

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of meeting: 14 December 2023

Report of: Gemma Davies, Director of Economy and Housing

Title: Cheshire West and Chester's Review of Progress against the Climate Emergency Response Plan and Carbon Management Plan

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 The following report sets out a review of progress against the Council's Climate Emergency Response Plan and Carbon Management Plan as of 30 September 2023. This is the third report to Council on progress on the delivery of the Plan, focusing on the 64 actions and 19 measures set out in the original Plan.

2. Recommendations:

Council is asked to:

1. Note the performance overview as of 30 September 2023, relating to the 19 performance indicators within the Climate Emergency Response Plan framework and the 64 actions.
2. Note the Council's performance in reducing its organisational Carbon emissions from 15,621 tons in 2021-22 of CO₂ per year to 13,390 tons in 2022-23.

3. Reasons for the recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure the Council produces climate reporting information which enables the Council and residents to be assured that priorities under the Climate Emergency Response Plan are on track for delivery and that any issues within the Council's control are being addressed.

4. Report details:

- 4.1 The Council has continued to give significant focus to tackling the climate emergency in 2023. The Council has officially launched ORIGIN¹ this year, one of the UK's most important employment and economic growth clusters, including 1300 businesses employing 24100 people. ORIGIN will drive forward plans to tackle the climate emergency and create a net zero industrial cluster. As we have continued to emerge from COVID and face new challenges, it is recognised that there continue to be sectors where we need to significantly accelerate progress. Earlier this year, we published our Fuel Poverty Strategy, and ensuring that people have access to opportunities to

¹ To find out more about ORIGIN: <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/regeneration-of-west-cheshire/ellesmere-port-regeneration/origin-ellesmere-port>

reduce their energy bills, including via housing retrofit, remains a key priority. We are especially proud of the work done over the winter period to support people in poverty, which included the warm spaces initiative. The Council also has embarked on a long-term process to review the Local Plan, and is also in the process of reviewing the Local Transport Plan. Despite the range of challenges we still face, the Council can be proud of its achievements in the third year of the Climate Emergency Response Plan. The following report sets out attainment against the actions and measures within the Plan.

- 4.2 As a Council, we have continued to reduce our emissions, with a further 1,814 tons of carbon reduction. Since our baseline, in 2014-15, we have reduced from 54519t CO₂ to 13,390t, and set 2,634t of carbon offsets in motion via woodland and biodiversity creation. The borough's emissions reduced by 1.86 per cent year-on-year, to 3457.8ktCO₂, based on 2021 emissions data, the latest available. While there is an ongoing trend of reduction, this reflects a re-bounding of transport emissions between 2020 and 2021. This reiterates the importance of driving further change and the need for national regulatory and funding changes to achieve significant progress.
- 4.3 Cheshire West and Chester has built on its reputation as a leading centre of decarbonisation with the launch of the ORIGIN brand for the Ellesmere Port industrial area. This will support the area's aspiration to become the world's first net zero industrial zone. Throughout the borough, we have seen an increasing trend for applications for renewable energy generation and storage. Our large and economically important agricultural sector is also developing plans to increase the efficiency of operations while reducing carbon through methods such as anaerobic digestion.
- 4.4 We have continued to invest in our communities via the Climate Emergency Fund and Spacehive. These investments range from solar and energy efficiency projects on the Council's own estate, planting more areas of wildflowers to contribute to tackling the nature emergency, to supporting voluntary and community sector organisations with their energy efficiency.
- 4.5 We recognise that we will continue to require additional resources and support, including external funding to tackle climate change at scale. The Council has continued to be an active member of networks such as UK100, the Local Government Association (LGA) and Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) who are seeking greater powers and funding for local authorities to enable them to tackle the climate and nature emergencies more effectively. Regardless of national changes, we will continue to work proactively with our communities and residents to deliver practical change that makes a positive difference to people.
- 4.6 The requirement to annually report on progress against the borough's attainment of net zero by 2045 was set out by Council in 2020. In order to align to the Council's Corporate Performance Management approach, the following key principles are adopted:

- **Proportionality:** Performance management will track and focus on the issues that make the biggest difference, being tailored to the appropriate audience, rather than being an end in itself. The focus will be on improvement supported by efficient processes and systems for reporting, analysis and data collection.
- **Depth vs breadth:** There needs to be a balance between the range of information available and the depth of understanding it can give. Fewer indicators can enable more insight, analysis and focused improvement, as having an abundance of indicators can make it difficult to digest key information and statistics. Given the limited amount of time available to decision makers to scrutinise and review performance data, it is therefore preferable to have fewer but meaningful, indicators, and arrange for ‘deep-dives’ into areas of underperformance.
- **Intelligent target setting:** Recognising that this plan is the start of a 25-year monitoring period, targets are set on a medium-term basis where possible, specifically, to the end of the current Council Plan period. Targets were be set by taking account of Anthesis² data (collected at the start of plan development), benchmarking information, considering historical trends and considering resources.
- **Managed flexibility:** Measures, targets and actions are sensitive to changed circumstances and a refresh of the framework takes place on an annual basis in an open and transparent manner.

4.7 19 performance indicators are in place to track performance against this Plan. These indicators are not directly correlated to all actions within the Plan, but act as proxies for the delivery of the Plan’s objectives. The Council is not able to directly influence the attainment of the target on all indicators. Measures are therefore categorised as being either “Direct Influence” or “Indirect Influence”. The performance framework will enable members and residents to hold the Council to account for performance including any under achievement, and enable us to celebrate success and positive achievement. Where a need to improve performance is identified, facilitated workshops will be held with the relevant service(s) to seek to understand and resolve barriers to delivering better outcomes.

4.8 The best available data on aggregate Climate Performance is produced by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on an annual basis via the “UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics”. These are produced with a two-year time lag, therefore the latest available data is from 2021. The 2020 data set out that the borough emitted 3,523.3 ktCO₂, it should be noted that this was the peak of COVID-19 lockdowns and carbon emissions were reduced as a result. The latest available data from 2021 is 3,457.8 ktCO₂. This represents a reduction in emissions of 1.86% per cent from 2020. Though the direction of travel remains the right one, there is much more to do. This moderate rate of emissions reduction should provide motivation to all parties to increase the pace of action, maintain collective focus and think innovatively to support communities to achieve net zero. Achievement of the net zero pathways would require a sea-change in Government policy and a re-implementation of key targets such as the 2030 ban on

² https://info.anthesisgroup.com/hubfs/CW&C_Final_Report.pdf?hsLang=en

the sale of new petrol and diesel cars, and the phase out of new gas boiler installations by 2035. We will continue to work with relevant departments to identify the resources the borough needs, and will work with communities via a range of mechanisms – from our Climate Emergency Fund, to Spacehive crowd-funding, and through the provision of advice and support.

4.9 In the latest annual emissions data, while there has been an overall reduction, there is a mixed picture overall, with some rebound effect from emissions which had been significantly reduced by COVID. Industrial emission reductions continue at a strong pace and drive an overall emissions reduction year on year, but these reductions are partially offset by factors such as transport rising once again albeit not to 2019 levels. Domestic, commercial emissions, public sector and land use emissions also rose. This should be considered in the context of population estimates in the DESNZ figures, which reflect that between 2018-2021, per capita emissions in the region have dropped from 10.5 (2018) – 9.7 (2021). The region’s population is estimated to have increased from 351600 to 357700 in the period.

