

Report to:	Cabinet Council	Date of Meeting:	24 June 2021 15 July 2021
Subject:	Climate Emergency Annual Report		
Report of:	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

Sefton Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019. Following that declaration work has progressed within the council on the agreed actions that were contained and approved by Members. The climate emergency strategy and associated action plan was approved by Cabinet (28 May 2020) and Council (17 September 2020).

Annual reporting on progress made is required as part of the governance approach to the programme. Members are asked to note the progress made on achieving net zero carbon by 2030 and the programme of works supporting the Council's transition to low carbon working.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet / Council are recommended to :-

(1) Note the progress made on the targets in the Sefton climate emergency strategy and action plan.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To support the delivery of the council motion that declared a climate emergency.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

Not acting would increase the risks to Sefton in future years, on the themes of energy security and climate change resilience (increased incidence of extreme weather events, sea level rise etc.)

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

There are no revenue implications arising from this report. There is currently no additional budget provision for the delivery of the strategy/action plan with all resources being met from within the council’s approved budget.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no capital implications arising from this report. Currently, any capital works being undertaken are fully funded through external funding sources and subject to the normal governance protocols.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
There are no resource implications arising from this strategy	
Legal Implications:	
There are no legal implications arising from this strategy	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	Y
Have a neutral impact	N
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y
The continuation of work directly contributes towards achieving the targets within the Council’s Climate Emergency strategy.	
Equality Implications:	
There are no equality implications.	

Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

The delivery of the council motion will support all of the council’s core purpose themes.

Protect the most vulnerable: By enabling greater resilience to future climate events.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: By enabling greater resilience to future climate events and encouraging energy security measures

Commission, broker and provide core services: By training staff to consider climate impacts as part of service delivery
Place – leadership and influencer: By Sefton taking decisive action on its energy/carbon emissions
Drivers of change and reform: By Sefton taking decisive action on its energy/carbon emissions
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: By enabling greater resilience to future climate events.
Greater income for social investment: By Sefton taking decisive action on its energy/carbon emissions
Cleaner Greener By Sefton taking decisive action on its energy/carbon emissions

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6401/21) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4602/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Climate Emergency Annual Report 2020/21 (draft version)

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Sefton Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019. Following that declaration work has progressed within the council on the agreed actions that were contained and approved by Members. The climate emergency strategy and associated action plan was approved by Cabinet (28 May 2020) and Council (17 September 2020).
- 1.2 The strategy and delivery via the action plan is based on the following approach;
 - Approval of a strategy for the period to 2030
 - Establishing and refining a baseline position on council carbon emissions (carbon footprint)
 - The development of 3 year implementation plans
- 1.3 The progress made on the delivery of the strategy has been impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic, however, opportunities have arisen as part of the recovery phase which Sefton has acted upon.
- 1.4 Both the strategy and action plan have seven key principles to guide work in this area – guided by the acronym C.L.I.M.A.T.E
 - Carbon Reduction
 - Leadership
 - Innovation
 - Mobilisation
 - Adaptation
 - Transformation
 - Engagement

As such, the Annual Report is structured around reporting against each of the above principles.

2 Progress during 2020/21

- 2.1 A significant amount of work has been undertaken in the past twelve months and this is reflected in the attached document 'Climate Change Annual Report 2020/21' Appendix 1. A summary of the progress made, is presented below.

Carbon emissions baseline

2.2 The Council's carbon footprint has fallen 10% from last year's baseline. This reduction means the Council are on track to meet net zero carbon by 2030.

