

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

Date: 29 November 2021

Title: Climate Emergency Update

Portfolio: Environment	Cabinet Member: Councillor Sandra Graham
Report from Service Area:	Environment Housing and Leisure
Responsible Officer:	Phil Scott, Director of Environment, Housing and Leisure Tel: (0191) 643 7295
Wards affected:	All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

In July 2019 Council declared a Climate Emergency, setting a target to reduce the carbon footprint of the Authority and the Borough by 50% by 2023 and to become carbon neutral by 2050.

Subsequently, in further acknowledgement of the gravity and urgency of the climate emergency, the refreshed Our North Tyneside Council Plan 2021-25, approved by Council in September 2021, included the following ambition;

“We will publish an action plan of the steps we will take and the national investment we will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030.”

This report updates Cabinet on the reductions in the Authority and Borough carbon footprints, 52% and 41% respectively, informs Cabinet of a number of actions taken since the previous update report in October 2020 and of the ongoing work programme, and sets out the Authority’s approach to meeting this policy ambition.

1.2 Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. notes the performance update in relation to the carbon footprint of the Authority and the carbon footprint of the Borough;
2. notes the Authority’s approach to achieving the Our North Tyneside Council Plan policy ambition of carbon net-zero 2030;
3. notes that a further progress report will be presented to Cabinet in 2022.

4. agrees to receive an action plan in 2022 of the steps the Authority will take and the national investment it will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 1 October 2021.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report relates to the following priorities in the 2021-25 Our North Tyneside Plan:

- We will secure funding to help low-income households to install low-carbon heating;
- We will increase opportunities for safe walking and cycling, including providing a segregated cycleway at the coast; and
- We will publish an action plan of the steps we will take and the national investment we will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030.

1.5 Information

1.5.1 Carbon net-zero and current performance

In July 2019 Council declared a Climate Emergency, setting a target to reduce the carbon footprint of the Authority and the Borough by 50% by 2023 and to become carbon neutral by 2050.

Subsequently, in further acknowledgement of the gravity and urgency of the climate emergency, the refreshed Our North Tyneside Council Plan 2021-25, approved by Council in September 2021, included the following ambition;

“We will publish an action plan of the steps we will take and the national investment we will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030.”

Net-zero means achieving a balance between the number of emissions produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere. It requires the reduction of existing emissions and the subsequent removal (offsetting) of remaining emissions.

Working towards a net-zero target recognises that there will be some emissions at the target date which cannot be mitigated against through planned interventions and that these need to be fully offset / inset. Traditionally this would be through natural carbon sequestration such as land and trees, although increasingly the national policy context is including the potential for technological solutions, such as carbon capture and storage.

The Authority's carbon footprint is made up of the power, heat and water used to run its operational buildings, including the sheltered accommodation offer but not schools, the electricity used to power over 31,000 street lighting apparatus, the fuel and power used to operate the Authority's fleet of vehicles that are used to deliver services and the business miles staff travel in their own vehicles (not including commuting to and from work). This definition of the Authority's carbon footprint is in line with central government's Greenhouse Gas Protocol guidance.

The Authority submits an annual performance report to the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) that details the year-on-year measurement of the

Authority's carbon footprint. This is published on the Authority's website and is included as a background paper.

At the end of 2020/21, the Authority's carbon footprint had decreased by 52% since the baseline year of 2010/11, well in advance of the 2023 target.

The Borough's carbon footprint is made up of the power and heat used in the commercial, industrial and domestic buildings across the whole of the Borough, emissions from road and rail transport, and land use and forestation activities, which can result in either a release into or removal of emissions from the atmosphere.

An annual report is provided to the Authority by BEIS detailing the carbon footprint of the Borough. The most recent report shows that between the baseline year of 2005 and 2019, absolute carbon emissions have decreased by 41% and carbon emissions per head of population have decreased by 45% when accounting for population growth.

The most recent data shows that the respective carbon footprints are:

- Authority – 14,395 tonnes of CO₂
- Borough – 827,200 tonnes of CO₂

1.5.2 What action has been taken?

The Authority is clear in its commitment to tackling the Climate Emergency and has taken a number of steps since the previous report to Cabinet in October 2020. These include but are not limited to;

- Council agreed over £4.3m funding to convert almost 20,000 street lights to energy efficient LED. This will complete the street lighting LED programme.
- The Killingworth Depot has reopened. This has undergone a significant refurbishment including an improved fabric first approach, installation of efficient electrical and mechanical equipment, and installation of low carbon heating. Further work to install roof based and car port Solar PV systems, and battery storage, is due to take place in the coming months. This is now the subject of a best practice case study.
- Secured £4.3m funding from the Green Homes Grant Local Delivery Scheme to install low carbon heating, energy efficiency measures and renewable energy systems in over 500 homes with low-household incomes.
- Secured £3.2m funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Grant to install low carbon heating and energy efficiency measures in four of the Authority's most carbon intensive buildings.
- Cabinet approved a revised North Tyneside Transport Strategy which aligned to the new Our North Tyneside Plan carbon net-zero 2030 policy ambition.
- The Authority has developed its first ever Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) Strategy and this is presented to Cabinet for approval on 29 November 2021.
- Securing funding to develop a North East Community Forest across North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland and Durham. This will provide 500 hectares of new woodland and canopy cover across the community forest area by 2025.