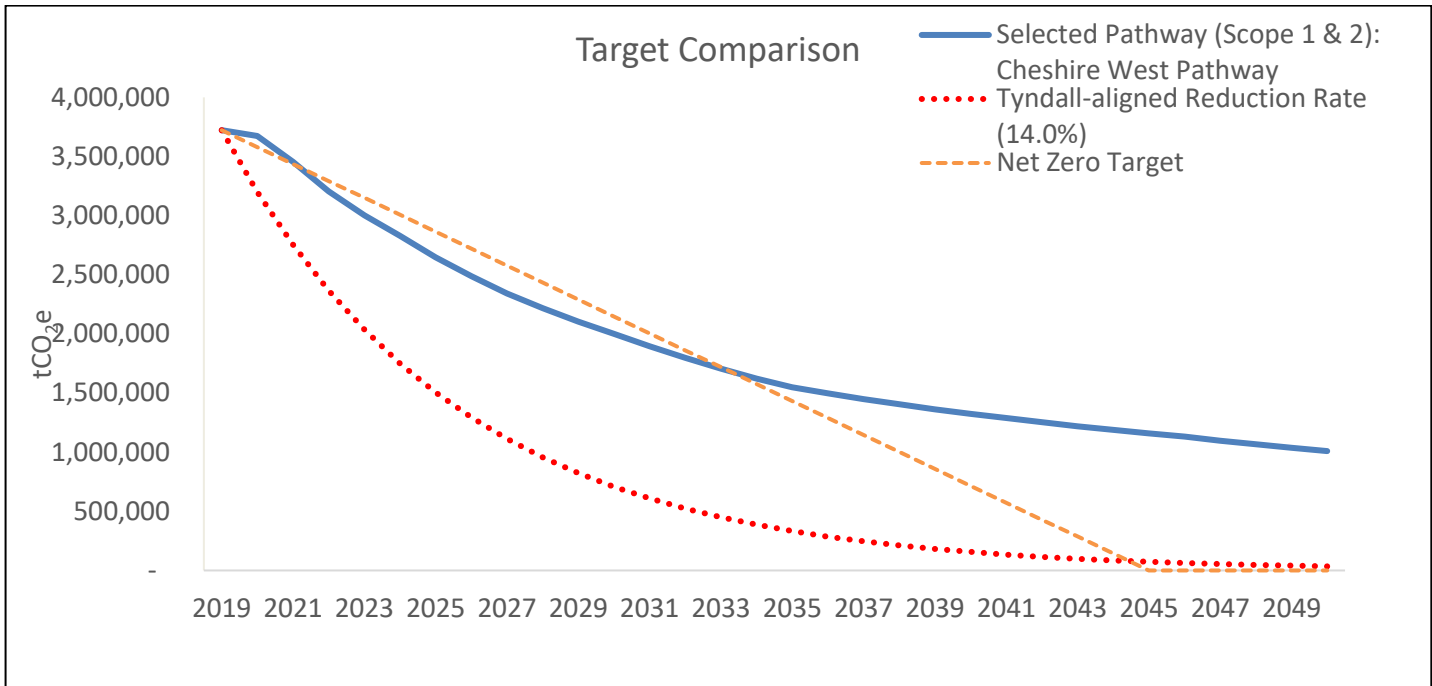
Table 1³:

Year	Industry	Commercial	Public Sector	Domestic	Transport	LULUFC⁴	Total
2018	1,897.5	108.3	48.4	550.9	966.4	-1.2	3,699.0
2019	1,981.1	114.3	86.5	530.3	960.1	-3.1	3,796.4
2020	1,921.9	93.3	80.9	514.4	782.4	-3.2	3,523.3
2021	1,727.0	108.2	89.8	530.6	852.2	-2.7	3,457.8

4.10 The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and Anthesis have jointly produced the SCATTER pathways tool. This produces realistic and localised emissions pathways. Given Cheshire West’s exceptionally high emissions, even in the most ambitious pathway (SCATTER 4 – High Ambition) the borough does not achieve net zero by 2045. Therefore further support is required from Government to bring about the radical scale of change that is required.

³ These data-sets are revised annually to reflect changes in methodology at a national level. These changes have been reflected throughout the Climate Emergency Response Plan.

⁴ Land use, land use change and forestry.



Graph 1 – SCATTER pathway for Cheshire West and Chester.

4.11 Current Status – Actions – September 2023:

4.12 Table 2 sets out action status on the 64 actions within the plan.

Table 2:

Action Status		
Status	Count of Status	per cent
Complete	14	21.9 per cent
In progress	49	76.6 per cent
Slipped	1	1.6 per cent
Total	64	100 per cent

4.13 The majority of actions, 49 (76.6 per cent) are in progress. Fourteen (21.9 per cent) are complete. One (1.6 per cent) is slipped and will be re-phased for future years.

4.14 Action Updates:

4.15 The Council has:

- Begun the process of reviewing the Local Plan
- Begun the process of reviewing the Local Transport Plan
- Progressed the delivery of £2.4m of Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme works across four sites.
- Approved and begun implementation of the Fuel Poverty Strategy.
- Phase 2 of the Street Lighting Replacement programme has now completed.

- Supported the ongoing delivery of the Land Action Plan, this includes a range of work to decarbonise land use, including projects via the Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission.
- Implemented support for businesses to decarbonise via the Shared Prosperity fund, via the Race to Zero advisory service, delivered by Groundwork.
- Launched the Origin brand for the Ellesmere Port Industrial area.
- Engaged with the development of multiple NSIPs such as the pipelines to enable HyNet and the Frodsham Solar proposal.
- Commissioned work via the Local Enterprise Partnership to review options for Housing retrofit across the region.
- Continued to purchase of renewable electricity for the Council, beginning in 2020-21.
- Supported the utilisation of £538,000 of Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding via Sanctuary housing to improve the energy efficiency of 125 homes in Blacon.
- Made available the Climate Emergency Fund in 2022-23.
- Continued to act as the accountable body, programme managers, funding recipient and distributor for the Trees for Climate national programme, ensuring the effective management of this nationwide programme. Trees for Climate is the largest tree planter in England, this is a huge achievement that the Council is proud to be involved in.

4.16 The majority of actions remain on-track. Highlights within this category include the following:

- Applied for a further £2.4m in Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding. This will support energy efficiency measures at ten schools.
- The Council has continued to support HyNet North West in its development of low-carbon industrial infrastructure in the region, for both blue and green hydrogen production. DESNZ have launched the Low Carbon Hydrogen Standard to support the development of the Hydrogen Economy.
- The Council has engaged with the development of the 150MW Frodsham Solar proposal.
- The Council has consulted on its EV Strategy.
- The Council has allocated a further £1.65m to climate capital investments in 2023-25. This includes upgrades to the sustainability of Brio leisure facilities, energy efficiency improvements on the Council's housing stock, a pilot project to deliver energy efficiency improvements on Bishop Lloyd's Palace, improvements to food waste recycling, support to voluntary and community groups such as the Hospice of the Good Shepherd, and more.
- The Council's e-scooter trial continues, and results will feed into the national trial dataset.
- 99 homes on the Council's Phoenix Depot site are being developed, which will be zero carbon in use.
- The Council has launched a Solar Together scheme, supporting residents to benefit from competitively priced renewables. The Council's wider energy efficiency work includes our warm spaces over winter, the delivery of the Home Upgrade Grant

Programme, the identification of a preferred provider for ECO energy efficiency works, and the launch of a new digital app.

