



Place & Environment Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 30th April 2024

Report Title	Carbon Management Plan Annual Report 2022/23 Scrutiny Panel Feedback
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Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	Not applicable
Which Corporate Plan priority does the report most closely align with? Our priorities for the future North Northamptonshire Council (northnorthants.gov.uk)	Green, sustainable environment

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Carbon Management Plan Annual Report 2022/23

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report provides a summary of the work that has taken place toward the delivery of the Carbon Management Plan (CMP) and the Council's goal to become a carbon neutral council, by 2030 from December 2022 – December 2023, and seeks comments/ feedback from the Committee prior to the report being considered by the Executive for approval.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 In December 2022, the Executive approved North Northamptonshire Council's (NNC) CMP, which set out how the Council will achieve its goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The CMP also established the Council's baseline carbon emissions based on available 2021/22 data and identified key areas of focus to achieve its targets, through carbon emission initiatives and carbon offsetting.
- 2.2 The Plan has been reviewed quarterly by the Sustainable Communities Executive Advisory Panel, and the Annual Report reflects progress made from the period December 2022 – December 2023. This report details the recommended changes, proposed new activities, and provides an update on the Council's carbon footprint.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Place and Environment Scrutiny Committee:
- (a) Notes the positive work undertaken toward the delivery of the CMP;
 - (b) Provides comments and feedback on the findings of the CMP Annual Report at Appendix A.
- 3.2. Reason for Recommendations:
- The CMP Annual Report sets out progress on the key areas of focus for the Council to achieve its target to be carbon neutral by 2030.
 - The CMP Annual Report supports the Council's ambition for climate change mitigation as set out in the Corporate Plan.
 - Whilst the projects within the CMP require financial investment, they will provide both operational efficiencies and carbon savings.
 - The updates set out in the report compliment a number of existing environmental policies, such as the Pollinator Strategy and Tree Management and Care Policy.

The recommendation will be subject to Executive approval on 13th June 2024.

- 3.3. Alternative Options Considered:
- The alternative option is not to publish the CMP Annual Report. This would not align with the Council's declaration of a climate and environment emergency, or wider strategic priorities. This option is therefore not recommended.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 In July 2021, the Council declared a Climate and Environment Emergency and subsequently the Council committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The Council's Carbon Management Plan was approved in December 2022 to support this goal.
- 4.2 Further, as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process, the Council earmarked £1m of reserves funding over three years to support the Council on its journey to becoming carbon neutral. This report also provides an update on funding spend.
- 4.3 The CMP Annual Report (Appendix A) provides an overview of progress made in delivering the CMP after its first year; covering December 2022 to December 2023, including recommended changes, and proposed new activities. It also provides an update on the Council's carbon footprint, highlighting changes from the previous year's monitoring and original baseline.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The CMP Annual Report is the first opportunity for the Council to illustrate progress made toward the delivery of the plan and to becoming carbon neutral. It has been developed with input from services across the Council, recognising that a cross-directorate approach must continue to be taken to ensure the Council's ambition is achieved.
- 5.2 **CMP Annual Report: Carbon Footprint Update**

5.2.1 The December 2022 CMP detailed that as a new organisation we did not have a historic baseline of carbon emissions from which to work from, and that work would need to be undertaken to build on the quality of the emissions data in the coming years. This included expanding the range of Scope 3 reporting to consider the wider impact of our operations, with an anticipation that our reported CO₂e emissions would rise requiring a revised baseline¹. The inclusion of Scope 3 emissions goes beyond what is required of Local Authorities but has been included to illustrate the Council's commitment to climate change and transparency of the impact of its operations.

5.2.2 As part of this annual report, the 2022/23 carbon emissions for the Council have been calculated, with work undertaken to build upon the quality and completeness of the Council's emissions data and expand the range of Scope 3 reporting. For the 2022/23 financial year, the Council's total carbon footprint was 20,084.25 tCO₂e. This increase on the 2021/22 figure is attributable to:

- The inclusion of Scope 3 emissions linked to the disposal of household waste collected from residents and businesses, water supply and treatment, and an increase in staff business travel;
- The inclusion of Scope 1 fleet mileage emissions²; and
- An increase in natural gas usage following the collection of more accurate and complete datasets from Council assets

A full breakdown of the Council's emissions is detailed on page 16 of the CMP Annual Report. We have also retroactively updated the 2021/22 carbon footprint to reflect any missing/ estimated data. Whilst it may be seen as disappointing that the Council's emissions have increased, the inclusion of wider reporting standards, in line with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, only better serves to identify positive actions the Council can take to tackle climate change and lead by example.

