ABSTRACT: This report brings forward a Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan for Angus Council 2012-2016. This report has been developed to take into account the public bodies’ duties imposed under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. agree the contents of this report; and

2. agree that the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan does not require a SEA as it is likely to have no or minimal environmental effects and notification to this effect should be submitted to the SEA Gateway.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The key objective of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 is to reduce Scotland’s greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050, covering carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases. Under the terms of the Act local authorities are considered “major players” and must in exercising its functions, act:

- in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of the targets set in or under Part 1 of the Act;
- in the way best calculated to help deliver any programme laid before the Scottish Parliament under section 53;
- in a way that it considers most sustainable.

2.2 All public bodies within the definition of the Act are required to comply with the climate change duties and are encouraged to take a broad approach when complying with the duties and include all direct, indirect and influenced emissions. Climate change action should address (the three aspects of the duty) mitigation, adaptation and acting sustainably and be embedded across all departments via corporate planning.

3. CURRENT POSITION

3.1 In response to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, the council established a short life working group to bring forward for approval a climate change strategy. This group is led by the Head of Planning & Transport (as authorised under Standing Orders to manage the council’s response to the new climate change duties) in close co-operation with the Head of Property who has the main responsibility under the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRCEES) and with contributions from all departments. The attached (Appendix I) Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan is the result of that work.
4. PROPOSALS

4.1 It is proposed that the committee approve the contents of the attached Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for implementation over the period 2012-2016. A requirement of the Act is for a public body to report annually reductions in relation to its direct greenhouse gas emissions. These annual reports will be submitted to committee in due course.

5. RISKS

5.1 This report does not require any specific risk issues to be addressed. However, unless the council approves a Climate Change Strategy then it is at risk of not complying with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with the terms of this report. Actions in the Climate Change Strategy are planned projects which will be funded from within financial resources available to the relevant department.

7. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The issues contained in the report fall within an approved category that has been confirmed as exempt from an equalities perspective.

9. ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

9.1 This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2011-2014:

- Our carbon footprint is reduced.

10. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

10.1 On consideration of the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan the Climate Change Strategy Working Group have concluded that this Strategy is likely to have no or minimal environmental effect and have notified the SEA Gateway accordingly, as required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. This notification will be published by the Gateway on the Public Register maintained to that end.

11. CONSULTATION

11.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Finance and Head of Law & Administration and the Head of Property have been consulted in the preparation of this report.
12. CONCLUSION

12.1 The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan is very comprehensive covering ten main themes which includes a section looking at adapting to the inevitable effects of climate changes which are already in train. This strategy will help us to continue and improve on the work we have already done and will also contribute to national targets of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050. Although concentrating mainly on our own “in-house” emissions, it is hoped that this strategy will provide an inspiration to others to do their bit for the climate and help us all to reduce our carbon footprint thus protecting future generations from the hazards of climate change.

ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

P&T/GWC/RManson/IAL
31 October 2011