YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY **ITEM 9**

Date: **26 September 2023**

Report: **OPERATIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Purpose of the report

1. To provide Members with an update regarding the Authority's work on reducing its carbon emissions.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That Members **NOTE** the report.

Strategic Planning Framework

3. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework:

- ***Corporate Plan Objective 35***

By 2030, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from our operations by at least 95% compared to 2005/6, and achieve annual carbon savings from woodland planting that we have funded of at least 30 times our residual annual emissions.

Background

4. The Authority has been a national leader within local government on practical action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, measuring our own emissions since 2005. The Authority signed the Nottingham Declaration in 2007 and has been implementing carbon reduction initiatives ever since. By 2023, the Authority had reduced its organisational emissions by 71%.

5. In September 2019, the Authority added its voice to those bodies who recognised the problems being caused by the (lack of) urgency in dealing with the issue and declared a climate emergency and re-committed itself to action to reducing its carbon emissions. Members have set the very challenging target of reducing our own carbon emissions by 95% by 2030 – based on the 2005 baseline. The latest 5-year Carbon Reduction Plan ("CRP") was prepared and adopted in March 2020, together with the new corporate objective set out above.

6. The initial CRP set out the 'big ticket' corporate actions that would be taken to reduce emissions. It was supported by a more detailed Carbon Reduction and Sustainability Action Plan ("Action Plan") that included a number of actions relating to officer working practices, and to wider sustainability issues.

Progress since 2020

7. Overall, the Authority has continued to make good progress, reducing emissions by 75t CO_2e (28%) compared to 2019/20 – the best of any English NPA. However, performance last year suggests that progress may be levelling off (see **Annex A**).

8. Good progress has been made in completing the specific actions set out in the Action Plan (see **Annex B**), and this has helped to prevent emissions 'bouncing back' up following the pandemic. To date, 30 out of 42 actions have been completed, 5 actions are partially completed, 4 actions remain ongoing and 3 remain outstanding. The most significant actions completed are

    i. PV installations added to 5 buildings; and

    ii. Heat pumps installed at 3 NPCs;

9. The cumulative impact of these investments in renewable energy and energy-efficiency measures has been to reduce emissions from energy use (heating, fuel, electricity) by 75 tonnes (28%) compared to 2019/20. Those reductions have been supplemented by decreases in both officer mileage emissions (down by 8 tonnes (28%)) and volunteer mileage emissions down by 4 tonnes (10%)). However, actual mileage is creeping steadily back up from its pandemic low.

10. Of the actions that are being implemented in the coming year, the most significant are:

    i. Replacement of the (non-Land rover) vehicle fleet with Electric Vehicles by March 2024 – the change of 11 fleet vehicles will save just under 2t CO_2e annually for each vehicle (20t CO_2e in total);
    ii. Tackling business mileage and volunteer mileage.

11. Members should be aware that the way in which public bodies report on emissions is changing and becoming potentially even more challenging. There is greater emphasis now on measuring and reducing 'Scope 3' emissions. This includes things like emissions related to staff commuting; home-working; and, emissions associated with goods purchased by the Authority. As identified in the Action Plan, the Authority has ongoing work to do in this area but actions iii and iv in paragraph 12 below demonstrate some practical ways in which the Authority can manage its Scope 3 emissions.

Employee Engagement

12. Following interest from the Authority's Employee Voice Group regarding the role they could play in helping the Authority to continue to reduce its emissions, some meaningful actions have been agreed to engage officers in this issue further and these will be driven by the Employee Voice Group:

i. Improving car-sharing between Colvend and Yoredale/DCM;
ii. Encouraging wider sharing of offices/desks at Colvend;
iii. Making good purchasing decisions; and
iv. Encouraging staff to share journeys to and from work

Conclusion

13. The Authority has made good progress in completing the actions identified in the Action Plan, in particular in relation to the large ticket items and work continues to complete the outstanding actions. Emissions in 2023/24 are likely to be similar to the previous year but a substantial drop should be evident next year, with the change to an electric vehicle fleet and the cultural changes set out in paragraph 12.

Clare Burrows
Director of Corporate Services

8 September 2023