- The Council is working alongside Building Digital UK to roll out gigabit fibre-to-the-property across Cheshire. The next phase of the programme will benefit 16,500 properties.
- 68.53 hectares of new woodland are in scope in Cheshire West and Chester this year, contributing to the largest planting programme in England, Trees for Climate.

4.17 A full list of all actions, with status updates is available as Appendix 1.

4.18 One actions has slipped, which is as follows:

- Explore opportunities to deliver income generation through Woodland and other land management. This work is in the process of being re-started following recruitment of additional resources.

4.19 Direction of travel for performance indicators:

4.20 This report covers the period from September 2022 to September 2023. The focus of this report is on the 'direction of travel' of indicators. Direction of travel sets out whether measures are demonstrating an improving, maintaining, or declining performance position.

Table 3:

Measure direction of travel		
Status	No.	per cent
Green	9	47.3 per cent
Amber	2	10.6 per cent
Red	5	26.3 per cent
In Measurement	3	15.7 per cent
Total	19	100 per cent

4.21 Nine (42.1 per cent) indicators are reporting improved performance compared to the position at the baseline, two (10.6 per cent) indicator reports a maintenance in performance, meaning these indicators are within 5 per cent of the prior performance. Five (26.3 per cent) indicator reports declining performance, indicating that it has declined by more than 5 per cent from the baseline. Three (15.7 per cent) indicators are currently in measurement, and assessment methods are still in the process of being developed for these indicators.

5. Indicators reporting performance:

5.1 The following section summarises the indicators that are reporting performance in this first annual review. Measures not included are those where methods of assessment

are still in development therefore no data is currently available. A full list of measures is included in Appendix 2.

5.2 Green/Improving Performance:

- **M1: Industrial Sector Annual Carbon Emissions:** The baseline for this measure is 2,126.1ktCO₂, which was established in 2017 on the basis of data from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The latest available data is from 2021, at 1727ktCO₂, representing a 18.8 per cent decrease from the baseline, against a target of an 11 per cent decrease by 2024. This represents significant decarbonisation of a key sector for Cheshire West and Chester. It is likely that the utilisation of low carbon hydrogen in the middle of the decade will further drive down industrial emissions.
- **M2: Percentage of the LED streetlight replacement programme completed.** This measure's baseline is 73 per cent completion, 100 per cent of the programme has been completed. This measure will require a refresh in a future iteration of the plan.
- **M8: Carbon neutral new build homes delivered include council housing programme and housing provider programmes:** The Council has 99 new build homes planned which will be net zero carbon in operation. These are due to start on site in 2024. This represents a positive direction of travel for the measure.
- **M11: Retrofit Measures to Council Housing:** Retrofits to 125 social homes via Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund properties have been completed in 2022-23.
- **M12: per cent of properties achieving to Band C or above.** In this baseline, within the Housing Plan, 41.5 per cent (set in 2021) of domestic properties were achieving to Band C or above. As of 2023, 46% of properties are now at Band C or above.
- **M13: Commercial Property median EPC rating;** This measure reports as Green on direction of travel, as improving performance has been demonstrated. The measure has a target for the average commercial property to be EPC rated C by 2024. In the baseline, 62 per cent of commercial property was rated D or lower, this reduced to 54.1 per cent as of September 2023.
- **M15: Annual Tree Planting (ha):** This measure was baselined at 43 hectares being in scope for 2021-22, and 400 hectares are being investigated by the Mersey Forest. 57.9ha have been planted in 2022/3, 68.53ha in scope for this season, with 263ha of land Acquisition for woodland establishment in scope.
- **M16: Natural Flood Management (litres):** This measure reported 50,000l captured in its baselining period (2020-21), this has since risen to 869,500l. This has been calculated using the Green Infrastructure Valuation toolkit.
- **M18: Reduction in household waste:** This measure was baselined at 182900 tonnes representing the new norm of post-COVID waste volumes. 2022-23 data now reports 162,822 tons, a significantly improving direction of travel compared to the prior reporting period.

5.3 Amber/Maintained Performance:

- **M8: Annual Housing Emissions (BEIS LA CO₂ emissions):** The baseline for this measure is 531.2 ktCO₂, set in 2017. In the latest available data (2021), this measure

stands at 530.6 ktCO₂. This is a slight uplift in emissions from 2020 levels, which stood at 514.4ktCO₂.

- **M19: Household and non-household waste is sent for reuse, recycling or composting.** This measure was baselined at 56 per cent in 2019-20. This now reports at 56.45 per cent as of 2022-23. This represents a slight reduction in the recycling rate from 2021-22, which was 57.6 per cent. The slight reduction in performance compared to 2021/22 can be attributed to seasonality factors concerned with garden waste alongside the introduction of the garden waste subscription service that together saw a reduction in the overall volume of garden waste collected.

5.4 Red/Declining Performance:

- **M3: Transport Sector Annual Carbon Emissions – Cheshire West and Chester - (BEIS).** The baseline for this measure is 943.1 ktCO₂, set in 2017. In the latest available data (2021), this measure stands at 852.2 ktCO₂, a 9.6 per cent decrease against the target of a 17 per cent decrease by 2024. This has rebounded from a historic low in 2020 of 782ktCO₂. This is likely attributable to an easing of COVID restrictions from 2020 to 2021. On both this and wider Transport measures, the opportunities presented by the review of the Local Transport Plan are significant, and the Climate Change team are engaged in this process.
- **M5: Department for Transport: Modal Share by Local Authority, Weekly Cycling:** The baseline for this measure was 8.7 per cent in 2018-19. In the latest available data, 2022, 8.9 per cent of adults cycled. This represents a negative direction of travel against 2021 data point, of 9.7%. This forms part of a wider national trend following COVID of a reduction of walking and cycling.
- **M6: Department for Transport: Modal Share by Local Authority, Weekly Walking:** The baseline for this measure was 69.1 per cent set in 2018-19. In the latest available data, 2022, 66.6 per cent of adults walked. This forms part of a wider national trend following COVID of a reduction of walking and cycling.
- **M7: Resident Satisfaction: Public Transport Options:** The 2020 baseline figure for this measure is 57%. Currently, this measure stands at 47% against a target of 61%. This represents a declining trend. Greater Government investment in public transport options would support a reversal of this trend.
- **M14: Land Use Sector Annual Carbon Emissions – Cheshire West and Chester - (BEIS):** As quantified in this dataset, relating to Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry emissions, in 2020 this acted as a sink of 3.2ktCO₂, whereas in 2021 this acted as a sink of 2.7ktCO₂. Further engagement is occurring with relevant services to understand the factors that may have influenced this, however it should be noted that this represents a relatively limited variance in the overall scale of emissions in the borough.

5.5 Carbon Management Plan

- 5.6 In addition to the Climate Emergency Response Plan, and its associated targets to support borough-wide net zero by 2045, the Council has also set a target of achieving

net zero in its own operations by 2030. The Council has made progress against this target this year, reducing its organisational Carbon emissions from 15,621 tons of CO₂ in 2021-22 to 13,390tCO₂ in 2022-23 and setting 2,634t of carbon offsets in motion via woodland and biodiversity creation. Further information on the Carbon Management Plan is included in Appendix 3.