- Increased the number of electric and ultra-low emission vehicles in the Authority's fleet.
- An increased number of energy efficiency and solar PV installations have been built into the draft Housing Capital Plan to be considered as part of the 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget Process.
- Trialled the use of an electric refuse collection vehicle.
- Secured funding for, and completed, an independent review of the Authority's fleet and options for decarbonisation.
- Included a number of questions in the resident's survey on climate emergency for the first time ever.
- Developed an 'Action on Climate Change' brand and logo which will be used on Authority assets such as vehicles, and on printed and digital communications on climate emergency work in the borough. This is an umbrella brand with opportunities for residents, organisations, schools and businesses to use it to showcase their sustainability work. It will also feature in a behavioural change campaign to help residents, businesses, stakeholder and visitors to take steps towards reducing carbon dioxide emissions.
- Published a "Climate Hub" on the Authority's website containing useful climate emergency information, press releases, key documents and grant information.
- Hosted a "Call for Evidence" event during the United Nation's Climate Change Conference of the Parties 26 (COP26), including large organisations and stakeholder groups in the Borough.
- Secured funding from the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Energy Accelerator programme for the development of a Heat Network feasibility study for the Killingworth depot site and surrounding commercial, industrial and housing units.
- Launched a Business carbon awards scheme.
- The Authority has agreed to develop 9 affordable homes on a former garage site utilising a Modern Method of Construction (MMC) called HUSK. These homes will utilise electricity as a form of heat and build on our fabric first approach with a combination of Air Source Heat Pumps and Solar PV arrays.
- Completed a number of renewable energy feasibility studies that are now being considered for investment.
- Developed a Human Resources and Organisational Development action plan, including embedding a climate emergency section in individual performance reviews, including a statement on climate emergency in all job descriptions and recruitment packs, and including climate emergency in the recently launched new starter's induction day.
- Approved feasibility funding for the development of a Heat Decarbonisation Plan for public buildings.

- Launched a ‘Sustainability Incubator Programme’ to support North Tyneside businesses to improve their environmental sustainability.
- Installed 7 water fountains along the coast to support active travel and the campaign to end single use plastics, with a further 10 planned.
- Promoted a number of environmentally friendly businesses.
- Continued working with our young, elected representatives to shape our plans around climate emergency, waste, recycling and reducing single use plastics usage.
- The Authority published its 2020/21 Annual Greenhouse Gas Report, detailing performance on reducing the carbon footprint of the Authority and the Borough.
- Consulting on a scheme to create a continuous segregated cycle lane along the length of the North Tyneside Coast between St Mary’s Lighthouse and North Shields Fish Quay/Town Centre.
- Secured almost £9m funding to provide an additional 14 kilometres of cycle routes and improve active travel and public transport.
- The Authority’s partnership with E.On, which installed solar PV generation systems on over 1,400 council houses, produced 3,000 megawatt hours of renewable electricity in 2020. This is equivalent to 754 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.
- Took part in the Government consultation on “Consistency in Household and Business Recycling in England” and in line with the refreshed Our North Tyneside Council Plan 2021-25 policy commitment, supported the proposals for the introduction of separate food waste collections.
- Working with the North of Tyne Combined Authority;
 - Ran a climate emergency citizens assembly with 50 residents who made a set of 30 recommendations.
 - Agreed a Green New Deal, with £9m of public sector investment with an additional £9m private sector investment.
 - Established the North East Energy for Growth Accelerator.

1.5.3 Approach to carbon net-zero 2030

The Authority has a good understanding of the main sources of carbon dioxide emissions that makes up both the Authority carbon footprint and the Borough carbon footprint, as detailed in section 1.5.1 of this report, and has published a Climate Emergency Action Plan in October 2020. However, that plan was working towards a 2050 decarbonisation pathway and the new carbon net-zero 2030 ambition within the Our North Tyneside Council Plan 2021-25 requires that the Authority’s action plan be redeveloped.

The Authority is developing a number of carbon net-zero plans that specifically address these sources of emissions, such as an Authority buildings net-zero plan, fleet net-zero plan, street lighting net-zero plan and housing net-zero plan. These will be supported with net-zero plans for key functions such as supply chain and procurement, organisational culture and carbon offsetting.

