RECOVERABILITY

This decision is recoverable under section 7 of part 3 of the constitution.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Executive Committee is requested to consider the recommendations from the spotlight review included in paragraph 15 of the report.
2. That the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee be kept apprised of any responses and progress in relation to the recommended actions through periodic reports from the relevant Lead Officer.

## REPORT

### BACKGROUND

1. At the November meeting of the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee (IASC), it was agreed that a Spotlight Review on the Climate Neutral Action Plan be included on the list of reviews to be commenced during 2024.
2. Two documents were presented to the Committee in November: (i) Climate Change Action Planning document and (ii) the Fylde Council Carbon Emissions Report. Both documents do not have the benefit of a relevant strategy being in place.
3. The Climate Neutral Action Plan was prepared in response to ambitions set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-24 and the Fylde Council Carbon Emissions Report is baseline study which provides details about the carbon footprint for Fylde and an overview on how it could theoretically reduce its carbon emissions.
4. As requested by the IASC, the findings of the Task and Finish Group are reported direct to the Executive Committee.

## THE REVIEW

5. Climate Change is an important issue nationally and internationally, the commitments in the Council's Corporate Plan relating to climate change mitigation have been a useful reference point during the review. With the development of the new 2024-2028 Corporate Plan, it was considered timely that members of the scrutiny committee review the ambitions/commitments and actions relating to climate change.
6. The Task and Finish Group met on 3 April 2024 to carry out the Spotlight Review with a view to scrutinising the commitment and actions in the Corporate Plan and to make appropriate recommendations for the Executive committee to consider.
7. The Lead Member for Environment, Councillor Thomas Threlfall was invited to contribute to the review. The Task and Finish Group also took evidence from the Deputy Chief Executive, Tracy Manning and the Head of Environmental and Housing Services, Ian Williamson.
8. The commitment contained in the draft Corporate Plan 2024-2028 in the section entitled 'Clean and Green Environment' is: "Develop a climate change strategy to reduce our carbon footprint "
9. Fundamental to the work of the Task and Finish group was a clear understanding of the direction of travel. It was felt that the development of a strategy is essential to progress this commitment which should include reference to the cross-cutting nature of work in house and within the local community.

## CONSIDERATIONS BY THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP

10. The Task and Finish Group noted there is no dedicated resource within the Council currently responsible for leading the Climate Change agenda. Although the Council has tried to secure a specialist resource(s) to prepare the strategy and deliver the plan, it is considered necessary that a Lead Officer is identified to manage and drive the climate agenda.
11. The Task and Finish Group was aware that some councils have agreed a Climate Emergency Declaration as part of the commitment to the climate change initiative. Some councils have made a commitment for the Council to be carbon neutral by a specified date and to work with partners to achieve this target for the authority. This goes further than the commitment in the Corporate Plan 2024-2028, which is to reduce the council's carbon footprint but without specific measurement with a target date.
12. Members recognised that the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 is a good starting point to understand the Council's goals and commitments regarding climate change, it was felt that the Council's commitment to reduce the carbon footprint should extend to becoming carbon neutral by a specified date and include details of what that would look like, the Council should consider adopting SMART<sup>1</sup> targets.
13. The Climate Change Action Plan addresses what Fylde Council will do as an organisation to reduce its carbon footprint. The Task and Finish Group felt that the Climate Change Strategy should address the Council's role as a community leader responsible for encouraging people, businesses, and other organisations to reduce their carbon footprint to benefit the borough and wider regional climate. The Council should consider working with all stakeholders to address climate change issues.

## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

14. The following reference documents were referred to in the Spotlight review:
  - [Centre for Public Scrutiny – 10 questions to scrutinise climate action | Local Government Association](#)
  - [Scrutinising Climate Action Event Blog | Local Government Association](#)
  - [Engaging with the climate emergency - Centre for Governance and Scrutiny \(cfigs.org.uk\)](#)
  - Climate Change Strategy and actions from other local authorities.

## CONCLUSION

15. The Task and Finish Group recognised that the Council has proposals to embrace the Climate Change agenda and after consideration of the information made available to the committee have made the following recommendations to the Executive Committee:

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<sup>1</sup> [SMART is an acronym used for effective goal setting and objective development: Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, and Time-bound.](#)

1. That the Council considers setting measurable commitments in its new Corporate Plan to reduce its own carbon footprint by a defined percentage by an agreed date and to address the council's role as a community leader in encouraging people, businesses, and other organisations to reduce their carbon footprint, setting an example for the whole borough.
  2. To fully embrace the Climate Change agenda the Executive Committee and Full Council should consider acknowledging a climate change crisis. This will focus attention and priority on achieving the Council's commitments on climate change.
  3. That a Lead Officer is identified to lead, drive, and manage the Council's climate change commitments.
  4. That officers explore joint and collaborative climate change service delivery options with Wyre Borough Council and / or other partners.
  5. Agree an effective means to produce a 'Climate Change Strategy' for Fylde Council and to ensure adequate resource for its production.
  6. To consider a dedicated resource responsible for the coordination, facilitation, and delivery of the strategy across the council and its partners.
16. The committee should note that there is no current resource with the capacity and the required capability, or skill set, to take on the responsibility of a Lead Officer for Climate Change to address recommendation number 3, the resource would need to be appointed or commissioned externally. Any dedicated resource to deliver the actions proposed from a Climate Strategy would only be known once the strategy has been developed however, any resource would need to be an additional cost to the revenue budget.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy - To create a vibrant and healthy economy	√
Environment - To deliver services customers expect	√
Efficiency - By spending money in the most efficient way	√
Tourism - To create a great place to live and visit	√

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There is currently no approved revenue or capital budget provision in respect of the proposals as described within this report. If the proposals are to be adopted, the scale and method of funding would need to be considered as part of the budget-setting process for future years.
Legal	None
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	If the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee are accepted the sustainability and environmental implications will be positive.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
<a href="#">Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee 21 November 2023</a> In commending the progress and ambitions listed, the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> (i) to note the report and (ii) to establish a Task and Finish group comprising councillors Sue Fazackerley, Damian Buckley, Joanne Gardner, Bill

Taylor, Viv Willder and Sandra Pitman to undertake a spotlight review on the topic with a view to reporting its findings to the Executive Committee.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM**

Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Agenda/ Minutes IASC	21 November 2023	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings Calendar</a>

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Lyndsey Lacey-Simone	Tel 01253 658504	April 2024