6. Lessons learnt and changes

- 6.1 Changes to the Plan are made via the approved change control process. There is a requirement for the Plan to be a live, functional document that is responsive to its environment and circumstances. In order to ensure the Plan is effectively maintained, authority to make minor amendments to the Plan is delegated to the Director of Economy and Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency (which now falls within the Leader's Portfolio). Minor amendments include but are not limited to changes to the lead officer responsible for the action, contextual elements of the plan, such as updating data as it becomes available, and updates to actions to reflect changing circumstances, such as funding awards, the addition of actions as new projects emerge, and/or changes to project timelines.
- 6.2 More significant changes to the Plan such as amendments to performance indicators or the removal of actions require Cabinet approval. This will take place in a report to Cabinet in February 2024. This change control process was approved by Cabinet in February 2021.
- ### **6.3 Communications and Engagement Update:**
- 6.4 The Council has maintained a programme of proactive communications and engagement on the Climate Emergency throughout the last year. A particular highlight of this activity has been the Council's work to promote Solar Together in partnership with Cheshire East and Warrington Councils. More than 6000 residents of Cheshire have expressed an interest in the scheme. The Climate Emergency Taskforce has resumed its meeting schedule following the May election, and will continue to meet on a quarterly basis. It continues to review performance information relating to the themes of the Climate Emergency Response Plan. The Council was shortlisted for the National Energy Efficiency Awards. On this theme, the Council is in the process of engaging with our communities on the future of energy. This involves both communications via our channels and attendance at events, such as the Sustainable Cheshire Fair. We have promoted our Climate Emergency Fund and were pleased with the interest and uptake from local voluntary and community sector organisations. We continue to publish a monthly Climate Emergency newsletter, which goes out to around 4700 subscribers to share a range of good news stories from the Council and the community.
- 6.5 We regularly promote the [Inspire Cheshire West Climate Hub](#), which provides a central space to share ideas, stories and tips about how we can collectively tackle the climate

emergency, and residents and community organisations are encouraged to upload their own stories. It has been visited by more than 16,000 individuals since its launch.

6.6 We have consulted on the Fuel Poverty Strategy. This strategy provides greater depth and detail on how the Council can support people to live in warm and safe homes at a time of consistently high energy prices. The Council is working proactively to deliver this strategy on a partnership basis. The priorities of the strategy are:

- Reducing debt and maximising household income
- Improving residents' health and wellbeing by tackling cold-related illnesses
- Improving the energy efficiency of homes
- Increasing renewable and low carbon technology in domestic properties
- Encouraging behaviour change to reduce energy use

6.7 The Council has progressed with the implementation of the Land Action Plan. A full list of Land Action Plan actions and updates is available in Appendix 4.

7 How does the decision contribute to the Council's Plan?

7.1 Reviewing the Climate Emergency Response Plan is a core requirement of the commitment to tackling the Climate Emergency, which is in-line with the Council Plan priority.

7.2 There are also significant links between the Climate Emergency Response and the Council's priorities on fuel poverty, food, inequality and improving mental health. The Housing, Climate, Finance and Poverty teams worked closely together during the 2022 energy crisis and have continued to build on this to ensure the Council supports residents to prepare for Winter in 2023-24. Actions such as the Council's warm spaces initiative have resulted from this close partnership working, and will be continued.

8. What will it cost?

8.1 The delivery of significant elements of the Climate Emergency Response Plan can be achieved within existing resources. There is a £0.4m annual revenue budget allocated to this priority, alongside a remaining indicative allocation of £0.6m in the indicative capital programme for 2024-25. The Council has also bid for Government funding including £2.4m in public sector decarbonisation funding. There are a range of actions within the plan, such as retrofitting existing housing, that will require additional Government investment. We will seek this via funding sources such as the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

8.2 The Council continues to actively engage with Government via opportunities such as consultations and other mechanisms to ensure that we advocate for the required changes to policy and funding to make these actions deliverable. Delivering on this priority is not solely about new expenditure. It is about using our existing capital programme and revenue spending to create the outcomes we want via intelligent and carbon-informed decision-making.

9. What are the legal aspects?

- 9.1 The UK's main legislation relating to climate change is the Climate Change Act 2008 which sets a legally binding target to reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases by at least 80 per cent of 1990 levels by 2050 and required the setting of statutory five-year carbon budgets towards the 2050 target. The UK government on 27 June 2019 amended the 2008 Act to set a net-zero target for 2050.
- 9.2 Internationally, the Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015 and signed in 2016, was entered into by a number of states and the European Union. The Paris Agreement sets out a global action plan on climate change with a target of limiting global warming to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.
- 9.3 The Council has continued to ensure that it reviews the impact of emerging new legislation, to ensure these are fully understood, and that legal impacts and risks are accounted for when considering the response and actions of the Council in relation to the climate change priorities.
- 9.4 In addition to legislative updates, legal advice will be sought on all applications for grant funding, and any partnership and contractual implications of projects arising to ensure compliance with the Council's Finance and Contract procedure rules. Governance advice continues to be sought on collaborative working arrangements.

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

- 10.1 Due to the volume of information and number of plan owners and data leads involved, there are risks that data and indicators are not collected consistently across the outcome plans and vary in quality and accuracy. The Climate Change Team engages with data owners to verify the accuracy of these data returns and work with data leads to enhance the reliability and rigour of data collection. There is a risk that allocated Climate Emergency funding will not result in anticipated carbon reduction. This is mitigated by post implementation reviews and interrogation of bids submitted.

11. What is the impact of the decision on health inequalities and equality and diversity issues?

- 11.1 There are no detrimental equality and diversity issues directly associated with reporting on the Council's Climate Emergency Response Plan. The Plan is intended to enhance the environmental wellbeing, preparedness and prosperity of everyone who lives and works within the Borough. Action linked to reducing carbon emissions will have co-benefits such as creating better air quality, increases in walking and cycling, warmer homes, better access to green spaces which are proven to support mental wellbeing, and healthier diets. This will in turn combat health inequalities and reduce the demand on the NHS and Social Care. The recent tragic events of Storm Babet illustrate the importance of continuing to prioritise climate mitigation and adaptation.

12. What is the impact of this decision on Climate Change?

- 12.1 The ongoing monitoring of Climate Emergency Response Plan is a critical element in supporting the Council's programme of action over 2023-2024 which will reduce carbon emissions and enhance our preparedness for the detrimental effects of climate change.

For further information:

Cabinet Member: Councillor Louise Gittins, Leader of the Council

Officer: Will Pearson

Job Title: Climate Change Strategy Manager

Appendix 1:

Actions:

Action Reference	Plan	Action Description	Timeframe	September 2022 Update	Status
A1	Energy and Industry	Purchase renewable electricity for the Council, beginning in 2020-21;	Q1 2021-22	Action Complete.	Complete
A2	Energy and Industry	In 2021-22, review the feasibility of purchasing 'green' gas for the Council's buildings;	Q2 2021-22	Action Complete.	Complete
A3	Energy and Industry	When replacing heating systems in buildings, or including systems in new Council developments, our default option will be low-carbon alternatives to gas/coal/oil based heating systems.	Q2 2021-22	Action Complete.	Complete
A4	Energy and Industry	In 2020-24, review the establishment of a recycling fund to deliver renewable energy or energy efficiency projects, and prioritise in the Council's capital programme improving the energy efficiency of public sector buildings through measures such as improved insulation.	Q1-4 2021-22	The Council has submitted an application for a further £2.4m of Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme works.	On track