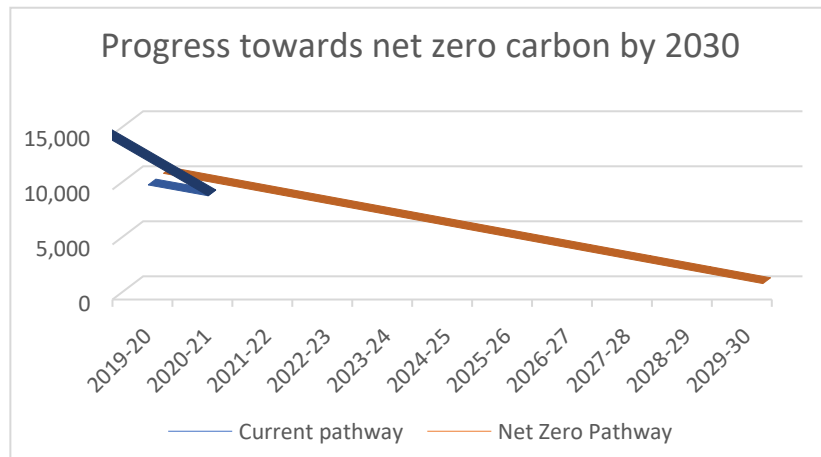


Figure 2.2 Progress to net zero carbon by 2030

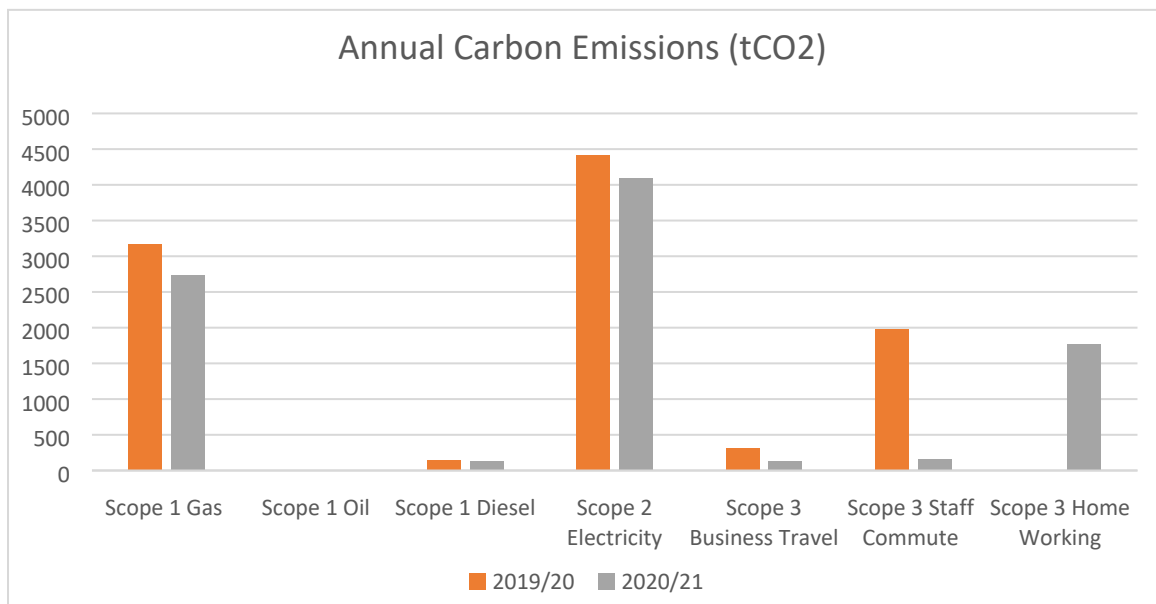


Figure 2.3 Annual Carbon Emissions 2019/2020 and 2020/2021

2.3 Figure 2.3 above shows the Council's carbon emissions have fallen largely through changes to working practices brought about by the pandemic, notably a move to home working. This led to a reduction in staff commuting and reduced the energy consumed in Council owned buildings. Scope 1 emissions (largely gas emissions) fell by 13% and Scope 2 (electricity) emissions fell by 7%. Emissions from staff commuting to work fell by 92%.

2.4 The change in working practice has led to emissions being shifted away from council buildings but into staff homes. Therefore, to avoid false accounting, the emissions associated with home working will be accounted for by the Council for the first time. This is a discretionary element of the carbon footprint but given the scale of home working it is now included and calculated utilising an accepted tool to estimate average home working emissions.

Key Projects

2.5 The foundations have been laid this year for several key projects which will significantly reduce carbon emissions going forward. For example, within this period the Council have approved the Asset Street Lighting Project and Town Hall Retrofits which will both lead to significant carbon savings in the future.

