

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Council – 25 May 2022

**Report Title**

Climate Emergency Annual Report

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

**Report Author(s)**

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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

On 25 April 2022 Cabinet resolved to submit the Climate Emergency Annual Report and associated decisions to the next Council meeting for information. The report had also been subject to pre-decision scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at their meeting on 20 April 2022.

At its meeting on 30 October 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency and produced a policy and action plan “Responding to the Climate Emergency”. This set out key policy themes of Energy; Housing; Transport; Waste; Built and Natural Environment; Influence and Engagement.

At its meeting on 23 March 2020, Cabinet resolved to establish the targets of:

- The Council’s carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2030 (NZ30)
- Borough-wide carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2040 (NZ40)

A Climate Emergency Action Plan for 2021/22 was included in the previous Climate Emergency Annual Report on 22 March 2021. This report provides an update on progress against actions outlined in the 2021/22 Action Plan, with particular attention paid to baselining work, which will be an important factor in the continuing strategic development of the Council’s response to the climate emergency. The report then

outlines next steps on this agenda, particularly the ongoing development of a new Climate Emergency Action Plan.

## **Recommendations**

1. That the Climate Emergency Annual Report be noted.

## **List of Appendices Included**

- Appendix 1 Progress Summary Table
- Appendix 2 Case Study A: The Lanes Retrofit
- Appendix 3 Case Study B: Rotherham to Kilnhurst Flood Alleviation Scheme
- Appendix 4 Part A - Initial Equality Screening Analysis
- Appendix 5 Carbon Impact Assessment

## **Background Papers**

Greenhouse Gas Protocol (2014). *Mitigation Goal Standard: An accounting and reporting standard for national and subnational greenhouse gas reduction goals*:  
<[https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/standards/Mitigation\\_Goal\\_Standard.pdf](https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/standards/Mitigation_Goal_Standard.pdf)>

Rotherham Council (2020). *Responding to the Climate Emergency*. Cabinet 23 March 2020:  
<<http://modgov-p-db/documents/s125066/Responding%20to%20the%20Climate%20Emergency.pdf>>

Rotherham Council (2021). *Climate Emergency Annual Report*. Cabinet 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021:  
<<http://modgov-p-db/documents/s130298/Report%20-%20Climate%20Change.pdf>>

## **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

Cabinet – 25 April 2022

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 20 April 2022

## **Council Approval Required**

Yes

## **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## Climate Emergency Annual Report

### 1. Background

1.1 At its meeting on 30 October 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency. The subsequent Cabinet report of 23 March 2020, *Responding to the Climate Emergency*, outlined two overarching goals which were accepted as a basis for action:

- The Council's carbon emissions to be net zero by 2030 (NZ30).
- Rotherham-wide carbon emissions to be net zero by 2040 (NZ40).

1.2 The 2020 Cabinet report *Responding to the Climate Emergency* included a Policy Statement, which identified the following themes as a framework for action:

- Energy.
- Transport.
- Housing.
- Waste.
- Built & Natural Environment.
- Influence & Engagement.

1.3 The first Climate Emergency Annual Report was submitted to Cabinet on 22 March 2021. This report included an account of actions that had been taken to reduce emissions from Council assets, operations, and services and to reduce emissions across the Borough of Rotherham. The report included a Climate Emergency Action Plan for 2021/22, which laid out actions corresponding to the above themes, as well as a set of "overarching activities," which included the development of a carbon emissions baseline and the introduction of carbon impact assessments for all Cabinet reports.

1.4 Climate Emergency UK has produced a set of scorecards for local authorities' Climate Action Plans, in partnership with Friends of the Earth, Centre for Alternative Technology, Ashden and APSE Energy. While these scorecards evaluate planned actions, rather than actions completed, it is positive that the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan scored 51%. This is above the national average (50%) and is the highest score achieved by a local authority in South Yorkshire.

1.5 The Climate Emergency Annual Report had been presented to and discussed by Cabinet at the meeting held on 25 April 2022. During the meeting it was resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the progress to date towards the NZ30 and NZ40 targets.
2. Note the progress against the actions from the 2021/22 Climate Emergency Action Plan.

3. Agree the approach laid out for continued development of the Council's response to the Climate Emergency, including an updated Action Plan in 2022.
4. Agree that the Climate Emergency Annual Report be submitted to the next Council meeting for information.
5. Agree that developments related to the Environment Bill and the subsequent impact on the waste and recycling strategies be submitted to the Improving Places Select Commission in due course.

## 2. Key Issues

2.1 This report sets out progress to date against the 2021/22 Climate Emergency Action Plan. Particular attention is paid to the development of a carbon emissions baseline, which represents an important evidence base for strategic development of the Council's climate change agenda. The report goes on to outline next steps, particularly the ongoing development of a refreshed Climate Emergency Action Plan, which will be developed once the new Climate Emergency Delivery Team is established.