A5	Energy and Industry	The Council will deliver Phase 2 of the Council's LED street light replacement programme, reducing energy demand and speeding the achievement of carbon neutrality in the Council's own operations.	Commencing Q3 2020-21. Completion Q3 2022-23.	Action Complete.	On track
A6	Energy and Industry	The Council will make available a Climate Emergency Fund in 2020-21, which among other uses will provide opportunities to expand community energy provision.	Commencing Q2 2020-21	Action Complete.	Complete
A7	Energy and Industry	Support in principle the development of a low-carbon hydrogen economy. The HyNet project aspires to capture 10 million tonnes of CO2 from the North West's industrial cluster, add £17bn Gross Value Added to the North West economy, alongside supporting 5979 jobs. The Council will also explore opportunities for hydrogen to be mixed with the gas grid using existing infrastructure for the purposes of domestic and commercial heating. It is noted that the blue hydrogen proposed in HyNet is intended to be a transitional step towards green hydrogen, and therefore the development of green hydrogen will also be supported by the Council.	2020-24	HyNet has continued to progress, with two Nationally Significant Infrastructure Planning applications in progress for Hydrogen and Carbon Dioxide pipelines alongside a planning application for Hydrogen Production plants at Essar Stanlow.	On track

A8	Energy and Industry	Work with the LEP and Cheshire Energy Hub to review opportunities to reduce industrial energy use within Cheshire West and Chester, through projects such as the Energy Innovation District and E-Port Smart Energy Master Plan, which aim to aims to reduce the carbon emissions from the Ellesmere Port industrial cluster by 34 per cent by 2030;	2020-24	Action Complete.	Complete
A9	Energy and Industry	Working with the Liverpool City region on the Mersey Tidal project to seek to deliver clean energy to the Cheshire and Merseyside region;	2020-24	The Council continues to engage with the Mersey Tidal team.	On track
A10	Energy and Industry	The Council will work with central Government and local industrial stakeholders to promote the development of funding mechanisms to ensure the economic viability of blue hydrogen, as a transitional step towards green hydrogen, to enable the delivery of initial HyNet infrastructure by 2025.	2020-24	DESNZ have launched the Low carbon Hydrogen Standard and associated funding mechanisms.	On track
A11	Energy and Industry	The Council will work with the Mersey Dee Alliance on the development of an Energy prospectus.	2020-24	Action Complete.	Complete
A12	Energy and Industry	The Council will work with the local Energy Network infrastructure provider, SP Energy Networks, to assure the delivery of network upgrades to facilitate readiness for 100% electric vehicles by 2030.	2020-24	The Council has consulted on its EV Strategy and is developing an associated fleet decarbonisation strategy.	On track

A13	Transport	Develop a Residential Design Guide that drives modal shift and supports the achievement of carbon neutrality. In-line with the government's 'Gear Change' vision, develop separate cycling and active travel infrastructure that is designed around usability, that is joined up, and which feels direct, logical and intuitive. This will be achieved by creating segregated cycling infrastructure, re-balancing the street towards equal prioritisation of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and supporting electric vehicle/low carbon vehicle infrastructure.	2020-24	This will be part of the Local Transport Plan 4. Which is currently in development.	On track
A14	Transport	All future major transport projects will have a carbon assessment as part of their business case.	2020-24	This will be part of the Local Transport Plan 4. Which is currently in development.	On track
A15	Transport	Develop the enhanced partnership model for Bus Transport, working closely with local operators to review options for zero emissions buses on all routes, to create the conditions to achieve 51 per cent electrification by 2025 and full electrification by 2030. This will be enabled by provision of zero emission fuelling infrastructure, including hydrogen buses and future electric buses.	Spring 2021	The Enhanced partnership continues to bring together the council and bus operators. It covers some spending including BSIP and BSOG monies from the DFT, as well as developments of the ZEBRA potential.	On track
A16	Transport	Within the current Council Plan period, review the Local Transport Plan to strengthen provisions regarding climate change in-line with the Council's Climate Emergency priority.	2022-23	This will be part of the Local Transport Plan 4. Which is currently in development.	On track

A17	Transport	Review the outcomes of e-scooter trials within Cheshire West and Chester.	Commence Autumn 2020. Review Q3 2021-22	The Council has extended our trial period in order to align with DfT trial period. Results will feed into the national trial dataset.	On track
A18	Transport	Procure zero emission vehicles where technology is available and cost effective when we replace our existing fleet.	2020-24	The rollout of EV for fleet continues. With an 'electric first' prioritisation process as fleet demands are re-procured	On track

A19	Transport	<p>Ensuring that residents and businesses can access fast and reliable digital connections is a social and economic goal for the council. Whilst we have made some significant progress through the Connecting Cheshire programme to date there is more to do. Almost 39,500 premises having benefited from public sector funding for superfast broadband access, but we need to go further to address disparities in coverage and to ensure that all communities benefit from future technological change and growth</p>	2020-24	<p>We are currently working alongside BDUK to implement the Project Gigabit FTTP upgrade across Cheshire (Lot17). The contract award date is due for Q1 2024 where approx 16,500 properties will benefit from being included in a Government funded FTTP upgrade. CW&C is currently at 69.5% Full Fibre connectivity vs 53.7% this time last year. We will tip over the 70% mark by Christmas 2024. The properties left without FTTP will be the hardest to reach areas where we will use voucher funding, including Top Up Vouchers to connect through Community Driven Schemes. We will be rolling out the alternative Tech Grant for those with speeds less than 30Mbps to cover the cost of installation of alternative tech to deploy a decent level of internet speed and reliability to those who need it most.</p>	On track
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A20	Transport	Work with Building Digital UK (BDUK) through next phases of gigabit capable infrastructure programmes	2020-24	As per A19.	On track
A21	Transport	Develop and support the work of the Sustainable Transport Taskforce in its goal to achieve consensus on ways to improve the delivery of inclusive walking, cycling and public transport projects.	2021-22	The Council will use the Local Transport Plan Engagement process to test and learn new methods of engagement across a range of settings and focusing on different modes of transport.	On track
A22	Transport	Support the development of Hydrogen infrastructure for trains, buses and road freight, and review opportunities for hydrogen refuelling stations on arterial routes, in-line with Hydrogen production commencing locally in 2025.	2022	The Council is supportive to opportunities in this arena and will engage with commercial operators to support the rollout of hydrogen infrastructure.	On track
A23	Transport	Work with partners and draw down funding from Government to increase the number of publicly available EV charging points developed by the Council.	2020-24	We have been allocated capacity funding to deliver on EV roll out, and we are shortly appointing to this role. We have also been allocated capital monies to deliver the charging infrastructure, which we will do in partnership with commercial operators	On track

A24	Transport	Support the development of Growth Track 360, which includes the electrification of the line from Crewe to North Wales.	2020-24	GT360 are continuing to lobby for electrification of the North Wales mainline, which the Council fully supports.	On track
A25	Transport	Continue to work with Transport for the North and Department for Transport on their respective key transport decarbonisation plans.	2020-24	This is ongoing and links to the quantifiable carbon reduction elements of the Local Transport Plan.	On track
A26	Transport	Working with local partners, including Town and Parish Councils, schools and communities to improve walking infrastructure through improved pavement hedgerow control, dropped kerbs and suitable pedestrian crossings.	2020-24	This is an ongoing programme of work. The Council is engaging with local councillors to explore the use of Member Budgets on activities such as dropped kerbs.	On track
A27	Housing	The Council will review options and costs for low-carbon housing in Council-led housing schemes, in order to deliver the commitment set by Cabinet to seek to ensure that all new builds (Council and private developments) are built to a higher standard such as the Passive House Standard, renewable energy and EV charging points and access to a high standard of broadband infrastructure.	Q2 2021-22	99 homes on Phoenix depot site, Winsford to be zero carbon in use.	On track
A28	Housing	Develop an action plan specifically aimed at reducing the number of fuel poor households across the borough, working closely with established affordable warmth partners	Q4 2021-22	The Council's 4-year Fuel Poverty Strategy has been adopted and will run from 2023-2027. Work has begun on delivering the outcomes to be achieved.	Complete