It is important to understand that the Authority's carbon footprint is less than 2% of the Borough's carbon footprint. Working with the North Tyneside Strategic Partnership, the Authority will form a Green North Tyneside Board that will bring together other public sector organisations, large producers of carbon dioxide emissions in the Borough and key stakeholders to address the climate emergency collectively.

The investment and net-zero plans of other organisations will help to influence and shape the Authority's approach to carbon net-zero 2030, work programmes and campaigns, for example, the replacement of Nexus rolling stock will both bring a direct energy efficiency improvement and emissions reduction and will also present the opportunity for a campaign around more sustainable transport.

The Green North Tyneside Board will assist the Authority in capturing these plans, sharing best practice, collaborating on strategic projects and opening the Authority's own plans up to scrutiny. The recent 'Call to Evidence' event hosted by the Authority on November 11th brought together a number of large organisations and stakeholders to share and scrutinise plans and was a useful event for shaping the future board.

Engaging and energising our residents, businesses, partners and visitors will be key in working towards a carbon net-zero 2030 and the Authority has developed a campaign to support this. There is a need to create a movement and to encourage behavioural change to meet the challenges of a carbon net-zero 2030 ambition. The recent resident's survey, which included questions on climate emergency for the first time, will help to inform the campaign, as will other conversations with key stakeholders.

The Authority's Climate Emergency Board will continue to provide governance to the programme of work listed within section 1.5 of this report.

1.5.4 National policy context

The Climate Change Act 2008, as amended in 2019, commits the UK to net-zero by 2050. Throughout 2021 and particularly in the run up to COP26, key Government strategies and plans have been released that set out the Government's approach to net-zero, including the Ten Point Plan, Net Zero Strategy and Heat and Building Decarbonisation Strategy.

It is important that the Authority's approach to developing its own carbon net-zero 2030 plan fully considers the decarbonisation plans, investments, technological developments and opportunities for economic growth outlined within these key documents.

The Authority will ensure that its plans are aligned to these key documents to both realise the opportunities for decarbonisation and economic growth, and to identify where the differing timeline of national government targets will have an impact on the Authority's carbon net-zero 2030 ambition.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

To agree to the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

Option 2

To not approve the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Agreeing the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report will support the delivery of the Our North Tyneside Council Plan 2021-25 carbon net-zero 2030 ambition.

1.8 Appendices:

‘Appendix: North Tyneside Climate Emergency Action Plan’.

[North Tyneside Climate Emergency Action Plan](#)

1.9 Contact officers:

Paul Nelson, Environmental Sustainability & Street Lighting Manager, Technical & Regulatory Services, tel. (0191) 643 6467

Colin MacDonald, Senior Manager, Technical & Regulatory Services, tel. (0191) 643 6620

Michael Keenlyside, Environmental Sustainability Officer, tel. (0191) 643 6505

Cathy Davison, Principal Accountant Investment (Capital) and Revenue, tel. (0191) 643 5727

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

(1) [Annual Greenhouse Gas Report 2020-21](#)

(2) [BEIS Local Authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics 2005-2019](#)

(3) [Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-25](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The financing of specific projects to reduce carbon emissions will be considered as part of the development of each business case. Any investment required in addition to existing budgets will be reported to Cabinet / Council.

2.2 Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

The Climate Emergency Board provides governance and a mechanism for internal consultation on the programme of work outlined in this report. The Board is co-chaired by the Cabinet Member for Environment and includes the Deputy Mayor in its membership.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

Individual residents, community groups and businesses have demonstrated a passion to ensure North Tyneside is sustainable. Our climate emergency work has been informed by working with business on specific technologies, with cycling organisations as we increase North Tyneside's cycling infrastructure and working with our Young Mayors, Members of the Young Parliament and Youth Councillors to listen to their views about how we protect North Tyneside for their future. As a landlord, the Authority has worked with Tenants' representatives and individual tenants on energy efficient products and how to use them. As a leisure business, the Authority has worked with its customers, experts and the sector to reduce energy consumption and as a waste business, the Authority has spent time working on best practice with the sector and local universities to review and revise operations. Recently we have been working closely with our bus operators to apply Government funding to their fleet to reduce emissions.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including the public, private and third sectors.

The Authority recently hosted a 'Call for Evidence' day with other public sector organisation, businesses, stakeholders and residents to share plans and open them up to scrutiny.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equality and diversity issues directly arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk issues directly arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

This report details the achievements in reducing the carbon footprints of the Authority and the Borough and sets out an approach to achieving the Authority's carbon net-zero 2030 policy ambition.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive X
- Director of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Assistant Chief Executive X