2.2 The 2021/22 Climate Emergency Action Plan was structured around strategic themes, as follows:

- **Energy** – the energy used by Council assets, operations and services, including energy used by contractors.
- **Housing** – emissions from domestic energy usage, whether from social housing or privately-owned housing.
- **Transport** – includes emissions from the Council's fleet vehicles and "grey fleet", as well as from public and private transport use across the Borough.
- **Waste** – the Council works with other local authorities through the South Yorkshire Waste Strategy, to extend sustainable waste processing and to reduce the amount of waste.
- **Built and natural environment** – incorporates carbon emissions from construction and development and the urban environment, as well as carbon sequestration through green infrastructure.
- **Influence & Engagement** – most emissions from Rotherham are not related to Council activities: therefore, to have a meaningful impact on Borough-wide emissions, the Council must work alongside local residents, communities and organisations, as well as national government.

### 2.3 ***Progress to date***

### 2.4 ***Theme: Overarching activity***

#### 2.5 • ***Action: Continue to develop baseline data***

2.6 As of 1 November 2021, a Climate Change Data Analysis Officer has been recruited to the Council, to support the development of carbon emissions baselines for the Council's own assets, operations and services (NZ30) and for the Borough of Rotherham (NZ40). The Data Analysis Officer role will also support the development of emissions monitoring and the projection of carbon emissions reduction pathways.

2.7 A carbon emissions baseline is an inventory of emissions which are produced over a specified timeframe. Two separate baselines have been produced in this case, corresponding to the Council's two net zero goals. Guidance in the Greenhouse Gas Protocol's Mitigation Goal Standard identifies baselining as a key step in developing evidence-based strategy and actions towards emission reduction. A carbon emissions baseline will allow the Council to:

1. Establish the scale of current carbon emissions across a range of sectors and subsectors.
2. Create scenario-based projection models to test the effectiveness of proposed projects, plans and strategies to mitigate climate change.
3. Provide a reference point, against which the Council's data analysts can measure changes in emissions resulting from a project, plan or strategy.
4. Create a 'road map' towards NZ30 and NZ40 targets.

2.8 The baseline used in this report covers the year 2018/19. This reporting year was chosen as the most recent period with sufficient data coverage, prior to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Data collected over lockdown periods can be considered anomalous due to temporary laws, regulations and behavioural changes, which had an impact on emissions. For example, during the first national lockdown, there was a decrease in carbon emissions from transport across the Borough. Emissions data from these periods would therefore not be appropriate for baselining.

2.9 In the Council's NZ30 and NZ40 Baselines, carbon emissions are measured in tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and kilotons of carbon dioxide equivalent (ktCO<sub>2</sub>e).

2.10 NZ30 2018/19 Baseline:

The carbon emissions included in the Council's NZ30 target and baseline are shown in the following table:

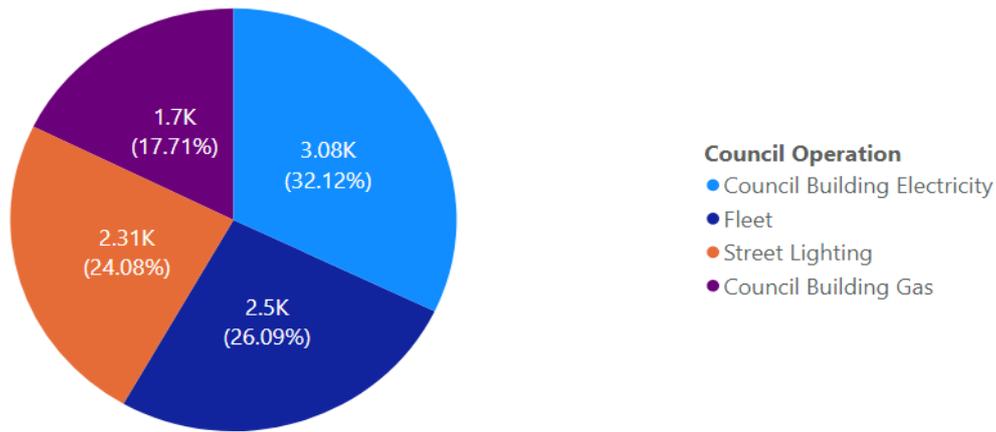
Scope	Definition	Examples	Target
Scope 1	Carbon emissions from sources that directly burn fossil fuels, such as gas boilers and combustion engines.	Heating of RMBC owned and managed assets (e.g. offices and libraries).  RMBC's fleet emissions.	NZ30
Scope 2	Carbon Emissions from electricity use.	Electricity from RMBC owned and managed assets (e.g. offices and libraries).  Electric vehicles and their charging points.  Streetlighting and traffic signals.	NZ30
Scope 3	Carbon emissions from sources that the Council does not directly control, but over which it has some responsibility or influence.	RMBC council housing and third party occupied buildings.  RMBC supply chain & procured services.  RMBC waste management.  Staff commuter journeys and 'grey fleet' mileage.	NZ40