A29	Housing	Work with the Housing Partnership to agree shared Climate Emergency goals, including the aspiration to work towards a carbon neutral borough by 2045, and work with social housing partners to deliver low-carbon housing and retrofit existing stock.	2022-23	Housing Development Group being established to encourage and support quantity and quality of new homes	On track
A30	Housing	Ensure the Council and housing providers support all forms of homeowners, tenants and occupiers to maximise access to all available funding opportunities for retrofit measures to improve homes, including the Green Homes Grant LAD scheme, energy redress programmes and others.	2020-24	All grant opportunities identified and applied for. Current funding opportunities via the Home Upgrade Grant (owner occupier and private rented) and ECO. The Climate Change Team are currently appointing an ECO delivery partner. This will focus on homeowners and private rented sector, but will also explore opportunities for social housing tenants as well. A data gathering piece of work has recently been carried out on the council's housing stock using Parity Portfolio data to enable an application to be submitted to the next round of SHDF. This is currently expected to be in 2025.	On track
A31	Housing	Review the available domestic energy advice and support offer to ensure that government funding schemes are appropriately promoted and leveraged to achieve the highest possible carbon return on investment. This includes the Green Homes Grant.	2022-23	The Council's Home Energy webpages are kept up to date with information and guidance on all available schemes (local and national) Training was provided to front-line staff over the winter of 2022/23. Energy Efficiency app has been developed and will hopefully be available for residents in October 2023.	On track

A32	Housing	Review opportunities to support private sector landlords for whole house retrofit and other energy improvements for private rented properties that do not meet the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard.	2021-22	Pilot grant assistance scheme to PRS landlords - landlords with an eligible tenant will be able to apply support to meet any shortfall costs via HUG2 and ECO scheme.	On track
A34	Housing	The Council will explore options for ensuring that new development should comply with the UN Sustainability Targets and the Anthesis targets.	2020-24	Work remains ongoing and will form part of the consideration of a new local plan to commence in 2023	On track
A35	Housing	Support businesses and partners to sign up to the Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment. This commitment challenges organisations to reach net zero carbon in operation for all assets under their direct control by 2030.	2020-24	Support being delivered through Shared prosperity fund decarbonisation fund	On track
A36	Housing	Work with Government and partners to review opportunities for significantly expanding whole-house retrofit programmes in social housing to support the achievement of Anthesis' targets relating to low carbon energy, solid wall insulation, loft insulation and superglazing.	2021-22	Lobbying where appropriate and identification and maximisation of targeted funding for retrofit	On track
A37	Housing	Work with Homes England to deliver our shared priorities around climate change and ensure sufficient resource is available to deliver new build low carbon affordable homes and request that Homes England considers establishing and providing expert support to housing providers regarding delivery options for low carbon homes.	2020-24	We are building in expectations regarding carbon neutral housing to future site planning.	On track

A38	Housing	The Council will respond to Government consultations to ensure that the legislative framework for Planning and Building Control promotes the ability for local areas to set higher standards for energy efficiency than the national minimum standards and puts a framework in place to ensure these standards are implemented.	2020-24	The Council's Planning service will continue to monitor responses and will provide updates should any future consultation responses be submitted.	On track
A39	Business Premises and Engagement	Review intelligence on business needs regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation;	2022	Support being delivered through Shared prosperity fund decarbonisation fund	Complete
A40	Business Premises and Engagement	Develop a communications plan that includes an information pack on the LetsTalkBusinessCW website that: provides helpful information to support SME's to make changes; informs and engages business in this agenda; that supports business to access new initiatives and funding streams.	2022-23	Investment Zone submitted however government withdrew application. Wider support to business delivered via shared prosperity fund.	On track

A41	Energy and Industry	Ensure that the energy efficiency of the Council's own industrial and commercial assets improves in order to support the delivery of the Council's own 2030 carbon neutrality target, further information is available in the Carbon Management Plan.	2020-24	Action complete, further information on the ongoing decarbonisation of Council assets is available in the Carbon Management Plan.	Complete
A42	Business Premises and Engagement	Working with partner agencies, ensure that any regeneration or enterprise zone projects are designed with net-zero in mind and contribute to the achievement of net-zero by 2045.	2020-24	ORIGIN Business Forum held inception meeting. Wider support to business delivered via shared prosperity fund.	On track
A43	Business Premises and Engagement	Work with external partners to develop a long-term business grant programme (phase 2 programme) to support low-carbon and energy efficiency investments;	2020-24	Current year 2 delivery in progress of the SPF decarbonisation programme	On track
A44	Business Premises and Engagement	Work with Government to develop new financial models to make commercial retrofit at scale a feasible option.	2022-23	Ongoing engagement with stakeholders.	On track

A45	Business Premises and Engagement	Work with the Mersey-Dee Alliance to initiate activity as part of the MDA workplan.	2020-24	On going engagement with MDA around cross border activities to support Hynet activity	On track
A46	Business Premises and Engagement	Embed low carbon discussions into the Inward Investment and Key Account Management strategy (in development).	2020-24	Work in both Mid Cheshire and Ellesmere Port industrial area around key issues and solutions	On track
A47	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Support, on average over the 5-year (2020-2025) programme, an aspiration for 150 hectares of new planting a year across the borough, a total of 750ha over the lifetime of the programme.	2020-2025	119ha planted over the past 3 years in CW&C with over 300ha still being looked at for years 4 and 5 of Trees for Climate	On track
A48	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Bid for funding to deploy exemplar nature-based solutions to Climate Change to provide models for wider deployment and incorporation into borough wide plans and strategies.	2020-2021	Complete	Complete
A49	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Implement new policies on wildflower verges, enhancing local biodiversity and reducing our cost for green space management.	2021-2022	Complete	Complete

A50	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Review the Council's land holdings, including its farm estate, to explore the case for this land to contribute to the Council's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. This may include reviewing opportunities to support low-carbon agricultural practices which reduce emissions and increase carbon sequestration, alongside promoting solutions such as tree planting, wetland management and creation.	2021-2022	Complete	On track
A51	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Develop a strategic approach to maximise the benefits of 'net gain' in biodiversity and climate change in new development.	2021-2022	Ongoing work	On track
A52	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	We will identify where natural flood management approaches can be used to increase carbon sequestration and deliver improved catchment management. This will be initiated by an opportunity mapping exercise.	Q4 2021-22	New Riparian Woodland programme will start in Autumn 2023	Complete
A53	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	We will publish a Nature Recovery strategy which sets out how we will promote biodiversity and carbon sequestration through new approaches to Streetscene management and wider work across the borough.	Q4 2021-22	In progress	On track
A54	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Explore opportunities to deliver income generation through Woodland and other land management.	Q4 2021-22	This work is in the process of being re-started following recruitment of additional resources.	Slipped

