

REPORT OF Head of Communities and Place
To: Full Council
Subject: 2023 Update of Torridge District Council's Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan
Date: 4th September 2023 **Reference:**

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To put forward for approval by Full Council the 2023 update of the Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan for Torridge

1. INTRODUCTION

In July 2019 Torridge District Council declared a 'Climate Emergency'. This was in recognition of the science and evidence of the impacts that climate change is having on our environment, population and communities. This declaration committed Torridge District Council to reach net carbon neutrality by 2030.

In 2021 members approved our first Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan and we are committed to reviewing, updating and presenting this to members on an annual basis.

Publication of the 2023 update of the plan was delayed due to election of a new Council in May 2023.

2. REPORT

The updated plan is attached to this report. It has been developed with input from the Councillor Climate Change Working Group who endorse and put forward the plan for approval by Full Council.

The changes/ updates to this year's plan are as follows:

Pg 1 Welcome to Torridge	Description of Torridge amended to better reflect rural nature of the district. Census para summarises 2021 Census data on population
Pg 3 Case for declaring a climate emergency	Takes account of UN Sixth Assessment Report etc
Pg 10 What we have already achieved	Includes examples from the last 12 months
Pg 11 Opportunities arising from FLOW in the Celtic Sea	New section added and text relating to the LEP and the Growth Strategy removed.
Pg 15 TDC's Carbon footprint	Includes most recent calculation (2021/2022)
Pg 19 Working with Devon CC	Devon Carbon Plan and Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Adaptation Plan updates
Pg 21 Planning and Place	Reflects current status of local plan review.
Pg 26 Biodiversity & the Natural Environment	Information on Torridge's proposed Biodiversity Management Plan added.
Pg 26 Communications	Includes 2022 staff survey results



Pgs 31+	All actions in action plan updated
Pg 53, 54	New actions 7.7, 7.8, 7.9

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

None.

Financial Implications

While the Carbon Plan does not specify any specific investment required from Torridge District Council it does highlight areas where financial impacts may occur in the future as we move towards our stated climate ambitions.

Human Resources Implications

N/A

Sustainability/Biodiversity Implications

Sustainability and biodiversity are at the heart of the Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan for Torridge.

Equality/Diversity

N/A

Risk Management

Climate change and our net-zero carbon commitment are included on our Corporate Risk Register.

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

N/A

Data Protection (GDPR) Implications

N/A

Climate Change

Climate change is at the heart of the Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan for Torridge.

Ward Member and Lead Member Views

I commend this revised Carbon Plan to members. It is the result of a considerable amount of work by our Joint Climate Officer who through producing carbon audits of the Council's properties, transport and other activities has provided the essential basis for implementing the measures set out in the actions section of the Plan. I implore this Council to support and enable these measures as a matter of urgency in the context of the increasing threats of climate change to our way of life and the natural environment.



Date of Consultation – 8/8/23

4. CONCLUSIONS

We are now in a programme of annual review, update and approval of TDC's Plan and hopefully members will appreciate the ongoing efforts that is being made in this programme. We have laid the foundations for taking forward this Corporate Priority and will continue to refine this Plan to highlight progress, issues and opportunities. This broad and ever-changing agenda touching most aspects of Council operations but the annual reporting of the Plan allows us to take stock of our progress and focus going forward. We will continue to refine this report in annual iterations, setting targets and developing a 'roadmap' to meet our stated net zero carbon declaration.

Meeting our targets will be an ongoing challenge to this Authority given the pressure on resources and competing priorities both locally and nationally.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

That members note and approve the 2023 update of the Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan for Torridge.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultations:	Lead Member for Climate – Cllr Hames Officers Consulted -SMT, OMT
Contact Officer:	Donna Sibley, Climate & Sustainability Officer
Background Papers:	None