Scope 1 & 2 emissions from Council assets, operations and services are those considered under the NZ30 target and baseline. Scope 3 emissions are not considered under the NZ30, as they are outside the Council's direct control: instead, they are considered under the NZ40 target for carbon emissions across the Borough of Rotherham. Two exceptions can be made:

- Council policies can set expectations relating to 'grey fleet' mileage.
- Whether emissions from the Council's contractors can be accounted for and whether these can be influenced by the Council will be reviewed, to determine if these should be included in the NZ30 baseline. For now, these are included under NZ40 emissions.

The following chart demonstrates internally held data used to construct the Council's NZ30 baseline for 2018/19 across several operational areas. For simplicity, despite being defined as Scope 3 emissions, emissions from 'grey fleet' mileage have been included under general fleet emissions. The 2018/19 baseline, covering Scope 1 & 2 emissions and 'grey fleet' emissions, puts the Council's total annual carbon emissions at 9,590 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

Scope 1 & 2 Emissions (tCO2e) by Council Operation



2.11 NZ40 2018/19 Baseline:

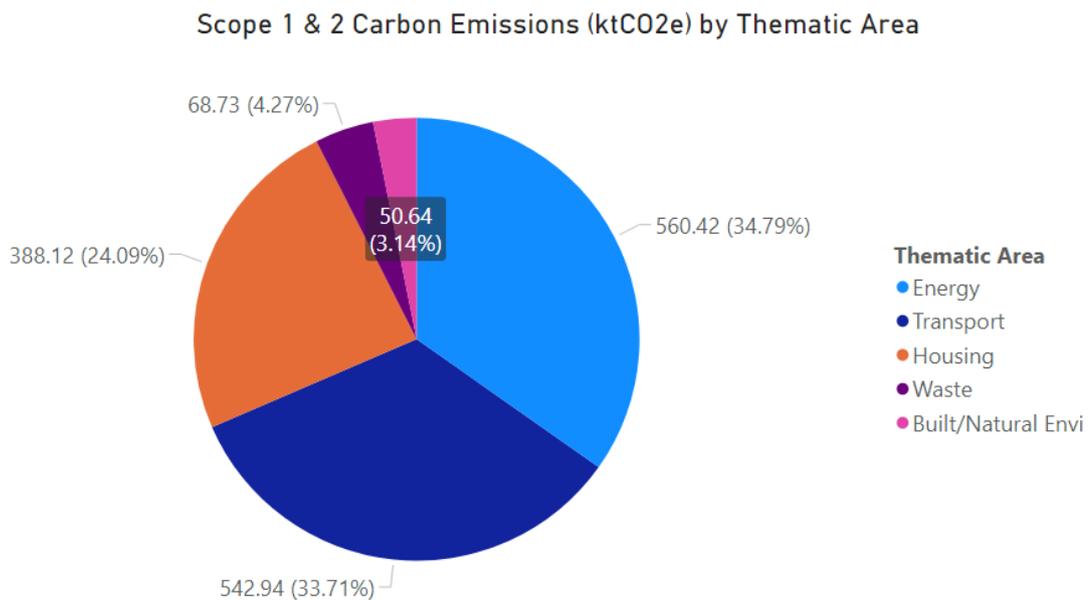
Carbon emissions included in the Borough-wide NZ40 target and baseline are shown in the following table:

Scope	Definition	Examples	Target
Scope 1	CO2 emissions from sources located within the Borough boundary.	Domestic, industrial, commercial and public sector gas  Transport within the Borough  Emissions from waste treated within the Borough boundary  Emissions from agricultural, other land-use and land-use-change Fugitive Emissions  Emissions from industrial process within the Borough	NZ40
Scope 2	CO2 emissions occurring because of supplied electricity within the Borough boundary.	Domestic, industrial, commercial and public sector electricity  Electric vehicle charging emissions	NZ40
Scope 3	All other CO2 emissions that occur outside the Borough's boundary, due to activities within the boundary.	Transmission and distribution losses from the use of grid supplied energy  Emissions from the portion of trans-boundary journeys occurring outside the Borough, and transmission and distribution losses from grid-supplied energy for electric vehicle use	

		Aviation	
		Emissions from waste generated by the Borough but treated outside its boundary	
		Emissions from the production of goods consumed in the Borough but produced elsewhere.	

Regarding the NZ40 target and baseline, Scope 3 emissions are those that relate to Rotherham or its residents but occur outside of Rotherham’s geographic boundary. As it is so difficult to accurately measure or meaningfully influence such Scope 3 emissions, they are excluded from the NZ40 target and baseline.