5.2.3 Going forward, the 2022/23 carbon footprint will be used as the Council's baseline year as it provides a more accurate representation of emissions. This means NNC's carbon neutral trajectory will be measured against this figure. Further work will need to be undertaken to analyse indirect Scope 3 emissions associated with the Council's supply chain. The purpose of this work is to enable indirect Scope 3 emissions to be monitored and reported on annually and updated in line with prevailing best practice guidance.

5.2.4 From the 2022/23 footprint, we have derived the following:

- 30% of emissions come from electricity and gas usage at council owned and operated sites
- Fleet mileage and fuel consumption account for 17.3%

¹ As referenced on page 8 of the [Carbon Management Plan 2022](#).

² The GHG Protocol recommends using a combination of fuel-based and distance-based calculation methodology for fleet emissions. This combination is used because carbon dioxide (CO₂) is calculated from fuel use (litres), whereas methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) are calculated from distance travelled (mileage). GHG Protocol, "Technical Guidance for Calculating Scope 3 Emissions, Category 4: Upstream Transportation and Distribution," page 51, [Scope3 Calculation Guidance 0.pdf \(ghgprotocol.org\)](#).

- 23.3% of emissions are associated with the disposal of household waste, water supply & treatment, and staff business travel, attributing to the increase on the 2021/22 emissions baseline
- The full percentage breakdown of captured Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions is outlined on page 6 of Appendix A

5.3 **CMP Annual Report – Progress Updates for the 82 activities, Changes & New Activities**

5.3.1 In the first iteration of the CMP all 82 activities were allocated a delivery term of short, medium, or long. Over the course of the last year work has commenced on the majority of short- and medium-term activities. Out of the 82 activities:

- 18 have been delivered
- 47 have a Green RAG status, meaning they are on track to be delivered as planned, and
- 1 has an Amber RAG status, meaning it is facing some challenges to delivery; however, mitigation is in place and the delivery timeline is not impacted

5.3.2 For the remaining 16 activities it has become apparent that the original prescribed delivery terms are not all feasible, largely due to contractual limitations and the complexity of work that needs to take place to deliver each activity. As a result, 16 activities have a Red RAG status meaning they face considerable challenges, which will likely see the scope/ timeline for delivery impacted. As such, to mitigate blockages and enable on time delivery, the terms have been adjusted for 15 of these activities, as outlined on pages 32-34 of Appendix A. The 1 remaining Red activity (CMP034 – Carbon Neutral Fleet) will maintain a Red RAG status because it cannot be delivered by 2030. This is due to the procurement of new fossil-fuel vehicles for the Wellingborough depot³, with a contract term past the date of delivery of January 2030 as outlined on pages 25-26 of Appendix A. The Council will need to offset these emissions to achieve a carbon neutral fleet in 2030.

5.3.3 A request was put out to officers asking for recommendations for new CMP activities to help the Council reduce carbon emissions. 21 new activities were proposed and considered. Of this, 5 are not suitable for further consideration, and 4 require further investigation to determine feasibility, the output of which will determine if they will be added to the 2024/25 CMP Annual Report as new activities. The remaining 12 have been selected and will now be added to the CMP as new activities, as outlined on page 35 of Appendix A.

5.3.4 The plan will continue to require investment both in staffing and financial resources to implement and progress delivery. The alternative option of not progressing the plan leaves the Council exposed to further fluctuations in energy costs, ageing technology, and vehicles, and would be a departure

³ 44 new vehicles were ordered, 8 of which are EVs. At the time of procurement, due to the quick turnaround times required, it was determined that only 8 EVs would be suitable for the Wellingborough depot. This decision was made for a number of reasons i.e., charging infrastructure and space limitations at the depot, the weight of the vehicles, staff need to take vehicles home, and cost. The contract was signed in March 2023 and has for a 7-year term.

from the strategic priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. Additionally, not tackling the Council's carbon emissions in the context of the climate and environmental emergency would not illustrate corporate responsibility or set a positive example for North Northamptonshire organisations and residents about how the Council intends to address climate change.