A55	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	We will develop a detailed Land Action Plan that will support delivery of Local Action.	Q4 2021-22	Complete.	On track
A56	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Work with the LEP to develop make available and promote the Natural Capital Audit, Investment and Implementation Plan for Cheshire and Warrington.	Q2 2021-22	Complete.	On track
A57	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Assess the opportunity to work with the Local Nature Partnership to develop a co-created, borough wide, Local Nature Recovery Strategy to complement the Natural Capital Audit and providing a framework for investment, including through Net Gain.	2020-24	This work has commenced, guidance was delayed along with confirmation of funding with responsible authorities. The work will progress over the next 18 months.	On track
A58	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Carry out the function of the accountable body, programme managers, funding recipient and distributor for the Trees for Climate national programme, ensuring the effective management of this nationwide programme.	2020-24	Complete. Now considering options for post 2025/6	Complete
A59	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Support the ongoing delivery of the Mersey Forest Plan.	2020-24	Ongoing work	On track
A60	Land Use, Climate Repair and Adaptation	Assess how we work together to increase carbon capture and store across the whole landscape including wetlands, peatlands, woodland and farmland.	2020-24	Ongoing work. Limited progress this year due to officer capacity	On track

A61	Waste and Recycling	End avoidable single-use plastics in the Council's operations via a range of methods including more sustainable procurement;	2020-24	Government Legislation now in place, information from the waste team to support depts.	On track
A62	Waste and Recycling	Work with Cheshire West Recycling to procure the most efficient and environmentally friendly fleet possible, including exploring purchasing electric or hydrogen vehicles;	2020-24	This has been delivered	Complete
A63	Waste and Recycling	Review opportunities to use de-commissioned landfill sites to provide renewable energy.	2020-24	The Council is re-reviewing sites and progressing with a view to grid connection agreement on one site.	On track
A64	Waste and Recycling	Explore the creation of a community-led award scheme for sustainable businesses.	Not started	This action is recommended for removal, as it could put additional pressure on businesses which are still recovering from COVID.	On track
A65	Business Premises and Engagement	Align the implementation and outcomes of the Inclusive Economy Strategy with the Climate Emergency Response Plan.	2020-24	This is an ongoing action.	On track

Appendix 2: Measures

Reference	Measure	Measure Type	Theme	Polarity	Baseline Data	Q2 2021 Data	Q2 2022 Data	2024 Target	Direction of Travel
M1	Industrial Sector Annual Carbon Emissions – Cheshire West and Chester - (BEIS)	Indirect Influence	Energy and Industry	Low is good.	2126.1 ktCO ₂	1921.8 kt CO ₂ (2023 update for 2020 data)	1727kt CO ₂ (2023 update for 2021 data)	11% Reduction	G
M2	Percentage of the LED streetlight replacement programme completed	Direct Influence	Energy and Industry	High is good.	73%	94.90%	100.00%	100%	G
M3	Transport Sector Annual Carbon Emissions – Cheshire West and Chester - (BEIS)	Indirect Influence	Transport	Low is good.	943.1 ktCO ₂	782.3 ktCO ₂ (2023 update for 2020 data)	852.2 (2023 update for 2021 data)	17% Reduction	R

M4	Electric vehicle infrastructure: Number of publicly available electric vehicle charging devices developed by the Council	Direct Influence	Transport	High is good.	0	15 (30 - end November - Northgate) (57 - end December)	n/a - The LEVI national funding scheme will be distributing our allocation of funding by the end of 2023. Following this we will begin to schedule, plan and then deliver EV charging points across the borough.	48	M
M5	Department for Transport: Modal Share by Local Authority, Weekly Cycling	Indirect Influence	Transport	High is good.	8.70%	9.7% (2020-21)	8.9% (2022)	25% increase	R
M6	Department for Transport: Modal Share by Local Authority,	Indirect Influence	Transport	High is good.	69.10%	74% (2020-21)	66.6% (2022)	25% increase	R

	Weekly Walking								
M7	Resident Satisfaction (Public Transport options - NHT)	Indirect Influence	Transport	High is good.	57%	54%	47%	61%	R
M8	Annual Housing Emissions (BEIS LA CO ₂ emissions)	Indirect Influence	Housing	Low is good.	531.2 ktCO ₂	514.4 kt CO ₂ (2023 update for 2020 data)	530.6 kt CO ₂ (2023 update for 2021 data)	450 kt CO ₂ per annum (15% reduction)	A
M9	Carbon neutral new build homes delivered include council housing programme and housing provider programmes.	Direct Influence	Housing	High is good.	0	The Council is developing its pipeline of new homes with the intention that they are built to carbon neutral standards.	99 new homes approved at Phoenix depot site will be zero carbon in use.	99 start on site	G

M10	Private sector landlords supported to retrofit properties that do not meet the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard.	Direct Influence	Housing	High is good.	0	6 private landlords supported to retrofit properties in a pilot.	Pilot scheme in design for 10 landlords.	10 (newly established target)	M
M11	Retrofit measures to council housing and RP stock	Direct Influence	Housing	High is good.	First year to be baseline.	123 properties due to complete end March 23.	125	M	G
M12	% of properties achieving to Band C or above	Indirect Influence	Housing	High is good.	First year to be baseline.	42.20%	46.00%	M	G
M13	Commercial property median EPC rating;	Indirect Influence	Business Premises and Engagement	High is good.	D	D (58.2% band D or lower)	D (54.1% band D or lower)	C	G

M14	Land Use Sector Annual Carbon Emissions – Cheshire West and Chester - (BEIS)	Indirect Influence	Land Use	Low is good.	First year to be baseline.	-3.2kt CO2 (2020)	-2.7kt CO2 (2021)	10% reduction	R
M15	Annual tree planting (ha)	Direct Influence	Land Use	High is good.	First year to be baseline.	85ha in scope - 400ha being investigated	57.9ha planted in 2022/3, 68.53ha in scope for this season, with 263ha of land Acquisition for woodland establishment in scope.	150 on average by 2024	G
M16	Natural Flood Management	Indirect Influence	Land Use	High is good.	First year to be baseline.	459,814	869, 500	2,500,000 litres of additional storage capacity in the landscape	G
M17	Carbon in the landscape - updated natural capital assessment of carbon stored in the landscape	Indirect Influence	Land Use	High is good.	First year to be baseline.	Assessment methods in development.	Assessment methods in development.	1% increase	M

M18	Reduction in household waste	Direct Influence	Waste and Recycling	Low is good.	182900 tonnes (2020-21)	178,702 tonnes (2021-22)	162,822 tonnes (2022-23)	6.7% decrease	G
M19	Household and non-household waste is sent for reuse, recycling or composting	Direct Influence	Waste and Recycling	High is good.	56%	57.6% (2021-22)	56.45% (2022-23)	65.60%	A

Appendix 3: Carbon Management Plan

Cheshire West and Chester Council

Carbon Management Plan

- Introduction
- Council Priorities
- Legislative Drivers
- Performance
- Carbon Budget Analysis
- Vision and Strategy
- Baseline v Current
- Key Actions
- Finance
- Monitoring
- Offsetting
- Governance
- Glossary

Introduction

In May 2019 Cheshire West and Chester Council declared a Climate Emergency.

This declaration represents a major statement of intent to treat Climate Change as requiring urgent local action believing that the time is now to take further practical action.

In making the Declaration, we have set an ambitious target date of 2030 to achieve carbon neutrality for the Council's own emissions, to be delivered through this Carbon Management Plan.

Although the Council only has direct control over 0.6% of borough-wide carbon emissions, we have a great responsibility to show leadership by reducing our own emissions, as well as supporting local people, business and our partners to reduce their impact.