The following chart shows Scope 1 & 2 emissions across thematic areas during the baseline year, using data from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy’s (BEIS) greenhouse gas emissions inventory and the SCATTER emissions tool. This comes to a total of 1,611 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e.



2.12 Baseline development will continue through the following steps:

1. Conduct uncertainty and sensitivity analysis on current baseline models to ensure that reporting procedures and carbon emission estimations are as accurate as possible.

2. Use baseline data to create projections, mapping a series of scenario-based outcomes to establish a feasible pathway to NZ30 and NZ40 targets.
3. Work with cross-departmental services to utilise scenario-based projection models to test potential effectiveness of proposed future strategies.
4. Work with climate leads to ensure that annual reporting strategies are in place to measure the success of implemented strategies.
5. Annually review and report carbon emissions productivity, reviewing and amending projections where necessary.

2.13      • ***Action: Introduce carbon impact assessments for all Cabinet reports***

2.14      It is now standard practice for all Cabinet reports to include a carbon impact assessment. This is seen as an important step in order to assess and understand the carbon emissions impacts of Council decisions. However, carbon emissions data are not sufficiently available across all Council services, for the impacts of all decisions to be fully understood. Data and information on emissions is being developed, which will support consistent detail across impact assessments. Impact assessments may also be improved through climate change awareness training, to ensure emissions considerations are embedded across Council services.

2.15      • ***Action: Deliver carbon literacy and energy awareness training for Council staff***

2.16      In the Climate Emergency Action Plan 2021/22, this key action was included under the Energy theme, as energy awareness training for Council staff. Briefings have been delivered to officers responsible for writing carbon impact assessments. Further training will continue to be rolled out over 2022, to support Council officers in developing carbon impact assessments.

2.17      ***Theme: Energy***

2.18      • ***Action: Develop a site decarbonisation plan and implement energy efficiency upgrades***

2.19      The Council has reduced energy consumption and CO2 emissions in its operational buildings year on year since 2014/15:

	Annual CO2 Emissions (tons)	% Reduction
2014/2015	14,589	0
2015/2016	12,796	14.01%
2016/2017	10,896	17.44%
2017/2018	9,047	20.44%
2018/2019	7,005	29.15%
2019/2020	6,003	16.69%
2020/2021	5,034	19.25%

There has been a total carbon emissions reduction of 65.49%, since 2014/15.

- 2.20 Phase 1 of the Heat Decarbonisation Plan (HDP), covering 43 of the highest energy consuming operational buildings, has been developed. A capital proposal for £6.4 million has been approved as part of the Council budget setting for 2022/23. Projected carbon emissions reductions from Phase 1 HDP are from 3,716 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2019, to 806 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2030: a reduction of 78%. Work is ongoing to extend the HDP to cover all operational buildings, with more than 40 smaller buildings to be decarbonised in Phase 2. Further technical site-specific decarbonisation reports have been completed or arranged in preparation for future funding opportunities, especially from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.
- 2.21 Additionally, a £1 million proof of concept renewable energy project is underway and officers are assessing sites to identify one suitable for a solar farm. The system size will be approximately 1000kWp (1000kW peak generating capacity) of photovoltaic panels. For comparison, the system on the roof of Riverside House has a generating capacity of 61kWp: the proof of concept project will be 18 times larger and will cover the area of two and a half football pitches. A facility of this type is expected to have an output of 1,120,000kWh and would save carbon emissions of the order of 240 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, compared with using grid electricity.
- 2.22     • **Action: Continue to support the private sector led development of Templeborough biomass heat network**
- 2.23 The Climate Emergency Annual Report 2021 noted that Government investment amounting to £8.4m had been secured for the heat network development. The report also noted that the owners of the plant had withdrawn their investment of an additional £8 million. Alternative private sector investors ended their involvement with the scheme in July 2021. Engagement has begun with another potential investor, introduced to the Council by BEIS in December 2021.

2.24 **Theme: Housing**

2.25 • **Action: Delivery of schemes under Local Authority Delivery (LAD) scheme funding**

2.26 Energy performance upgrades have been delivered to 217 homes in The Lanes, East Dene. The works were completed in September 2021, after just six months. Retrofitted triple glazing, external doors, insulation, and energy efficient boilers have saved an estimated £320 (33%) from energy bills and 1.5 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (37%) of carbon emissions, per household, per year. Emissions from homes at The Lanes are now 22% less than the Borough average, due to this project.

2.27 £4.2m was invested in the project, including £1.14m funding from the Government's Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD) scheme, Phase 1B. The Council submitted a further bid for funding, under a third phase of the scheme (LAD 3) for Private Sector housing, but this was unsuccessful. Feedback received will support development of bids in future funding rounds.