2.5.1 **Asset Street Lighting Project**

The energy used by Street Lighting accounted for 26% of the Council's total carbon footprint in 2019-20 and these energy costs are increasing year-on-year at a rate above inflation incurring a significant cost to the Council.

This year the Council approved an investment of £12.750m in the Street Lighting Asset Project to improve the portfolio through the installation of energy efficient LED technology and replacement of life expired assets. The programme will generate significant operational cost savings over 20 years against current forecast expenditure without intervention.

By the end of 2021 (year 1 of programme) it is anticipated that Sefton will achieve financial savings of circa £240,000 based on 2020/21 rates.

When the project is complete, annual emissions are expected to reduce by 1,655 tCO₂ per year – which would mean street lighting emissions reduce to 10% of the Council's total carbon footprint (based on 2019-20 data) – saving 16%.

2.5.2 **Energy efficiency work at Bootle and Southport Town Hall**

The Council recently secured £865,000 from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund to undertake works at Bootle and Southport Town Halls, with the aim of reducing heat loss at both sites. A specialist heritage contractor will work to improve the glazing and roof insulation in both buildings, ensuring that key historic features are maintained and protected.

Works are scheduled to be completed in late 2021 and will be carried out simultaneously alongside other essential maintenance projects. The works are expected to reduce emissions by approximately 59 tCO₂ per year - reducing the Council's carbon footprint (by 1%) and energy bill as well as creating a more comfortable working environment for staff and visitors.

Agile Working

2.6 The Council need to maintain the 10% carbon reduction achieved this year and repeat it year on year – to achieve net zero carbon by 2030. The Property Services Department are developing proposals to embed agile working changes including changes to office numbers, staff commuting, staff travel, IT use and building usage. The climate emergency carbon reduction target is helping to inform the decisions made on how Sefton employees work in the future.

Procurement

2.7 The Council have a leadership role in the community, therefore, have established a formal mechanism for procurement of sustainable products and services. During 2020/21, environmental based social value questions have been introduced to large/carbon intensive tenders. Scored by the Energy and Environmental Management Team. A pilot of a new social value tool TOMS which better captures and quantifies carbon emissions has also begun at the Council.

Domestic Housing Retrofit

- 2.8 The Council are the accountable body for an ERDF funded project with Housing Associations retrofitting homes in Sefton and across the LCR with both innovative and traditional carbon reduction interventions – such as external wall insulation, floor insulation and electric heating. Utilising this expertise, the Council have accepted grant funding for retrofit of approximately 245 homes within Sefton. This work will focus on the most inefficient homes of the poorest residents. The outputs from this work will not only reduce the carbon emissions across the Borough, but support local jobs and reduce the risk of fuel poverty for residents.

Staff Training

- 2.9 An eLearning climate emergency module has been developed and will be available to all staff on the Corporate Learning Centre 'Me learning' platform from May 2021. The compulsory training will provide all Council staff with a basic understanding of what climate change is, why it is important, what the Council are doing in response and what staff can do.

Committee Reporting

- 2.10 From May all Cabinet and Council decision papers will include a climate change impact assessment. This will help ensure that climate change is a visible part of the decision-making process in the future, helping to embed climate change thinking into everything we do across the whole council.

Tree Planting

- 2.11 For the planting season 2020/21, 3,430 new trees have been planted in the borough with 160 mature (dead, diseased or dying) trees felled on the highway, and in parks and on the coast. Trees are a valuable carbon sink helping to absorb carbon and aid adaptation to weather extremes by helping to reduce flood risk and providing solar shading.

3 Future delivery plans

- 3.1 In addition to the roll out of projects and processes noted above, in 2021-22 there are a number of key projects scheduled to commence, in line with the Action Plan.
- Climate Change Risk Assessment (adaptation). A full risk assessment of climate change impacts, identifying threats and how they can be managed as well as realising the opportunities.
 - Focus on customer engagement and delivery of communications plan, linking to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) due to be held in Glasgow in November 2021.
 - Investigate the potential to switch to a 100% renewable/green electricity tariff. This would enable the Council to remove electricity from the carbon footprint. (which currently makes up nearly half of the Council's carbon footprint. Indicative costs are included in the attached report).
 - Explore options for local offset via climate adaptation programmes and local landscape enhancement