

REPORT TO STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 16 March 2022

Report of: Director for Net Zero Exeter & City Management

Title: Working Towards Net Zero - Exeter City Council's Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 This report is a brief update on the work of the Net Zero Team, and delivery of the City Council's first Carbon Reduction Plan.
- 1.2 The updated Carbon Reduction Plan (v 2.0) includes a mix of measures set out in the Council's Corporate Carbon Footprint Report produced in 2022, and actions in progress across all services to achieve a Net Zero Council.
- 1.3 A summary of recent projects successfully delivered are also included within this report.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That members acknowledge progress made but also the scale of the challenge that remains.
- 2.2 That the Carbon Reduction Plan is an evolving document, to be reviewed on a six monthly basis, to monitor progress, identify change and evaluate actions needed to deliver net zero.
- 2.3 To deliver net zero by 2030 will require an increase in capacity, financial investment and operational resource, both internally and from government at a national level. An investment Plan to establish recourses required has been added to the Carbon Reduction Plan.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 Exeter City Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and as part of this commitment, it aims to achieve net zero Green House Gas (GHG) emissions for its own corporate actives by 2030. The target year is 20 years in advance of the 2050 national net zero target required under the Climate Change Act and reported on in the Sixth Carbon Budget.
- 3.2 In 2021 the Net Zero team commissioned a corporate carbon footprint baseline report, which was undertaken and completed by the Centre for Energy and the Environment,

at the University of Exeter. The footprint is a detailed evaluation of the Council's emissions across seven sectors, and sets out a range of carbon reduction measures, projections and offsetting options to deliver net zero.

- 3.4 Members have an appreciation of the work being carried out to deliver the Carbon Reduction Plan, and appreciation of the work needed throughout all Council services, and the resources, both financial and non-financial, needed to deliver net zero by 2030.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

- 4.1 Achieving net zero, whether nationally, locally or organisationally, requires broad action across all emission scopes and across every service. Reducing Council carbon emissions will be very challenging in such a tight time frame and with the resources currently available.
- 4.2 Additional resources will be required to enable the Net Zero Team to strategically plan the required organisation change and investment budget needed to deliver activity across services to support one of the main Council's corporate priorities. Financial and non-financial resources currently in place, were detailed in a report to Executive July 2022.
- 4.3 Investment and a clear policy change will be required to support the Council to achieve net zero by 2030. Furthermore, capacity (financial and non-financial) to deliver the measures set out across services in the Carbon Reduction Plan must be addressed with some urgency.

5. What are the legal aspects?

- 5.1 This is an informative report. Section 1 of the Climate Change Act 2008 states that 'it is the duty of the Secretary of State to ensure that the net UK carbon account for the year 2050 is at least 100% lower than the 1990 baseline'. The Act originally specified that the net UK carbon account for the year 2050 was to be 80% lower than the 1990 baseline. The Climate Change Act (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 increased the figure to 100%.

6 Report details

Carbon Reduction Project Update

- 6.1 Part Funded by the European Regional Development Fund, the Water Lane Smart Grid and Storage Project has been completed. This is a 1.2MW mini Solar farm, built on an inactive landfill site, and includes a substantial battery storage system to provide flexibility between peak generation and peak usage. Using a Private Wire it feeds renewable power direct to the Council's depot site, feeding Oakwood House, the Materials Reclamation Facility, and new charging infrastructure that is able to support electrification of all fleet. The project also includes battery storage at the Livestock Centre, John Lewis Car Park and a solar array and small battery store at the Riverside Leisure Centre. The project provides for energy resilience, reduction in carbon and vehicle emissions.
- 6.2 A Task & Finish Group has been set up to work with Procurement to better record and reduce Scope 3 emissions. Procurement of goods and services, is the sector the

Council has least control over, and in 2020 accounted for 61% of all emissions. The Task & Finish group are working to better record and categorise spend so that more accurate carbon accounting can be carried. Suppliers of high value works will also be required to provide embodied emission data.

- 6.3 Officers from the Net Zero Team have delivered Carbon Literacy training to 60 members of staff, including, members of the Strategic Management Board and City Councillors. 30 Councillors and staff are certified as carbon literate, which secures Carbon Literate Organisational Bronze Status for the city Council.
- 6.4 The Net Zero team has develop a new section on the Council's website <https://www.exeter.gov.uk/climate-emergency/> The Climate Emergency section details projects undertaken, linking back to the seven sectors, to reduce Council carbon emissions. Information is also provided for residents and businesses to advise them in how to reduce their own carbon emissions. The website will be updated on a regular basis.
- 6.5 The Council has become a full member of the South West Energy and Environment Group (SWEEG). SWEEG is a collaborative research partnership of South West public organisations and provides the Council access to detailed technical work by academics from the Centre for Energy and Environment. Much needed work has commenced to support Embodied Carbon Emissions and Scope 3 data, Decarbonisation of corporate assets and services, Dissemination of the Water Lane Project Outputs, and Recycling Operations.
- 6.6 The annual assessment of the council's GHG emissions will enable the evaluation and of the Carbon Reduction Plan and actions required to deliver net zero. The Council's GHG emission data recorded annually will be reported to the September Strategic Scrutiny.
- 6.7 As of Q3, £189,829 has been spent from the £1m one off net zero budget. Additional budget has been committed for the Council net zero, which includes staffing and SWEEG membership for an additional 3 years, feasibility studies, carbon literacy training and solar infrastructure maintenance.

