

## Healthy Environment – Year 1 End Update

### **Objective: People having a good quality of life and making healthy choices about their lives and their environment**

Like the rest of the world, Carmarthenshire is under threat from the impact of climate change. Our environment is also affected by historic and modern ways of living and our Assessment of Local Well-being identified that we have some of the worst transport CO2 emissions in Wales.

We are yet to understand the specific impact of these aspects on our environment in the long term, but we know we will be affected by rising sea levels, flooding, the increase of extreme weather events and the loss of habitats and ecosystems.

Carmarthenshire PSB cannot prevent climate change, but it can collaborate at a strategic level to adopt changes to soften the impact on our county and to reduce the emissions that contribute to it.

#### **Wider Policy Drivers**

Climate change is identified as a priority in Welsh Governments Natural Resources Policy. It is also highlighted as an 'Initial Area of Focus' for South West Wales in the Area Statement being facilitated by NRW to comply with the Environment (Wales) Act. Delivery of Carmarthenshire PSBs objective will directly contribute to these drivers.

#### **Short Term Action for Carmarthenshire PSB**

Year one work associated with this objective required the delivery of a Climate Change and Environmental Risk Assessment for Carmarthenshire to develop clear and defined actions that can be taken by individuals, communities and organisations.

**A working group was established** to work on this objective and initially met in June 2018.

The group agreed to focus on the climate change element of the objective in year one because of the volume of work we felt would be needed.

The group were tasked with gathering together information and previous research held by their respective bodies to feed in to this work.

**A Regional Climate Change group** was convened as the requirement to produce a Climate Change risk assessment is common to Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion Public Service Boards (PSBs). Leads from the working groups for the three counties have met regularly over the last year to share information and to progress this work in a coordinated way.

**Terms of Reference and a project outline** were agreed at a meeting held in September 2018. The same project outline was later also agreed by Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion.

**NRW funded consultancy work** undertaken by AECOM in Q4. AECOM have undertaken a Severe Weather Assessment for the three counties pulling together information supplied by the working group members on severe weather events and communities at risk. The draft document is available on request and will be published in late-April 2019 to include the latest NRW climate risk mapping, due for completion in mid-April.

NRW have also funded AECOM to design engagement materials that will enable the PSB to undertake work with communities on local experiences of severe weather, future priorities and adaptation.

**Gathering information on public sector climate readiness and emissions** for Welsh Government was due to be undertaken by the Carbon Trust in July 2018. The group decided to wait for this information to be collected centrally because it would be consistent for the whole of Wales and would prevent duplication. Unfortunately, this work was not ultimately started until January 2019, although the University of Wales Trinity St. Davids piloted the question set with Carbon Trust on behalf of this group. We understand that Carbon Trust are still in the process of collecting this information. We anticipate that it will now influence Year 2 of this work.

## **Forward look to Year 2**

The working group will:

- Formulate a proposal for a series of community engagement events for the PSB to approve.
- Collate information from engagement and make recommendations to the PSB.
- Analyse the Carbon Trust information gathered on behalf of Welsh Government to look for opportunities to increase public sector resilience and to reduce public sector emissions. This will be reported to the PSB with recommendations.
- Consider any additional actions needed to fulfil the requirement for an Environmental Risk Assessment in the objective.
- Work with NRW to consider the priorities and opportunities identified as part of the development of the South West Wales Area Statement in this project.
- Investigate the medium-term task under this objective on access to green space and connectedness to nature. Multiple benefits that could be gained will help public bodies to fulfil their Section 6 biodiversity duty under the Environment (Wales) Act.