2.28 • **Action: Develop a "road map" to zero carbon for Council housing**

2.29 Last year the Housing Service acquired access to Parity Projects software, a sophisticated carbon reduction asset management tool that helps landlords to plan and programme future carbon reduction measures and the impact and estimated costs across housing stock. The software is supporting the development of a road map to zero carbon council housing, the types of interventions required and the associated costs.

2.30 A road map to zero carbon for Council housing is being developed this year. It will require an estimated £585m to achieve net zero carbon emissions in Council Housing: the road map will plan and guide future stock investment, external funding bids, set targets and measure progress. It will also set out a strategic approach, including how best to move away from gas heating and benefit from funding available for carbon emissions reduction. As well as defining a work programme, the action plan will set out how the Council can help the local economy gear up for the work and, in doing so, address supply chain challenges and skill shortages in the local labour market.

2.31 • **Action: Establish energy efficiency specifications for new Council homes**

2.32 Housing specifications are being developed as part of a scheme to develop a total of 36 properties on two sites in Eastwood, with Local Partnerships. Local Partnerships have provided comparable detailed specifications, to allow the Council to assess the difference between 'zero carbon' and 'zero carbon ready'.

2.33 Two sites in Thrybergh will be developed, in partnership with one of the Council's repairs and maintenance contractors. This will deliver four properties as zero-carbon demonstrators, to explore implications of zero

carbon delivery. Both these schemes will be used to develop specifications, to inform the forward programme.

2.34 • **Action: Development of a Community Energy Support Scheme**

2.35 The Community Energy Support Scheme was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The scheme is intended to provide support for Rotherham residents to reduce energy costs, improve energy efficiency and access future Government grants. Due to the energy price crisis, consumers have been recommended not to switch suppliers. Assistance provided to residents has therefore focussed on energy efficiency, to reduce consumption through direct advice and support and by identifying funding opportunities.

2.36 Several other support and advice services exist alongside the Community Energy Support Scheme, including the housing service's Financial Inclusion support offer and the Rotherham Federation's Energy Knowhow scheme. A toolkit was provided to Members in 2021, following a presentation to the Improving Places Select Commission on housing energy efficiency, which explains how these different services can be accessed. Further work is ongoing, to establish how people who are most at risk of fuel poverty can be identified and can receive targeted support.

2.37 **Theme: Transport**

2.38 • **Action: Delivery of Cycling and Public Transport Infrastructure**

2.39 The Cycling Strategy was adopted by Cabinet in January 2022. If delivered in full, the strategy is expected to reduce emissions from transport by ca. 2% of 2019 levels, across the Borough.

2.40 Works continue to deliver the Transforming Cities programme. Together with the Active Travel Fund, this is expected to deliver £12 million worth of improvements for public transport, walking and cycling by March 2023. An update on Active Travel was presented to the Improving Places Select Commission 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022. The first phase of the Sheffield Road cycle route has been substantially completed and public transport improvements in the Parkgate area are due to commence in Spring 2022, subject to planning and South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) approval. These will include a new park and ride facility at the Parkgate tram train terminus: a new link road to the park and ride facility will divert traffic from the busy A633.

2.41 • **Action: Further Expansion of Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure and Support for Uptake**

2.42 As part of 2022/23 budget setting, £648,000 of capital funding was approved for residential and public charging infrastructure, which includes the development of neighbourhood charging hubs. A further £340,000 has been allocated by SYMCA, to provide additional fast and rapid charging infrastructure in Rotherham and to facilitate support for EV uptake. South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE) will also fund £50,000 worth of EV charging improvements in Rotherham.

- 2.43 Use of Council-owned EV charging infrastructure in 2021 saved carbon emissions of 5.21 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. Excess electricity from solar powered EV charging points was used to power Council buildings, with the effect that EV charging had Net Zero carbon emissions in 2021.
- 2.44 In partnership with bus operators and SYPTE, electric buses will be procured and operated on two routes in the Borough. Services are expected to go live from the end of the 2022/23 financial year.
- 2.45     • **Action: Rollout of Telematics**
- 2.46 Multiple telematics systems are already in use, with different functions for different fleet users. Telematics helps to improve driver behaviour and fuel efficiency and supports vehicle use monitoring. A new system will be trialled in Spring/Summer 2022 and a fully costed plan to rollout Telematics across the Council fleet by March 2023.
- 2.47     • **Action: Timeline for fleet electric vehicle (EV) Conversion**
- 2.48 An officer working group has been established to phase out petrol and diesel vehicles from the Council Fleet. The working group will consider the full life costs and carbon emissions of Low (LEV's), Ultra Low (ULEV's) and Zero Emissions Vehicles and associated challenges, such as grid capacity for EV charging. Work to develop a timeline for conversion will resume once data has been collected from a trial of electric refuse collection vehicles (RCV's), in March 2022.
- 2.49 The Council will assess options for electric vehicle conversion and will develop an action plan by March 2023. This will guide further development of the Council's approach to date, which has been to replace fleet vehicles at the end of their service life with an EV or ULEV, wherever possible. The development of a strategy and timeline for EV conversion will require a full review of infrastructure and charging capacity, to include known limitations of grid capacity at the Hellaby depot.
- 2.50 **Theme: Waste**
- 2.51     • **Action: Review the South Yorkshire Waste Strategy**
- 2.52 The South Yorkshire Waste Partnership is currently reviewing the achievements and progress of the South Yorkshire Municipal Waste Strategy covering the period from 2017 – 2021, to help inform a future strategy. Detailed work on the development of a new strategy that will contribute towards Net Zero targets is on hold, pending publication of results from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) Resources and Waste Strategy consultation.
- 2.53 The Environment Act 2021 sets out specific legislation that is likely to have a significant impact on how waste and recycling are dealt with and how local authorities deliver waste services in future. This includes proposals for:

