

## **Parks & Amenities Committee**

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

### **January 2023**

### **Zero- Carbon post**

## **Background**

In July 2022 the Council considered the report of the Zero Carbon Working Group and resolved

*“That the Town Clerk carries out further analysis of the Zero Carbon report in order that at the January 2023 Estimates meeting the Council can consider whether the proposed post (in resolution 7 above) should be full time or part time.”*

## **Current Position**

The Council resolution has asked me to consider whether the post should be full or part time. The following points are clear: -

- There is a need for a point(person) of focus on this work which at the current time in particular will need to compete to some extent with other priorities such as financial cost.
- A question I have considered is whether the person could also be responsible for delivering other sustainable targets for the Council. My view is a full -time person would have the capacity to have a wider remit.
- I am suggesting the following outputs as a full time role: -
- To provide strategic reasoning and recommend the actions and pathway to deliver the City Council’s carbon neutrality ambitions and sustainability targets. AN initial action is to carry out an updated carbon audit for the Council.
- To work with the HR Manager to organise and deliver staff training in carbon neutrality and any other sustainable areas
- To work collaboratively across departments to generate ecoefficiencies, create synergies and maximise outcomes.
- To work with the Buildings Supervisor regarding practical solutions for carbon efficiency
- To develop tools and resources to drive forward action and communicate environmental issues.

- To actively represent the City Council regarding environmental and sustainability matters to help understand shared ambitions and be an advocate for change within the community.
- To undertake training and attend briefings to improve personal understanding of the impact of climate change, and to learn about the local environment to better communicate and raise awareness of the unique environment in and around Truro and the benefits in supporting it.
- To report to the relevant Council Committee as a minimum twice per annum.

## **Drivers for Increased Officer Resource to Address Net Zero and Climate Change**

The report below has been written by Sarah Walker, a professional in this field of work

### **National and Regional Drivers**

- **The Climate Change Act** makes it a duty of government to reduce carbon emissions by 100% in 2050 compared to 1990, and local authorities will play a significant role in fulfilling the government's Net Zero ambitions.<sup>1</sup>
- Truro City Council have aligned with Cornwall Council's ambitious targets **for Net Zero by 2030**, which requires local systems change that falls outside of the national legislation.
- **Cornwall Council's Business Plan** sets out a new overarching mission: to work with communities for a carbon neutral Cornwall, where everyone can start well, live well and age well.
- **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Cornwall Local Plans** aim to help modal shift from private car to public transport, cycling and walking to help mitigate effects of climate change, meet carbon reduction targets, and improve health and wellbeing.
- In a Local Government Association survey, 79 out of 90 respondents thought **a lack of workforce capacity** was a moderate or significant barrier to tackling climate change and 70 respondents identified skills and expertise as a moderate or significant barrier<sup>2</sup>.

### **Local Drivers**

- Reductions in energy expenditure have a **cost benefit** for Truro City Council. The average small and medium sized enterprise (SME) could reduce energy bills by 18-25% by installing energy efficiency measures and implementing behavioural change. If the average SME energy bill was £4,000 in 2020, it could have risen to £10,000 in

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Local-government-and-net-zero-in-England.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Local-government-and-net-zero-in-England.pdf> p.13

2022. Installing energy efficiency measures could result in savings of £1,800 - £2,500 per year.<sup>3</sup>

- With **increasing pressure on local councils to 'do their bit'** for climate change, Truro City Council is positioned to take a leadership role in the local community. Failure to act runs reputational risks and could affect the Council's public image.
- Truro City Council has conducted its first **carbon audit** and identified an action plan for improvement, which requires officer resource to enact.
- **The Truro and Kewyn Neighbourhood Plan** is underpinned by a clear set of core objectives that seek to make a positive contribution to sustainable growth, which include promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation, protecting and enhancing biodiversity, promoting sustainable transport, and increasing resilience to flooding.
- In 2022 Truro City Council declared a **Climate and Environmental Emergency**. This declaration acknowledges the importance of reversing biodiversity loss and developing a climate plan, requiring strategic ambition.
- Increased officer resource will **inform future strategic planning** to ensure Truro City Council act sustainability, can reduce emissions, and take action on climate change on behalf of the community.
- Officer resource will **increase capacity to access funding** relating to climate resilience and carbon reduction.

