



Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Board

Date: 18th June 2014

Wards Affected: All

Report Title: Energy and Climate Change Strategy 2014 – 2019

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1. Purpose and Introduction

- 1.1 For Members to note the overall contents of the Energy and Climate Change Strategy 2014 – 2019. The strategy sets out the challenges for Torbay and how these can be addressed with the overarching aim of securing economic prosperity and increasing social and environmental benefits by reducing carbon emissions.
- 1.2 The revised strategy reflects the scale of the challenge and the need to build on existing strengths and explore new opportunities for sustainable development. Securing the necessary commitment to deliver the projects set out within the strategy will be essential to achieve financial savings and the proposed carbon reduction targets.

2. Proposed Decision

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Board consider the attached consultation document and makes its recommendations.

3. Reason for Decision

- 3.1 The strategy will not constitute a change to the current budget.
 - 3.2 This strategy will continue to provide the Council with a policy framework document to support its position as a community leader, service provider and estate manager whilst shaping other policies and services which generate financial savings and impact upon the wider environment. It helps to provide a framework for making wider decisions and as a tool to identify and justify where the Council might get involved in mitigating and adaption to climate change at local level.
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Supporting Information

4. Position

- 4.1 It was agreed at full council that the adopted climate change strategy 2008 – 2013 was to be refreshed after five years.
- 4.2 The political landscape has altered at both national and regional levels since the previous climate change strategy was produced. National carbon reduction targets have increased, the need to develop resilience has been highlighted by recent extreme weather events and the impact of energy price rises on households and the council reflect the need to update the strategy.
- 4.3 This revised strategy reflects many of the priorities and aspirations set out in the emerging Local Plan 'A Landscape for Success' and the recently adopted Economic Strategy.

5. Possibilities and Options

- 5.2 To help secure the investment needed to promote sustainable growth Torbay must have a clear, well supported strategy in place. Adopting the Energy and Climate Change Strategy 2014-2019 will ensure this is the case by communicating its priorities to local and national bodies.
- 5.3 Future energy and climate change projects contained in the strategy will all need accompanying robust business cases before they are developed.

6. Equal Opportunities

- 6.1 The strategy has no equal opportunities impact.

7. Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

- 7.1 This strategy is not recommending any direct commissioning of services and therefore does not have a direct impact with Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 Development of the draft strategy has already involved consultation with Council departments.
- 8.2 The strategy has been presented to elected members and the Strategic Leadership Team. It is currently undergoing a public consultation and has been sent to all Councillors. It will be subject to changes following comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Board and from public consultation prior to consideration by full council.

9. Risks

- 9.1 Torbay has increased vulnerability to the effects of climate change due to its reliance on its strategic road and rail links and coastal location.
- 9.2 If the strategy is not adopted Torbay will not have a current adopted plan for tackling energy security and climate change at a local level. Failure to improve the resilience of the area is also likely to lead to increased pressure on services and infrastructure and therefore higher costs for the Council.
- 9.3 There have been local, national and international changes since the last climate change strategy was approved by Torbay Council in 2008. If these changes are not reflected and a new five year carbon budget set it would result in missed opportunities for cost and efficiency savings; reduce the Councils ability to hedge against future energy price rises, and; increase the Councils exposure to climate change risks.
- 9.4 By not adopting the strategy Torbay would be not be able to take full advantage of the growth in green jobs that is occurring nationally and in particular in the South West. It would be in danger of becoming less competitive and reduce its ability to secure Regional, National & European funding.
- 9.5 In addition, there would also be a reputational loss by not demonstrating community leadership in this area and a reduced negotiation stance when approaching national bodies that can assist in developing Torbays resilience.

Appendices

No appendices.

Additional Information

The following web pages are relevant to the strategy.

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/index/yourservices/environment/climatechange.htm>

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/index/yourservices/environment/climatechange/climatechangestrategy.htm>

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/index/yourservices/environment/environmentpolicy/environmentstatement.htm>