- Measures to reduce and prevent waste from homes and businesses.
- Improving the consistency of household and business waste and recycling collections, including the introduction of separate food waste collections.
- Extended Producer Responsibility, to ensure the costs of disposal are borne by the producers of waste e.g., packaging.
- Deposit return schemes to incentivise the recycling of certain types of packaging wastes e.g., plastic bottles.

Consultations indicated that there will be a greater focus on data and efficient and effective services. This will involve resource intensive work to set up new systems and make service changes, to comply with new requirements.

2.54 • **Action: Recycling improvement and landfill diversion**

2.55 The landfill sharing mechanism in the BDR contract has been varied to better incentivise the contractor to divert waste from landfill. The contract diversion target is 5%: by negotiating a better position the contractor is forecasting landfilling of 1.24%. This means that 98.76% of residual waste is diverted from landfill. The contract recycling target has also improved by 1.09%, to 14.89% of residual waste being recycled.

2.56 • **Action: Set out and deliver plans to introduce recycling to the Council's commercial waste offer**

2.57 The Council does not currently offer commercial waste recycling; there is the potential for significant diversion of materials from existing customers if not managed effectively. A review of existing practice in house, benchmarking with other local authorities and the private sector has been undertaken, to identify best practice and potential routes forward.

2.58 In 2022, Waste Services will soft launch commercial waste recycling services in house, ensuring all Council operated services have access to multi-stream recycling. In the event of a successful trial, the service may be extended to all commercial sites in Rotherham, from 2023. The service offer would include collections of paper and card, glass, cans and plastics, as well as support to recycle effectively.

2.59 **Theme: Built and Natural Environment**

2.60 • **Action: Partial Update to the Local Plan Core Strategy**

2.61 A partial update to the Local Plan Core Strategy is ongoing. The following sections are to be updated:

- CS 25 Dealing with flood risk (reduce and mitigate)
- CS 26 Minerals (reduce reliance on fossil fuels)
- CS 30 Low carbon & renewable energy generation (EV charge requirements, new dwelling requirements, required info in planning applications)

Consultation on a draft strategy is expected in Summer 2022, with the strategy expected to be adopted by Summer 2025.

2.62 • **Action: Production of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**

2.63 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) offer technical guidance to developers. As such they encourage higher standards of development: they are a material consideration in the planning process.

2.64 A Natural Environment SPD and Transport SPD were adopted at Cabinet in June 2021. Consultations on three other SPD's, related to Soils, Trees and Green Spaces, are scheduled for Summer 2022.

2.65 • **Action: Appointment of a Trees and Woodlands Engagement Officer**

2.66 A Trees and Woodlands Engagement Officer has been appointed, following £50,000 revenue investment in tree planting support.

Since starting in post, the Trees and Woodland Engagement Officer has led engagement on tree planting and the administration of new woodland creation, through the following actions:

- Surveying potential woodland sites
- Carrying out land searches and applications to the Forestry Commission
- Making funding applications to Defra and SYMCA, for new woodland creation
- Consulting with Members on an urban tree planting programme
- Contacting local schools, scout groups, ramblers and voluntary sector organisations, to arrange community planting days throughout the winter planting season

2.67 • **Action: Adoption of the Tree Management Policy**

2.68 The Tree Management Policy has been adopted as the Council's Tree Management Protocol & Guidance document (2021). This sets Key Targets for tree planting, as follows:

1. *Rotherham Council will dedicate a minimum of 5 hectares of land to woodland creation, either through planting or re-wilding, up to 2030. This will see the Council's woodlands estate increase in size by at least 10%.*
2. *Rotherham Council will plant a minimum of 500 new trees in urban settings per year for the next ten years.*
3. *Rotherham Council will commit to a net gain of 250 new trees in urban settings per year for the next ten years.*