### **Climate Risk Drivers**

- Truro City Council has a significant role in the community and represents the needs of over 23,000 people in a region of the UK likely to see the **highest potential sea level rise by the end of the century**.
- Adapting to climate change can provide **immediate local benefits**, enabling Truro City Council to cope better with current climate variability and extreme weather as well as future climate changes<sup>4</sup>.
- There is likely to be a **significant increase in demand for emergency services** as a result of extreme weather conditions and events, so advice, warnings, and resource allocation must be provided to meet the increased risk.
- **Planned adaptation is usually less expensive** than responding to an emergency or retrofitting to cope with unexpected climate risks. Without consideration of likely future impacts Truro City Council could face unexpected costs relating to disruption, reduced productivity and costs of repairing or replacing damaged premises or equipment.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/business/business-support-and-advice/guide-energy-efficiency-and-cost-savings-your-workplace>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ukcip.org.uk/about-adaptation/>

## **Public Opinion Drivers**

Increasingly, the public is concerned about how local councils are addressing climate change and use this information to inform how they vote in local elections<sup>5</sup>.

**In 2021, research and analysis was conducted by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to understand public awareness and perceptions on climate change and net zero.**

An online survey of around 7,000 members of the UK public was carried out to explore public opinion, and the results showed majority concern for climate change and support for net zero transitions, and that over half of respondents believe that climate change will affect their families.

The following charts display some of the findings.

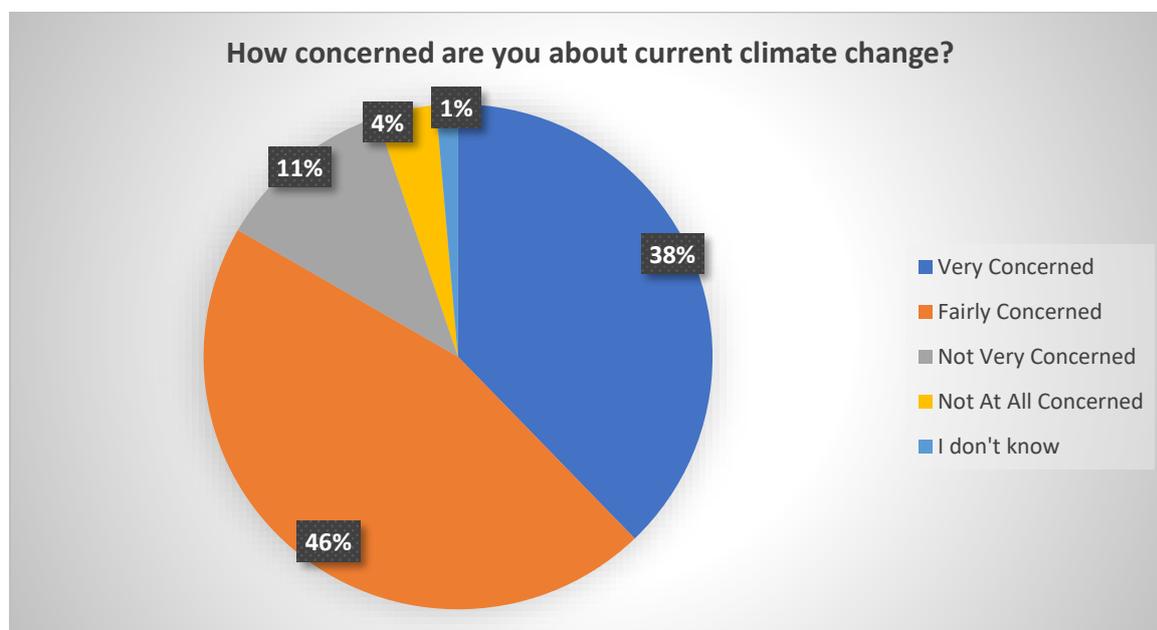


Figure 1- This chart represents responses to the question 'How concerned, if at all, are you about current climate change, sometimes referred to as 'global warming'?'. Source: BEIS (2021); Climate change and net zero: public awareness and perceptions. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/climate-change-and-net-zero-public-awareness-and-perceptions>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/explainers-61066698>

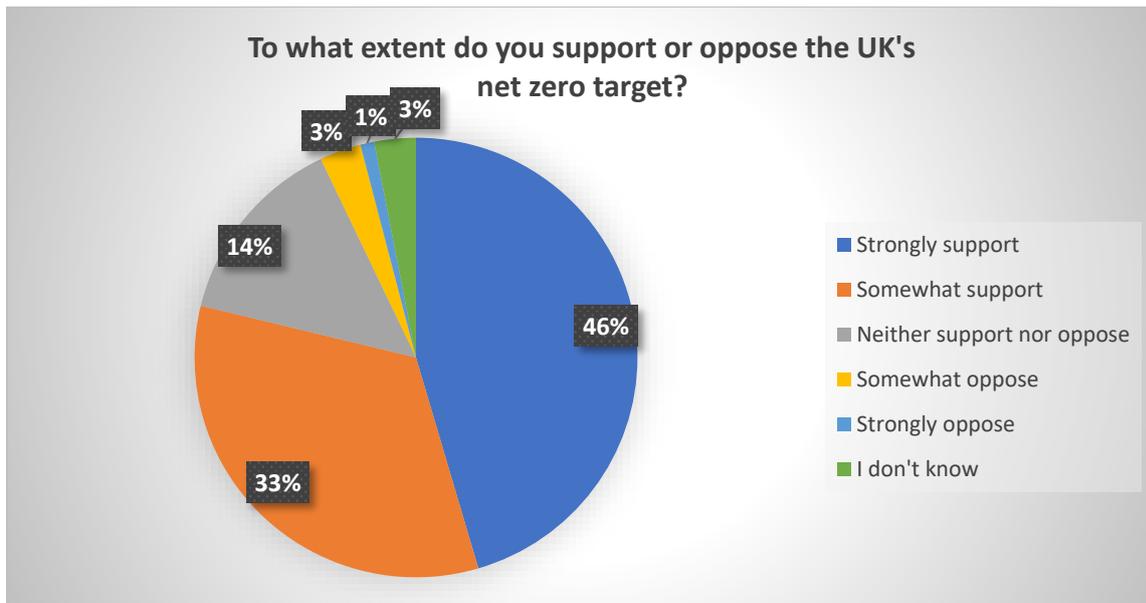


Figure 2- This chart shows public opinion towards the UK Governments Net Zero Targets. Source: BEIS (2021); Climate change and net zero: public awareness and perceptions. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/climate-change-and-net-zero-public-awareness-and-perceptions>

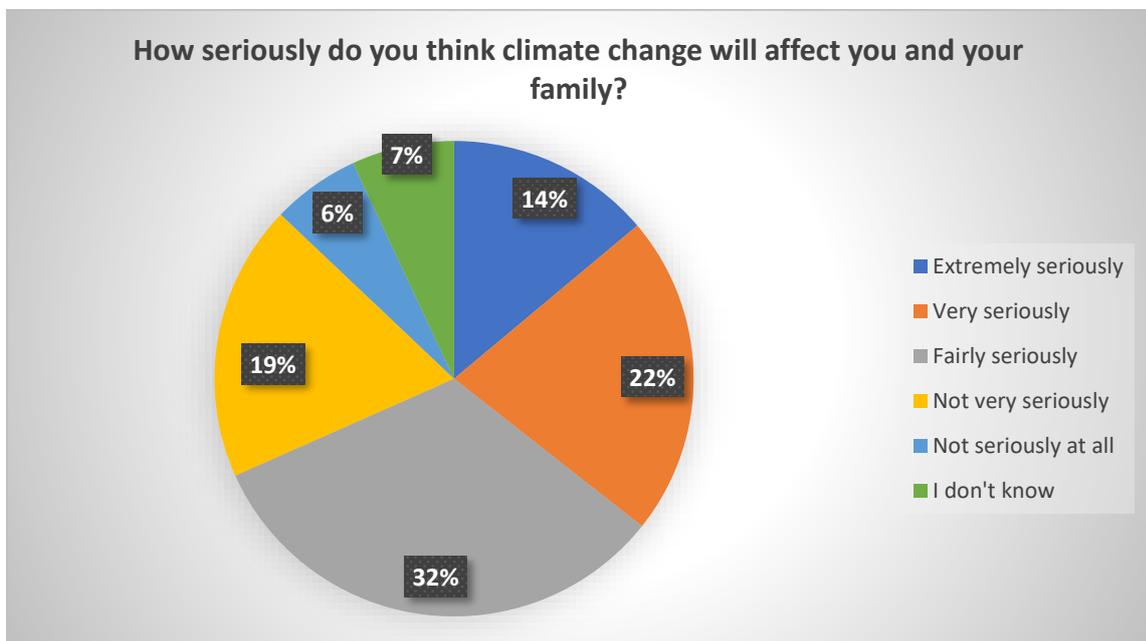


Figure 3- This chart shows public concern towards climate change and its effect on the respondents families. Source: BEIS (2021); Climate change and net zero: public awareness and perceptions. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/climate-change-and-net-zero-public-awareness-and-perceptions>

**Resources to Support Transitions:**

Resources are available for local councils who have the means to implement positive change. These include:

Title & Summary	Author	Link
<p>Adapting to climate change: A guide to local councils</p> <p>This guide aims to provide local councils and community groups, wanting to take action to adapt to climate change, with information on some of the future risks and opportunities. It provides guidance and some practical examples of action that can make a real difference, including a number of case studies.</p>	DEFRA	<a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/218798/adapt-localcouncilguide.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/218798/adapt-localcouncilguide.pdf</a>
<p>The Wizard.</p> <p>A 5-step process to help you assess your organisation's vulnerability to current climate and future climate change, identify options to address your organisation's key climate risks, and help you develop and implement a climate change adaptation strategy.</p>	UKCIP	<a href="https://www.ukcip.org.uk/wizard/">https://www.ukcip.org.uk/wizard/</a>
<p>Climate Action Plan for Local Councils</p> <p>The Climate Action Plan for Councils contains 50 actions that councils can take to make their area more climate and nature friendly, and is split into key areas like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting our most vulnerable from the effects of climate change.</li> <li>• Ensuring new builds are well insulated and have eco-aware fittings.</li> <li>• Increasing and improving public transportation provisions.</li> <li>• Enabling and supporting the use of renewable energy.</li> <li>• Promoting sustainable consumption in order to become a zero-waste area</li> <li>• Ensuring everyone has access to green spaces.</li> </ul>	Friends of the Earth	<a href="https://climate.friendsoftheearth.uk/download/climate-action-plan-councils">https://climate.friendsoftheearth.uk/download/climate-action-plan-councils</a>
<p>LGA Climate Change Hub.</p> <p>As part of sector-led improvement work, LGA offer a wide range of support to help councils address climate change and environmental sustainability.</p>	Local Government Association	<a href="https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change-hub">https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change-hub</a>

### **Funding and Advice**

Various funding bodies are releasing money and offering advice to facilitate the transition to Net Zero, and increase resilience to climate change.

Dedicated officer resource can empower Truro City Council to access more of this funding.

