

## POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2023

### PART I - DELEGATED

#### 5. CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL DECISION MAKING (EHoS)

##### 1. Description

- 1.1 The report requests the Committee's approval for use of the Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool as mandatory in policy and project development, decision-making and committee reports.

##### 2 Summary of Main Points

- 2.1 The Council's declaration of a 'Climate Emergency' commits the Council to use all practical means to reduce carbon emissions and lower the environmental impacts of Council services.
- 2.2 Included in the approved Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan is an objective to: *"Embed the climate and ecological emergencies into the culture and decision making of the Council so that the environmental impacts of all council projects, policies, procurements and services are considered."*
- 2.3 A number Local Authorities in the UK have already formally embedded assessment of a range of environmental impacts in to their decision-making processes. Having reviewed a number of such tools, a Climate and Sustainability Implications Assessment Tool has been developed for Three Rivers District Council.
- 2.4 The tool allows officers from a range of disciplines to evaluate the environmental impacts of proposals without needing in-depth technical knowledge.
- 2.5 The tool, with support from the Climate and Sustainability Team, will help officers appraise the environmental implications of their proposed projects or policies early in the decision-making process and help in modifying proposals where necessary to minimise negative impacts and enhance those which are or have the potential to be positive. The results of the tool can then be included in a mandatory 'Environmental Implications' section of any relevant council reports.
- 2.6 Use of the tool for all projects and policies would have the additional benefit of enabling the Council to measure and report on its environmental progress in a consistent way, each year.

##### 3. Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 3.1 The recommendation in this report is within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

##### 4. Staffing

- 4.1 The introduction of the tool will represent a small additional workload for officers preparing reports. The tool has, however, been trialled with officers, been positively received and is supported as a way to provide a consistent approach to consideration of climate change and sustainability in the Councils work.

- 5. Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website Implications**
  - 5.1 None arising from this report
- 6. Financial Implications**
  - 6.1 None arising from this report.
- 7. Legal Implications**
  - 7.1 None arising from this report
- 8. Equal Opportunities Implications**
  - 8.1 None arising from this report
- 9. Implications for staffing, community safety, Public Health Risk and Health and Safety**
  - 9.1 None specific to this report.
- 10. Environmental Implications**
  - 10.1 As set out in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.6
- 11. Recommendations**
  - 11.1 The Committee are asked to agree that the Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool be used in the decision making process for all relevant policies, projects and procurements so that the climate and sustainability impacts of any action or proposal are fully considered early in the decision-making process and that the tool be a mandatory aspect of the preparation of all committee reports with the exception of planning reports.

Report prepared by: Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Manager

### **Background Documents**

[Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan](#)

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool