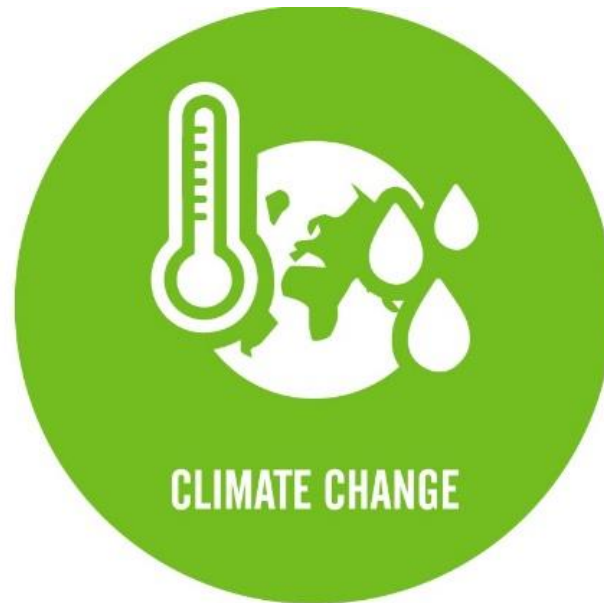


Ensuring Engagement with the Climate Emergency Agenda

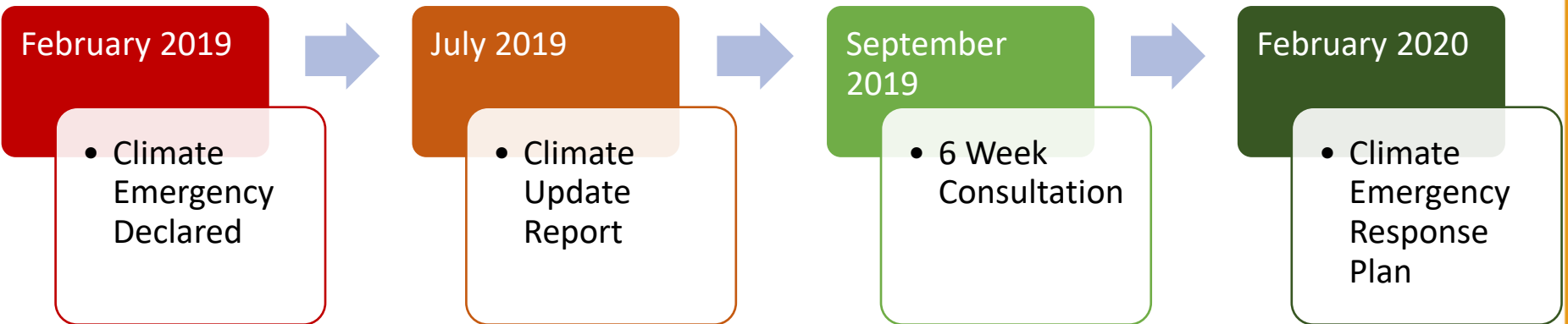


Stephen McDonald, Principal Officer, Low
Carbon Economy Team

Altogether better



Climate Emergency Timeline



Altogether better

Climate Emergency

1. Reduce the Council's carbon emissions by 80% by 2030
2. Investigate what further actions are necessary to make County Durham completely carbon neutral by 2050 and pledge to achieve this.

Altogether better



Climate Consultation

- Political decision to consult
- 6 week consultation which included:
 - Public and staff online survey
 - Elected Member survey
 - Meetings and presentations
 - Tier 4 Managers
 - Area Action Partnership
 - Town and Parish Council's
 - Extinction Rebellion
 - Durham Road Block
 - Young person's engagement
 - Stakeholder engagement

Comms engagement – social media

Altogether better



Context

- Durham County Council has a history of supporting schools/ young people with sustainability activity
 - Eco-Schools Forum/ Sustainable Schools/ Residential Outdoor Centres (until 2012), Earth Hour; Switch Off Fortnight etc
- Through the Council Carbon Management Plan we developed the School Carbon Reduction Programme in 2010 which in 2018 was rebranded ECO₂ Smart Schools Programme. This works with approx 240 schools through an SLA delivered with a local charity OASES.
<https://eco2smartschools.org.uk>
- 'Protect the Environment' identified as the highest priority from young people aged 11-18 in our 2019 Make Your Mark survey – being progressed by Countywide Youth Forum

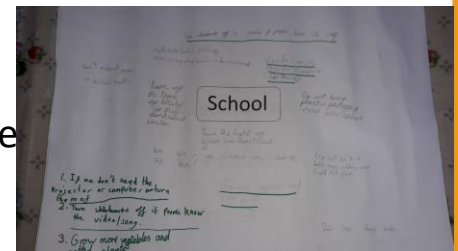


Young Peoples' Consultation

- Used a range of techniques:
- School Climate Strike Day Consultation Event at County Hall
 - Primary school workshop (4 school groups)
 - Secondary school workshop (7 school groups)
- In-school workshop sessions led by OASES Team working with Eco-groups in schools – 27 schools
- Children and Families Partnership Event in a secondary school with pupils and senior DCC staff and Councillors
- In total this engaged 450 pupils and students

Highlights from Young People Engagement

- Young people in the County are reasonably well educated on climate emergency
- They highlighted simple behaviour changes that they are well versed in: switch equipment/ lights off; turn down heating; walk/ cycle more etc
- They want more renewable energy generation at home/ school and in the communities
- Expectation that society will move towards electric cars/ buses/ lorries. Public transport needs to be better across such a rural county but recognised they can walk/ cycle/ scoot more.
- Natural environment - young people want to see more trees and flowers planted and fewer being cut down and less littering taking place



Altogether better

Designing your Survey

- Try not to have open ended questions
- Have multiple choice questions

A

B

C

D



Altogether better

Outcomes - Staff survey

- 502 responses
- Important issue to staff

What should the **Council** be doing? – **Top 3:**



1. Reduce the need for staff to travel



2. Maximise renewable energy generation



3. New buildings – very low or zero carbon



Close 4th: Existing buildings – improve energy efficiency

Altogether better

Outcomes - Countywide Survey?

523 responses

- **52%** - woodland planting, peatland restoration or wildflowers;
- **50%** - reduce waste and increase re-use, recycling and composting;
- **44%** - increase in the use of County Durham's natural, renewable energy resources.
- **44%** - improve walking, cycling and the use of public transport to be part of the everyday travel culture.
- **39%** - Improve the Energy Efficiency of buildings

Altogether better



Following Consultation

- Significant work pulling together and analysing all the responses (Don't underestimate)
- Refining the Action Plan
- Embedding (or not prioritising) the results
- Publicity and Communications



Altogether better

What impact has the Consultation had?

- Embedding the Climate Emergency into the Council Culture
 - Climate Change expectation within all Job Descriptions
 - Climate Change impacts now mandatory on all reports
 - Renewed/Re-engaged leadership
- Significant Tree Planting Promises
- Extra funding secured for projects
- Invest to save payback period increased
- New Council Target to 80%
- New Director title: Neighbourhoods and Climate Change
- GOVERNANCE
 - Only now being sorted

Altogether better



Was it worth it? - SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
Engagement Buy-in / Support Transparency	Staff time / resource Will it reveal any new ideas/ thinking/Duplication? Compilation of results
Opportunities	Threats
New Ideas Converting sceptics Leadership	How do you keep engaging? Gives opportunities for sceptics

Altogether better

What Next?

- Get Help!!!!!!!!!!
 - You can't do it all yourself
- Communications Plan
- Short term detailed and funded action plan
- Council Culture and Leadership
 - Awareness Raising
 - Broader than one service area

Altogether better