Examples include:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Link</b>
Funding for transport and rural communities	Department for Transport	<a href="http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/">www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/</a>
P.E.E.T Fund.  Set up to offer organisations the chance to bid for funds to improve the energy efficiency in their buildings. Local councils can also bid for these monies.	The Pilkington Energy Efficiency Trust (P.E.E.T.).	<a href="http://www.pilkington.com/europe/uk+and+ireland/english/building+products/pilknngton4architects/peet.htm">www.pilkington.com/europe/uk+and+ireland/english/building+products/pilknngton4architects/peet.htm</a>
UK Infrastructure Bank  UKIB offer financing to local and mayoral authorities across the UK for economic infrastructure projects	UK Infrastructure Bank	<a href="https://www.ukib.org.uk/where-we-invest/local-authority-lending">https://www.ukib.org.uk/where-we-invest/local-authority-lending</a>
Your Local Area Agreement  YLAA lists local priorities and progress towards achieving government targets. For up to date information about locally available grants, contact your local Rural Community Council or CVS	Local Area Agreement	<a href="http://www.localpriorities.communities.gov.uk/">www.localpriorities.communities.gov.uk/</a>
EDF Energy's Greenfund	EDF Energy	<a href="http://www.edfenergy.com">www.edfenergy.com</a>
Carbon Trust's Building Design Advice Service	Carbon Trust	<a href="http://www.carbontrust.co.uk/energy/assessyourorganisation/design_advice.htm">www.carbontrust.co.uk/energy/assessyourorganisation/design_advice.htm</a> .

### **Cornwall Council's Climate Assessment Projections**

Cornwall Council's Climate Change Risk Assessment has found the potential for higher temperatures, more winter rainfall, more river flooding events in winter, the possibility of more short duration but high impact summer flooding events of the type seen in Boscastle in 2004 and Coverack in 2017, and more coastal flooding and erosion.

Below are infographics taken from the report summary:

# How climate change is projected to impact Cornwall

See pages 11-14 for more information on climate change impacts

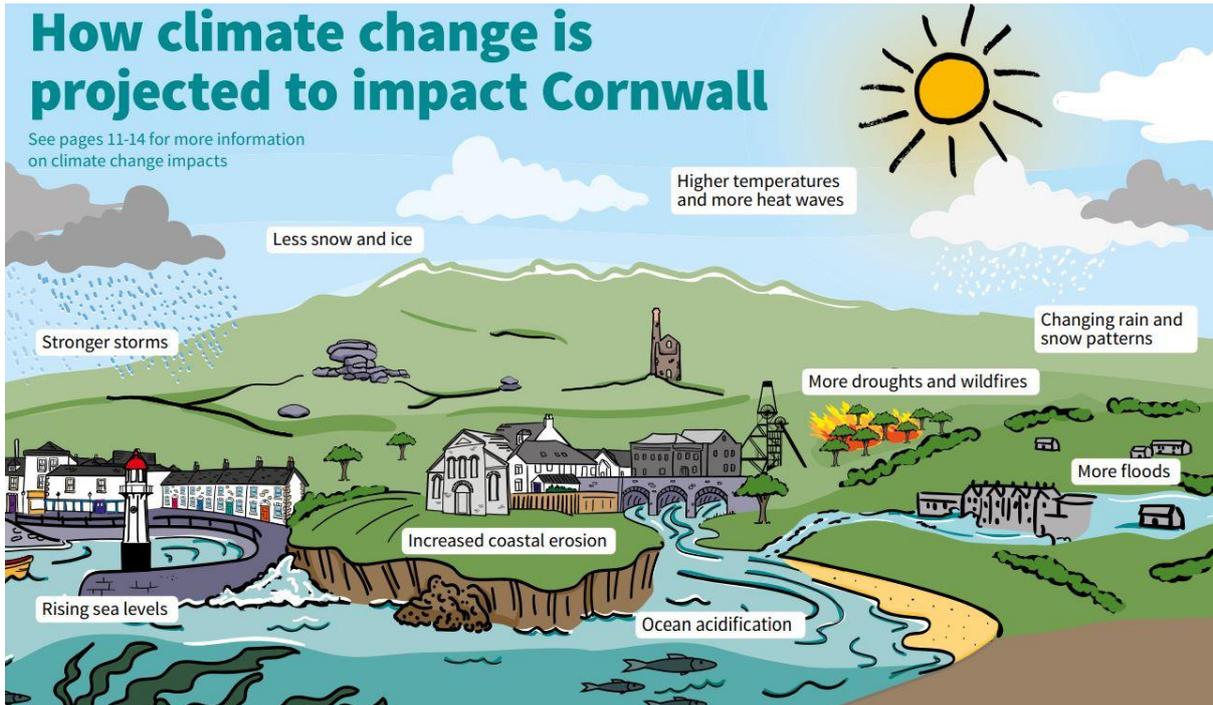


Figure 4- Cornwall Council's Climate Risk Assessment. How Climate Change is projected to impact Cornwall. Source: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/climate-emergency/the-impact-of-climate-change/>