4. *Rotherham Council will plant a minimum of 10,000 new trees in woodland settings per year for the next ten years.*

2.69      • **Action: Development of a Tree Planting Strategy**

2.70      A draft Tree Planting Strategy is to be delivered in Spring 2022.

2.71      • **Action: Capital Funding for Tree Planting**

The Council has invested £350,000 capital programme funding in tree planting over two years, 2021-2023, with £150,000 made available in the first year. Further funding has been received from Defra's Urban Tree Challenge Fund, Defra's Treescapes Fund and from SYMCA's Mayor's Office. Thanks to this funding, 9 hectares of new woodland has been created and more than 22,000 trees planted, this planting season.

2.72      • **Action: Data Related to Carbon Sequestered by Trees**

2.73      The Council has little data related to carbon sequestered by trees, limiting understanding of the planting required to offset emissions. The Council has applied for funding from the Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Fund. If successful, this will be used to conduct an i-Tree Survey of the Borough, to establish a baseline of current tree cover and species mix in Rotherham and to inform the new Tree Planting Strategy.

2.74      **Theme: Influence and Engagement**

2.75      • **Action: Regional Engagement**

2.76      The Council continues to engage with partners regionally and nationally, to develop a shared response to the Climate Emergency.

2.77      The Council joined other Local Authorities in its contribution to COP26, where the BDR Waste Treatment Facility at Manvers was featured in a showcase of climate action in local government, led by the Local Government Association (LGA).

2.78      Regionally, RMBC has contributed to the development of the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Action Plan. Collaboration with partners in South Yorkshire, such as the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE), promises local benefits for public transport and active travel, while the South Yorkshire Woodland Creation Group is expected to deliver improvements for the Borough's natural capital.

2.79      Recently, the Council invited members of Rotherham Youth Cabinet (RYC) to 'take over' a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, as part of the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge, a national initiative. The young people involved questioned Council officers on the subject of climate change, with several questions relating to plastic pollution, waste and the role of schools in the Climate Emergency.

- 2.80      • **Action: Develop Emissions Considerations as Part of the Council's Social Value Policy**
- 2.81      Carbon emissions have been developed as a consideration under the Council's Social Value policy. Through this approach, suppliers are invited to make commitments to reduce their carbon emissions. Commitments made in the second year of the Social Value policy amounted to carbon emissions savings of 2554 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, or roughly equal to emissions from the Council's fleet transport in 2018/19, the baseline reporting year.
- 2.82      To support further progress, procurement documents have been updated to highlight carbon emissions as a consideration throughout the procurement process. Similarly, questions have been included in the tender process, to gauge market understanding of carbon emissions and progress to Net Zero. Information gathered in this way can support future efforts to decarbonise the Council's supply chains.
- 2.83      • **Action: Develop a climate emergency communications plan**
- 2.84      A separate communications plan has not been developed, as was anticipated in the 2021/22 Action Plan. Communications activity to date has included the promotion of regional and national partnerships such as the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Action Plan and COP26. The Council website has also been updated, with web pages on Tackling Climate Change.
- 2.85      Development of a communications and engagement plan forms part of the Council's commitment to respond to the Climate Emergency in 2022 and is contained within the Year Ahead Delivery Plan
- 2.86      **Further development of the response to the Climate Emergency**
- 2.87      "A Cleaner, Greener Local Environment" is a key strategic priority in the Council Plan 2022-25. The plan sets out ambitions to protect Rotherham's natural environment, emphasising sustainability, ensuring that Rotherham is a clean and vibrant place to live and reaffirming the commitment to Net Zero.
- 2.88      In the Council Plan the environment appears alongside other priorities. These are:
- Every Neighbourhood Thriving
  - People Are Safe, Healthy and Live Well
  - Every Child Able to Fulfil their Potential
  - Expanding Economic Opportunity
- 2.89      At the Council meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022, £155,000 revenue budget was agreed to establish a Climate Emergency Delivery Team. This includes funding for two new posts, Climate Change Lead Officer and Climate Change Project Officer, as well as funding to extend the existing post of Climate Change Data Analysis Officer.

