Responding to the Devon Climate Emergency

Briefing for Members – August 2019

1. Purpose

This paper outlines the activity facilitated by Devon County Council (DCC) to demonstrate leadership on the locally-declared climate emergency. A temporary website describing the content of this paper is at https://www.devon.gov.uk/energyandclimatechange/devon-climate-emergency

2. An Immediate Collective Response

Borrowing procedures from civil emergency preparedness and response protocols, DCC convened a strategic-level teleconference of Local Resilience Forum members and others on the 9th May. This group of 25 Chief Executives and Directors agreed to form the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group (DCERG) and initially set out a shared ambition in a Devon Climate Declaration.

A multi-agency Tactical Group drafted the Declaration. The main actions the signatories to the Declaration will be committing to are:

- a willingness to lobby for required national policy changes and resources
- to review organisational carbon reduction plans within 6 months to meet or exceed the IPCC targets.
- collaborating on the production and implementation of a Devon Carbon Plan to meet the IPCC decarbonisation timetable at the latest (i.e. 45% reduction from 2010 by 2030 and net-zero by 2050).
- agreeing to collectively review community-related risks from a 1.5-degree warmer world.

The Declaration and the Devon Carbon Plan will complement activity that is being planned by individual organisations and geographies – it is not trying to compete. Collating the various layers of activity across the county, and being represented by one unified group, will provide stronger market opportunities to engage green financiers discuss with government the resources necessary to achieve a net-zero Devon.

All of the DCERG members endorsed the principles of the Declaration at its meeting on the 22nd May and agreed to discuss with their leadership team the opportunity for their organisation to sign the Declaration as quickly as their procedures allow.

In the meantime, the DCERG has begun the appointment process of a project manager to lead the joint initiative. Interviews are in mid-September and the project manager is hoped to be in post soon after, depending upon notice periods. DCC has made £250k available for developing the Devon Carbon Plan and hopes that other partners will contribute resources as well.

To assist with the implementation of the second bullet-point of the declaration DCC also funded a carbon footprinting workshop for DCERG partners and parish/town councils on the 23rd July. The Centre for Energy and Environment at the University of Exeter shared a standardised approach to preparing an organisational carbon footprint. The presentation provided at the workshop is available for download here.

3. Devon Carbon Plan

At its meeting on the 26th June 2019, the DCERG agreed to appoint a specialist Net-Zero Task Force to develop the Devon Carbon Plan. This Task Force consists of 12 core members and two advisory members with expertise in areas relevant to carbon reduction and drawn from economic, environmental, health and academic organisations, and is chaired by Professor Patrick Devine-Wright, a leading climate expert. Further information and a list of the members is available at https://www.devon.gov.uk/energyandclimatechange/devon-climate-emergency/net-zero-task-force. The first meeting of the Task Force is on the 23rd September.

A series of thematic hearings will be delivered by the Task Force where experts will be invited to answer questions to determine the barriers and opportunities of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in specific areas such as transport, new development, waste, and agriculture.

The hearings will identify if any additional research is necessary before putting forward potential policy options for consideration by a citizens' assembly and subsequent inclusion in the Devon Carbon Plan.

Options drawn up by the Task Force will be tested and refined at a series of citizens' assembly meetings, which will be scheduled to take place next spring in order to help inform the content of the draft plan. A full public consultation will then be held on the draft plan, with the aim of the DCERG organisations adopting the final plan by the end of 2020. The indicative project timetable is shown in the Gantt chart below:

By end	Apr 2019	May 2019	Jun 2019	Jul 2019	Aug 2019	Sep 2019	Oct 2019	Nov 2019	Dec 2020	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2020	Apr 2020	May 2019	Jun 2020	Jul 2020	Aug 2020	Sep 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020
DCERG and Tactical Group Established																				
Climate Declaration Published																				
Climate Declaration Signed by Organisations																				
DCERG Approves Plan-Making Process																				
Task Force appointed																				
Project Management Appointment																				
Appraise evidence and design Thematic Hearings																				
Procure Citizen Assembly																				
Thematic Hearings – Developing Policy Options																				
Citizen Assemblies																				
Draft the Plan																				
DCERG organisations endorse Draft Plan																				
Consult on Draft Plan																				
Produce Final Plan																				
DCERG members adopt Final Plan																				

4. Review of Climate-Related Community Risks

The DCERG has also formed the Climate Impacts Group that will undertake an initial review of the risks currently identified by the Local Resilience Forum to assess the impact on those from climate over the coming decades. The Group is being chaired by Devon and Cornwall Police. Four activities are underway:

- The Met Office is to produce a document outlining what climate change effects will be for the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) area as a reasonable

worst case scenario (RWCS) for 2030 and 2050 and provide evidence to back up these predictions.

- The Environment Agency is to produce a document outlining what the impact will be of the predicted climate change on the LRF area in terms of sea level rise, flooding, drought, heatwave, etc. for the 2030 and 2050 RWCS.
- University of Exeter to produce a document of different knock on risks and impacts which are likely outside of the principal severe weather effects and usual LRF risks, such as social, political and economic impacts. E.g. impact on agriculture and tourism.
- Health to produce a report on likely impacts on health sector for the RWCS at 2030 and 2050, in terms of excess deaths due to events such as heatwaves, drought, severe weather, pressures on provision of services, increase in vector borne disease, plant and animal disease effects which may have knock on effect on human health.

The outputs of these four workstreams will be used to review the community risks in the risk register at an event at the Met Office in early 2020

5. Stakeholder Map

The stakeholder map, below, provides a picture of how the groups fit together and where some of the opportunities are for different types of organisations to be involved the emergency response.

6. Conclusion

In collaborating through the DCERG, Devon is at the forefront of regional leadership on the climate emergency. Through the Declaration we have collectively acknowledged the scale of the unprecedented challenge ahead and that no individual organisation can decarbonise Devon, or any part of it, by itself. The process to produce the Devon Carbon Plan will bring together world-renowned specialists, local non-governmental organisations and communities to develop a workable plan. Everyone will be able to comment via the public consultation.