**between  
1°C to 5°C**

if carbon emissions  
are not reduced



**Droughts are likely to  
become more severe in  
summer, affecting water  
supply and farming**



**Heatwaves  
and associated  
heat risks**

including wildfires are  
likely to increase



**Short,  
torrential  
rainfall**

such as seen in Boscastle in  
2004 and Coverack in 2017  
will become more frequent



Figure 5- Cornwall Council's Climate Risk Assessment. How Climate Change is projected to impact Cornwall. Source: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/climate-emergency/the-impact-of-climate-change/>

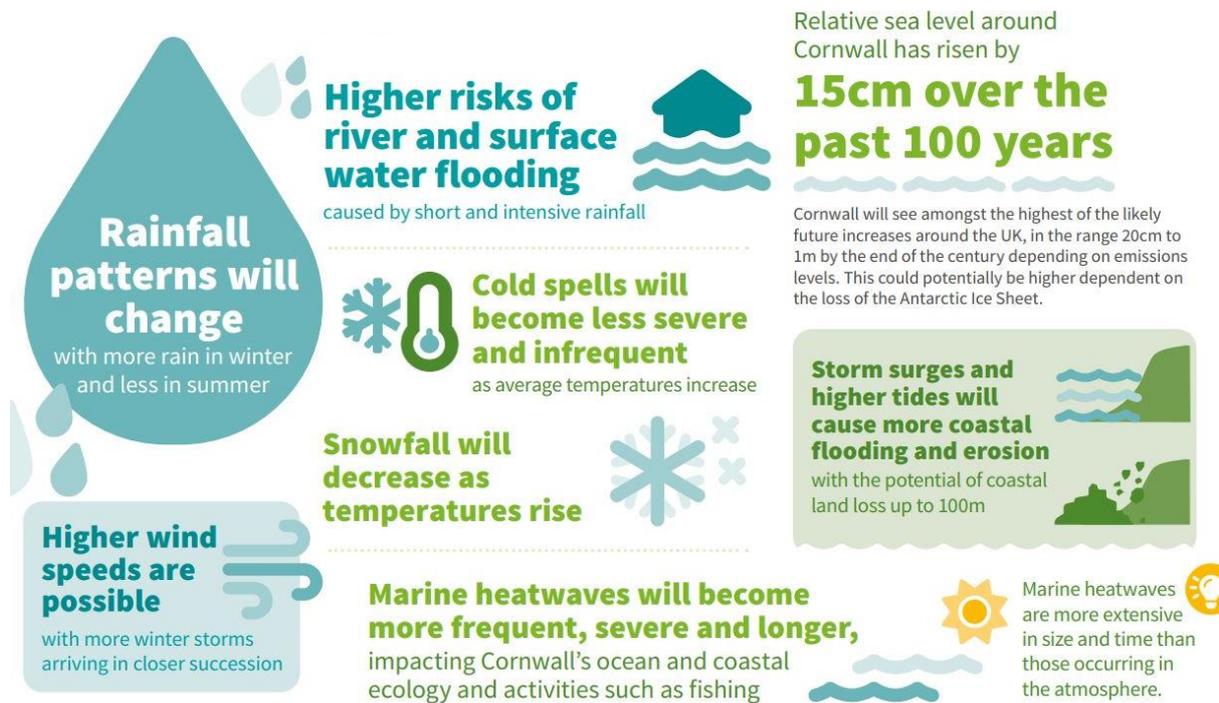


Figure 6- Cornwall Council's Climate Risk Assessment. How Climate Change is projected to impact Cornwall.  
Source: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/climate-emergency/the-impact-of-climate-change/>

## **Recommended**

That the Council appoint a full time Zero Carbon officer.

**Roger Gazzard**

**Town Clerk**