City Wide net zero	
Staffing & Overheads	£17,662
Room Hire	£15,090
Project Activity	£11,735
Total	£44,487
City Council net zero	
Staffing	£80,155
SWEEG Membership	£16,667
Carbon Literacy Training	£1,636
Green Accord website	£14,750
Feasibility Studies	£12,300
Solar PV	£19,833
Total	£145,341
TOTAL	£189,828

6.8 The next update of the action plan will indicate a high, medium, low priority ranking for actions. When resources allow, work will begin with services to develop specific adaptation and mitigation actions.

7. How does the decision contribute to the Council’s Corporate Plan?

7.1 This report and the work of the Net Zero team links directly to the Exeter Vision and a number of corporate priorities. Work will have to be delivered in partnership with all Council service areas to reduce our corporate carbon emissions.

Exeter Vision	Innovative & Analytical City	The team has developed a range of data sets to monitor Council carbon emissions
	Healthy & Inclusive	Ensure Council owned homes are energy efficient
	The Most active city in the UK	Projects developed to support active travel for employees
	Accessible world class educations	N/A
	Liveable & connected	Commercial and residential properties are energy efficient and built to the best possible standard
	A leading sustainable city	The Council is a role model for other organisations in Exeter
Corporate Plan	Delivering Net Zero Exeter 2030	Net Zero team focuses on reducing Council carbon emissions to deliver Net Zero by 2030
	Providing value for money services	Carbon reducing actions will be commercially viable and will reduce service delivery costs
	Building Great Neighbourhoods	Working with Building Greater Exeter, Liveable Exeter, Exeter City Living and other developers in developing sustainable and accessible neighbourhoods and new homes, using sustainable constructions methods
	Promoting active & healthy lifestyles	Working in partnership with Live & Move in developing sustainable travel options and low traffic neighbourhoods for staff active travel

8. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

8.1 The development of the Council’s carbon footprint report, supporting action plan and risk register will inform the work programme of the Net Zero team and that of other services for the foreseeable future. The action plan and risk register will be presented to Strategic Scrutiny every six months for ongoing monitoring and evaluation. If this stream of work is not supported, the Council will not deliver net zero by 2030.

8.2 Ownership, understanding and a lack of some emissions data is being addressed by the Net Zero Team, with initiatives undertaken such as the Net Zero Ambassadors and Carbon Literacy Training Programme, as listed in the Carbon Reduction Plan.

8.3 The financial cost to deliver net zero within the Council will be significant. This report provides a detailed carbon reduction projections, and measures that can be taken to deliver those projections. The team is unable to provide accurate financial costs for the measures needed, this will require investment plans and accurate cost proposals to be included in the work going forward.

9.Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

9.1 In delivering the action plan, the Net Zero team will take into account the potential impact of actions in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision. A separate EQIA will be developed for each action being developed.

10.Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

10.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and as part of this commitment, it aims to achieve net zero emissions for its corporate activities by 2030. The Carbon Reduction Plan provides a clear roadmap of actions to reduce Council GHG emissions.

10.2 Strategic decisions made, either have a positive or negative effect on Council emissions. Work needs to be undertaken prior to decisions being made, to determine the impact on Council emissions.

10.3 The Net Zero Risk Register will consider the carbon reduction measures required to achieve net zero.

11.Are there any other options?

11.1 There is the option of not committing existing or additional financial and non-financial resources to work towards Net Zero within the Council. This would result in a lack of co-ordination, strategic direction and delivery in reducing our carbon emissions and to realise the Council's Net Zero 2030 target. On a regular basis, the Net Zero team are sourcing and applying for external funding to support the delivery of the Council's own carbon reduction plan, working with services to identify capacity and match funding within the Council.

Director Net Zero & City Management, David Bartram

Author: Net Zero Project Manager

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

Executive, July 2022

Exeter City Council Corporate Carbon Footprint, Achieving Net Zero by 2030

Carbon Reduction Plan 2022-2030

Contact for enquires:

Democratic Services (Committees),Room 4.36,01392 265275