5.4 CMP Annual Report: Achievements

5.4.1 As indicated in the CMP Annual Report 2022/23, there has been a lot of foundational work completed to work toward meeting our carbon neutral target. To include the delivery of 18 activities, across all 8 thematic areas. Some examples include:

Behavioural changes:

- Launch of the Climate Change Impact Assessment (CCIA) tool to inform decision-making;
- Carbon reduction and sustainability questions added to procurement exercises for contracts of £100K or more;
- Carbon literacy training integrated into staff induction, to include 37 members and 101 staff having completed a Carbon Literacy Course; and
- The adoption of our Future Ways of Working Strategy.

Feasibility analysis: conducted to explore decarbonisation options such as improvements to building energy efficiency and opportunities for renewables (i.e., solar PV).

- 24 stock condition surveys completed on 10 leisure facilities and 14 corporate buildings;
- 24 Energy Performance certificates received to inform investment decisions;
- Cost benefit analysis conducted for introducing low carbon bunkered fuel; and
- Procurement of a Fleet Decarbonisation Report (report will be complete in June 2024)

Tangible carbon savings examples include:

Highways: (please note emissions from the activities below are indirect Scope 3, so the CO₂ savings are afforded to Kier Highways rather than the Council)

- 100% of the Highways winter gritting fleet now utilising hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) instead of diesel; and
- 35% of petrol driven hand-tools replaced with electric alternatives.

Highways – Streetlighting: (Direct Scope 2 electricity emissions for the Council)

- 4,815 halogen lamps have been converted to LED. This is a multi-year project, due to be completed in June 26, and will afford a 75% energy savings equivalent to 500.79 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) annually.

Fleet:

- 1 Electric Refuse Collection Vehicle (eRCV) is in use out of the Wellingborough Depot. Carbon savings from fuel usage (at 13,000 annual miles) is estimated at 153.47 tCO₂e;
- 18% of our newly ordered fleet is electric, which will result in a carbon savings, amount is dependent on mileage and scope 2 electricity emissions to be calculated at a later date; and
- 18 EV chargers installed at council owned car parks, and a further 169 have been installed on-street across North Northamptonshire.

Assets:

- Energy consumption of IT equipment has been reduced by 69,800 kWh - a carbon savings of 27.18 tCO₂e;
- Creation of a new energy management system via Laser and supporting monitoring service, which over time will enable the organisation to understand and improve energy efficiency in buildings and reduce carbon emissions; and
- Grounds Services are in the process of switching approximately 350 petrol/ diesel driven hand tools to battery operated alternatives.

Carbon Sequestration & Biodiversity:

- 20 urban parks identified in Wellingborough suitable for a variety of living things for capturing and storing carbon
- 9,832 trees were planted during 2022/23 (Dec 22- Dec 23) across North Northamptonshire

Big things on the horizon:**Fleet:**

- Over the next 4 years, the Council's diesel bunkered fuel supply will be replaced with HVO. A carbon savings of 1,620.23 tCO₂e once the switch over is complete.

Assets:

- Decarbonisation works on the Corby Cube, Corby Swimming Pool, and Desborough Leisure Centre (pending the successful outcome of a PSDS funding bid), to include replacing existing fossil fuel fired boilers with air source heat pumps, and the installation of solar PV and LED lighting. Estimated annual carbon savings of 642 tCO₂e, delivery by March 26; and
- Exploratory conversations with suppliers to understand feasibility of large-scale renewables.

