

# Devon Climate Emergency Response Group (DCERG)

## Minutes

21<sup>st</sup> January 2021

### Attendees

Phil Norrey	Devon County Council
Doug Eltham	Devon County Council
Hannah Oliver	Devon Climate Emergency
Emily Reed	Devon Climate Emergency
Emma Page	University of Exeter
David Bartram	Exeter City Council
Helen Dobby	Environment Agency
Fiona Tovey	Environment Agency
Steve Brown	Public Health Devon
Harry Barton	Devon Wildlife Trust
Dan Ulanowsky	Pennon Group
Paul Cottingham	National Farmers' Union
Andrew Butler	National Farmers' Union
Alex Gandy	Dartmoor National Park Authority
Kevin Jones	University of Plymouth
James Cooper	Environment Agency
David Edmondson	Torbay Council

### Apologies

David Ralph	Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
Clare Reid	Exmoor National Park Authority
Michael Titchford	North Devon District Council
David Eaton	Teignbridge District Council
Penny Tranter	Met Office
Sara Gibbs	Public Health Devon
Janet Williams	Torridge District Council

## 1. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were **AGREED** as a true record of the discussion.

## 2. Project Progress Report

### 2.1. Project Management Update

Doug Eltham invited questions about Section 1 of the Progress Report at Annexe 1 of these minutes. No further questions asked.

## 2.2. Update from the Net-Zero Task Force

Hannah Oliver and Emily Reed provided an update reflecting Section 2 of the Progress Report at Annexe 1 these minutes.

David Bartram noted it was good to see the consultation approach being amended based on the demographic of those responding already.

Phil Norrey asked for consideration to be given to developing communications about what the partnership is doing to share in the build up to the G7 and COP26.

**ACTION: Secretariat to work with the partners to gather communications material in the build-up to these events, including with Emma Page.**

## 2.3. Update on the Climate Impacts Group

Helen Dobby provided an update reflecting Section 3 of the Progress Report at Annexe 1 of these minutes. Helen thanked Elliott Batty of the Local Resilience Forum and Emily Reed for helping develop the risk framework.

## 3. Future Project Timetable

Emily Reed described that the period running up to the launch of the consultation had not allowed the ideal amount of time to meet the consultation deadline without significant pressure being placed on the secretariat team, the Task Force and the web contractor. All parties pulled together and the deadline was met, however we need to take the learning from this and amend the future project timetable. Once the consultation has closed and it is known how many consultation responses need to be processed, the secretariat will propose a revised timetable for preparing the final version of the Interim Devon Carbon Plan.

The Group **AGREED** this approach.

## 4. Local Updates

Andrew Butler reported that the NFU is asking members to [pledge what they will do](#) ahead of COP26.

Alex Gandy advised the Group that the Dartmoor National Park Authority is looking to carbon footprint the Authority's land assets and incorporate those into the organisation's carbon footprint.

James Cooper stated that the Environment Agency southwest has submitted its climate strategy to the national team for a steer on what can be implemented locally. The organisation is starting to embed low-carbon in optioneering of new projects. Also looking at a review of offsetting opportunities, which is expected to be published on gov.uk in the summer.

Fiona Tovey promoted the consideration of plastics in partner climate plans. The plastics team is developing a research proposal to establish the impact of microplastics on soil health. Fiona offered assistance and the sharing of further resource to partners. David Bartram added that there are lots of good messages on reducing plastic use on the Recycle Devon website and said that Exeter City Council kicked off the Ocean Recovery Project with

Keep Britain Tidy a couple of years ago and are currently nominated for a couple of awards for this work.

David Edmondson reported that Jaqui Warren is now in post as their new Climate Change Officer. The authority expects to allocate £100,000 next year for climate change initiatives. Two solar farm proposals are progressing.

Harry Barton said the Devon Wildlife Trust is now implementing its carbon plan and is looking at expanding the scope of its carbon footprint to include commuting of staff and methane emissions from livestock on its land holdings.

David Bartram advised that Exeter City Council is developing a proposal to setup a Low Carbon Team. Their solar farm is progressing; site preparations are currently underway. This will provide a direct wire straight into the fleet depot for vehicle charging.