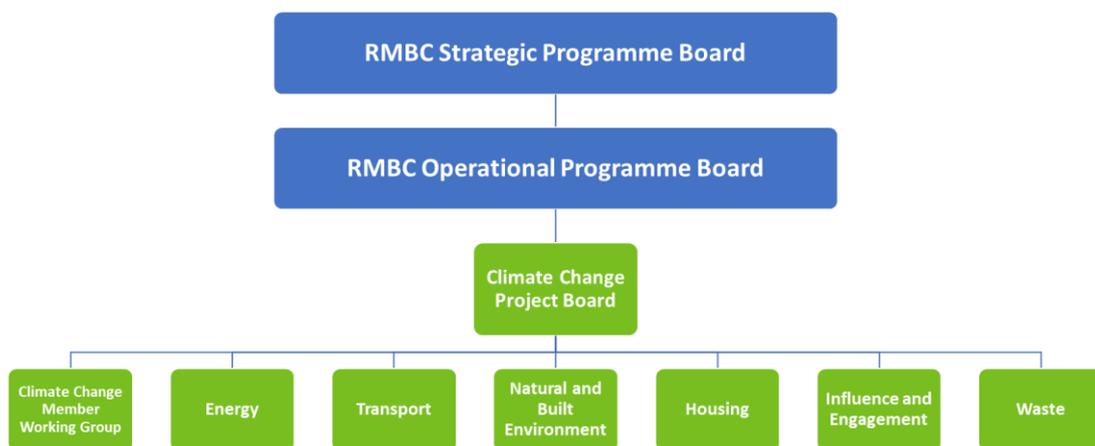
2.90 Decarbonisation will be delivered through capital investment, such as the funding approved at Cabinet on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 for Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure and decarbonisation of operational buildings.

2.91 As noted, a new Climate Emergency Action Plan will be developed in 2022. This updated plan will outline key priorities in responding to the Climate Emergency, identify potential solutions to the above problems, outline an approach to responding based on the development of emissions baselining and carbon reduction pathways and will priority actions for carbon emissions reduction.

## 2.92 **Governance Structure**

2.93 Governance arrangements were established to support the Lead Cabinet Member for Climate Change and to ensure that Key Actions from the Climate Action Plan 2021/22 were developed and embedded. These governance arrangements are represented in the organogram below.

2.94



2.95 Strategic and Operational oversight provides assurance of strategic change and improvement initiatives at the Council.

2.96 Workforce Leads from key Council services report to a Climate Change Project Board.

2.97 A Climate Change Members' Working Group meets monthly, to update elected Members on progress towards the Council's Net Zero targets.

## 3. **Options considered and recommended proposal**

3.1 No alternative options are recommended, as it has been agreed that an Annual Report will be produced to ensure effective monitoring of actions, in response to the Climate Emergency.

3.2 On 25 April 2022, Cabinet agreed to submit the Climate Emergency Annual Report to the next Council meeting, for information.

#### **4. Consultation on proposal**

4.1 Delivery of the 2021/22 Climate Emergency Action Plan has been a cross-Council effort; service leads have been identified to drive forward the ambition in the Action Plan, meeting regularly to collaborate on delivery of actions, across the Climate Emergency agenda.

4.2 As this is a progress report, not implying any changes to policy or services, it has not required public consultation.

#### **5.1 Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.2 Further development of the Council's response to the Climate Emergency will be presented as an updated Climate Emergency Action Plan in 2022. This is to follow further engagement not only with communities and partners in Rotherham, but also with regional and national organisations, as required.

#### **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this update report. The work to be undertaken as outlined within the report will be funded within the Council's existing revenue and capital budgets. Where additional Council funding is required to deliver the objectives of the Climate Change workstream, this will need to be identified as part of the Council's annual budget setting process.

6.2 Procurement updates are noted above, sections 2.81 and 2.82. As climate change projects are developed, appropriate procurement considerations will be needed, to ensure compliance with Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

#### **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report; however, any necessary legal advice should be sought in relation to individual decisions resulting from the ongoing implementation of the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

#### **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 In 2021/22, HR has supported recruitment activity for the Climate Change Data Analyst post and work is underway for recruitment to two new posts in the Climate Emergency Delivery Team, agreed in the 2022/23 budget.

## **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 9.1 There are no implications for Children and Young People or Vulnerable Adults in respect of this report, however there will be meaningful opportunity to engage these groups through the development of the new Climate Emergency Action Plan.

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

- 10.1 No equalities implications arise from this report directly. An Equalities Screening Assessment and Analysis will be completed in the context of a new Climate Emergency Action Plan. Equalities and human rights will be considered throughout development, consultation and engagement to understand potential impacts, including the need for a “just transition”.

## **11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

- 11.1 While this report deals with progress around climate change and carbon reduction, the report outlines progress only and therefore no additional implications for emissions or climate arise.

## **12. Implications for Partners**

- 12.1 There are no direct implications for partners in respect of this report, however there will be meaningful opportunity to engage our partners across all sectors through future delivery of the Council’s programme to reach Net Zero targets, as well as opportunities to contribute to and co-produce the Climate Emergency Action Plan during 2022.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

- 13.1 There are risks associated with climate change mitigation and adaptation, however they are outside the scope of this report, which provides a summary of progress to date, towards the Council’s Net Zero targets.

### **Accountable Officer(s)**

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