More information pertaining to what has been achieved can be found throughout the CMP Annual Report, to include all 82 progress updates on pages 14 -31 and the general achievements section on pages 10 & 11 of Appendix A.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Appendix A details progress made toward the delivery of the CMP and outlines the Council's carbon footprint for 2022/23. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and feedback on the report content prior to it being considered by the Executive.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. The CMP identified various actions for which funding will be required. The £1m set aside to support the Council's Climate Change work has been principally utilised for this work, with consideration given to the carbon emissions reduction benefits from proposed feasibility projects. As of February 2024, £468,326.50 has been awarded for various projects and services, including carbon literacy training for staff and councillors; energy and decarbonisation surveys for select corporate buildings and leisure facilities; procurement of battery-operated equipment for grounds maintenance; stock condition surveys for corporate buildings; procurement of net zero and climate change adaptation and mitigation evidence base consultancy; creation of a Residential Energy Efficiency & Energy Officer post; procurement of environmental justice location data, and the commissions of a fleet decarbonisation options report.
- 7.1.2. It is anticipated that the activities may translate into separate capital and/or revenue projects which will require business cases to consider whether they are taken forward. Such decisions will follow established approval processes through the Strategic Capital Board and/or Executive as required. Grant funding also continues to be sought for various decarbonisation activities.
- 7.1.3. This is a multi-year programme of work. Project feasibility studies are ongoing to consider all associated lifetime costs, along with carbon emission reductions. Decarbonisation benefits will be realised throughout the life of the programme and for many years to come. The scale of savings and timeline for payback will be dependent upon the scale of decarbonisation actions that are delivered. This will be considered as part of any future funding request.
- 7.1.4. Growth & Regeneration, Climate Change Officer and Transformation resources comprise the Carbon Management Team. The team are responsible for day-to-day management of the programme, internal engagement initiatives, and performance reporting. Officers from various teams throughout the Council provide additional expertise and capacity for progressing the actions within the plan.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. Becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030 is not a legal requirement. However, NNC agreed a motion on 22nd December 2022, which establishes an expectation to deliver a range of decarbonisation activities. This report supports delivery of that expectation.
- 7.2.2. Legislation applicable to the work covered by the CMP Annual Report includes Energy Performance Certificate regulations and Environment Act 2021 obligations.

7.2.3. Contracts required to support delivery are subject to legal and procurement advice.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1. The CMP Annual Report seeks to reinforce the Council's strategic priorities, as set out in the Corporate Plan:

(a) In particular the key commitment to a greener, more sustainable environment;

(b) The report also recognises the declaration of a climate and environmental emergency, and its target of becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030.

7.4. Risk

7.4.1. Should the CMP Annual Report not be approved there is a risk that the Council could appear to not be meeting our corporate responsibilities as outlined in our values and behaviours, specifically Trustworthy, in being open and transparent in providing an annual progress update for the CMP.

7.4.2. There is a risk of continued focus/ commitment in terms of delivery of CMP activities across the Council due to other business as usual pressures. This will be mitigated through strong project management, including task management, regular checkpoint meetings with officers, key performance indicator (KPI) reporting requirements, and internal engagement initiatives. Momentum is also dependent on funding. Officers will continue to bid for relevant grant funding.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. As projects continue to be developed, Ward members and relevant stakeholders will be consulted on any proposals impacting their area.

7.6. Consideration by the Executive

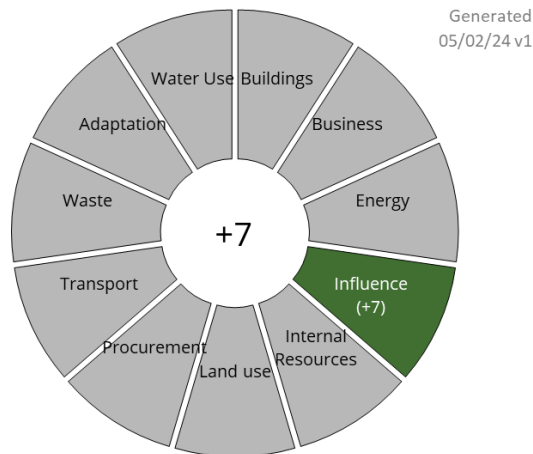
7.6.1. This report is on the Executive forward plan for 13th June 2024 where approval will be sought to publish the CMP Annual Report on the Council's website.

7.7. Equality Implications

7.7.1. The effects of climate change are likely to disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in our society, particularly residents in areas of high deprivation, younger children, and older people. The CMP Annual Report is not anticipated to disproportionately impact on any protected group. An Equality Screening Assessment has been completed and confirms that there are no negative impacts to one or more protected group as a result of this report.

7.8. Climate Impact

7.8.1. A Climate Change Impact Assessment has been completed. The resulting impact has been assessed as follows:



North Northamptonshire Council has committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, 5 yrs & 10 mos away.

7.8.2. The CMP Annual Report is expected to have a positive net benefit in terms of influence on the Council's activities with relation to the climate. This forms part of a range of other benefits delivered under the Carbon Management Plan which are not affected by this decision.

7.9. Community Impact

7.9.1. Continuing to enhance our green environment has a positive impact on health and wellbeing, whilst also improving air quality and creating a sense of place.

7.10. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.10.1. There are no Crime and Disorder issues arising directly from this report.

8. Background Papers

8.1. [Climate Change Impact Assessment](#)

8.2. [Equality Screening Assessment](#)