Doug stated that Devon County Council will be considering next month the allocation of £2.15m for the next two years to implement its corporate carbon plan which will be used for renewable energy, building refurbishment and fleet upgrades.

Dan Ulanowsky reported that South West Water's 2030 Net-Zero Plan will be ready by summer 2021.

Emma Page advised that the University of Exeter has: (1) an animation due out shortly to summarise their net-zero agenda; (2) [Edie podcast](#) talking about the agenda; (3) in year targets launched and projects identified to deliver the goal of which a key focus for them is prioritising low carbon in bought goods and services; and (4) developing agenda for activities/presence for COP26. The University is also developing a parish footprinting tool which is currently in a phase of user testing.

Janet Williams (by email) advised that Torridge District Council's Carbon Plan should be going to full council in April. They are looking to appoint a new climate change post for the new financial year which will be shared with North Devon Council.

# Appendix 1 – Project Progress Report

**Period:** December 2020 to January 2021

## **Status Indicator Key:**

- [RED] = Significant issue that requires Response Group intervention;
- [AMBER] = Minor issue that will initially be managed by the secretariat, but the Response Group should be aware;
- [GREEN] = No issue.

## **1. Project Management Update**

### **1.1. General Project Communications [GREEN]**

Newsletters continue to be issued on schedule and social media followings are growing.

### **1.2. COVID Reset [GREEN]**

The various Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme projects in the county are now in their implementation phase. The third lockdown is likely to affect the delivery ability of these projects (funding is meant to be spent by March 31<sup>st</sup>) and so most projects are discussing extensions with BEIS.

Devon Solar Together – over 913 households are now receiving roof surveys over the next few months.

The full report on the Economy and Business Recovery to accompany the Team Devon COVID Prospectus remains delayed due to resources being focussed on government funding opportunities.

### **1.3. Funding Successes**

Public Health Devon has been successful in receiving funding to kickstart a Devon Food Partnership initiative. Further details in due course.

Devon CC has received further Heat Network Delivery Unit funding to push forward aspirations to use the waste heat from the Exeter EfW. Further details in due course.

## **2. Net-Zero Task Force Update**

### **2.1. Citizens' Assembly [GREEN]**

Following the positive advice on the effectiveness of online deliberations from the University of Exeter, the procurement process for the recruitment and facilitation provider of the Assembly went live on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January.

## **2.2. Interim Carbon Plan [AMBER]**

The consultation for the Interim Carbon Plan went live on the 7th December and will remain open through to the 15th February. The secretariat has begun collating the responses to the public consultation to date and continues to make the final arrangements for upcoming webinars. The public engagement strategy is being monitored and adjusted in response to evidence of who and how people are being reached. An 'Eight Point Plan' reflecting the Plan's objectives is being developed to engage social media audiences.

This week YouTube and other social media advertising efforts are to be increased.

The webinar series has been well received. The final webinar on Economy and Resources will take place in February.

About 270 responses via the questionnaire have been received so far. In the week starting 10<sup>th</sup> January, the consultation questionnaire was refined to make it clearer that a short and a longer version are available as we had received reports that the length of the questionnaire was off-putting.

Hard copies are no longer available from libraries for offline audiences as the libraries are now closed due to the third lockdown. Messages have been sent to parish councils to amend posters, and messages have been posted on social media and in the January newsletter to alert the public to this. Hard copies are still available from 0345 155 1015.

## **3. Climate Impacts Group Update**

### **3.1. Narratives of the Effects of Climate Change [GREEN]**

All of the risks identified are now being brought together by narrative authors into one register with the assistance of the Local Resilience Forum secretariat. A workshop to assign prioritisation to these scores has been scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

The next stage is to identify the gaps in local preparedness for these risks. Actions required to fill these gaps will form the basis of the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Climate Adaptation Plan.

## **4. Summary Comments**

The Interim Devon Carbon Plan public consultation is now live until the 15<sup>th</sup> February.

The Climate Impacts Group is making progress with the narratives and risk assessments.

As a whole, the project is continuing to make good progress.