Whilst a separate Climate Emergency Response Plan is being developed for borough-wide emissions, this Carbon Management Plan provides an overview of the Council's current position, and outlines the plan for a carbon neutral services from 2030.

The ambition to reduce carbon emissions is not being made from a standing start; over the past decade there have been two prior Carbon Management Plans; 2010-2015 and 2016-2020. Whilst relatively good progress has been made to date, making further progress will require a significantly increased programme of action including the transition to using cleaner forms of energy – replacing the use of fossil fuels; improving energy efficiency across all council functions; investing in clean energy supply; and balancing our carbon emissions through investing in a variety of accredited environmental offsetting projects.

Between 2009 and 2020 we have reduced the Council's own carbon emissions by 50.9% through:

- Installing solar photovoltaic systems on Council assets
- LED conversion of street lighting
- Robust and flexible Energy Purchasing Strategy
- Ambitious waste recycling targets
- Managing business mileage
- Asset improvement and reduction

Despite our achievements to date, the science and evidence is clear - climate change poses a significant threat to our way of life, and the time for action is now. While Government and other bodies should take a national and international lead, a big difference can be made at a more local level.

Cheshire West and Chester has set an ambition to become a carbon neutral borough, reducing emissions of greenhouse gases to net zero by 2045 or earlier.

As local leaders, the Council will take decisive action and proactive measures to be a carbon neutral Council by 2030.

Council Priorities

The Cheshire West and Chester Corporate Plan 2020-2024 sets out 6 key priorities that will form the focus of the Council's actions for the next four years.

Tackling the Climate Emergency is a Key Priority in the [Council Plan 2020-2024](#)

In making the Council a greener organisation, we will work with businesses and communities to ensure that our Council provides carbon neutral services by 2030 and that future generations are protected from climate change. We have a shared responsibility to act and there will be a real urgency to our response. While this is a real challenge, it presents great opportunities to build a green economy and encourages innovation to find better and a more efficient uses of our resources.

Legislative Drivers

The [Kyoto Protocol](#) is the first agreement between nations to mandate developed countries to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions.

The [Climate Change Act 2008](#) sets the framework for how the UK will manage and respond to the Kyoto Protocol. It set a target committing the UK to reducing total greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% in 2050 from 1990 levels. The [Climate Change act 2008 \(2050 Target Amendment\) Order 2019](#) amends the 2050 target in Section 1 of the Act from an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 relative to 1990 to 100% over the same period.

The [Paris Agreement 2015](#) provides a framework for governments as well as business and investors to keep global warming well below 2°C, pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C. A temperature rise of 1.5°C is seen by some countries, such as low lying islands at risk of rising sea levels, as the limit beyond which their existence is threatened.

Cheshire West and Chester Carbon Performance

The Council follows the [Greenhouse Gas Protocol](#) Corporate Standard for monitoring and reporting emissions. It is an international accounting tool for Government and businesses to understand, quantify and manage GHG emissions.

The GHG protocol breaks down emissions into three categories and an additional voluntary category in order to better understand the source; - Scope 1, 2, 3 and 4* emissions.

Scope 1 – All direct emissions from the activities of an organisation or under their control. Including all fuel combustion on site such as gas boilers and fleet vehicles.

Scope 2 – Indirect emissions from electricity purchased and used by an organisation. Emissions are created during the production of the energy and eventually used by the organisation.

Scope 3 – All other indirect emissions from activities of an organisation occurring from sources that they do not own or control. These are usually the greatest share of the carbon footprint, covering emissions associated with business travel, procurement, waste and water.

*Scope 4 – A voluntary reporting of emissions that occur outside of a product's lifecycle or value chain but as a result of use of that product.

The Cheshire West and Chester Carbon Management Plan for 2016-2020 set a target to reduce in-scope carbon emissions by 30% by 2020. A reduction of 50.9% was achieved.

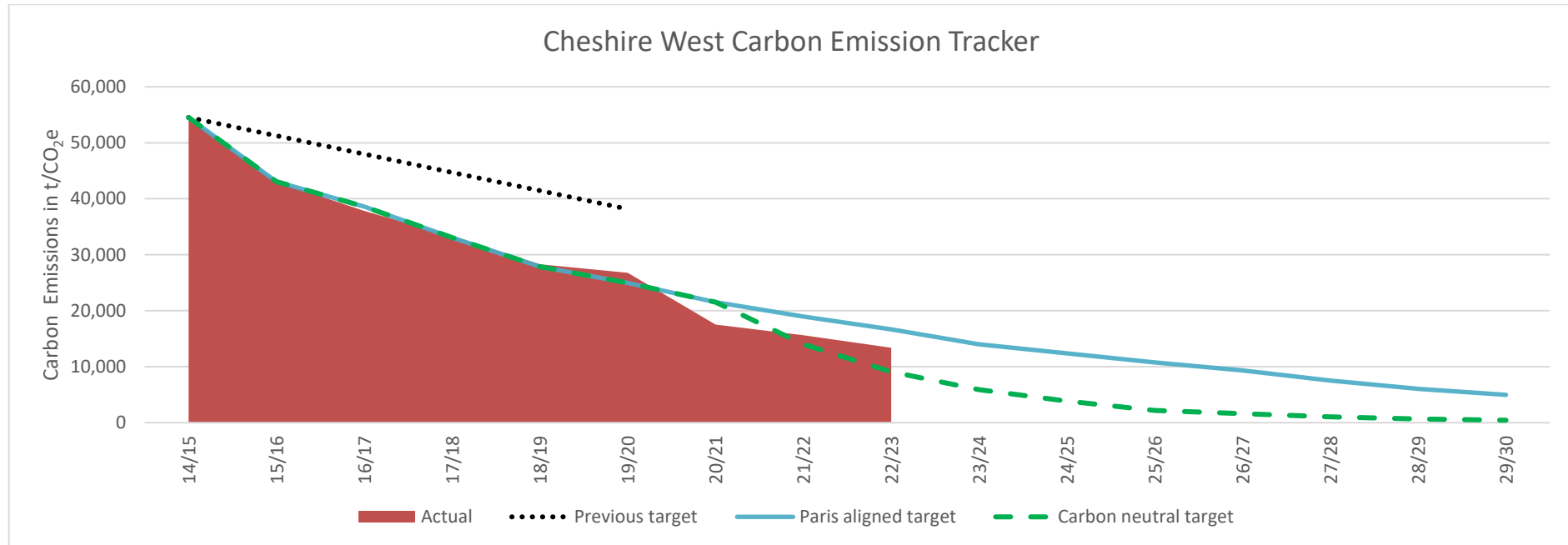
This is on the basis of primarily Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions with reductions in emissions associated with waste in Scope 3. These substantial reductions were achieved through a range of measures including the use of solar energy on assets, the LED street lighting programme, and enabling schools to invest in energy efficiency projects.

Carbon Budget Analysis

The Chart and table show the progress the Council made in the last Carbon Management Plan.

It also highlights the Council's performance trajectory against a Paris Agreement aligned target and the Council's own climate emergency declaration target*.

As a minimum, the Council will need to continue to maintain an Actual position below the lines to successfully meet its commitments



*The Council's Carbon neutral target pathway shows a compressed regressive curve to 2030 based on the Paris Agreement aligned target for the Council, as set out in carbon budget reports produced by The Tyndall Centre. The Council is demonstrating its leadership in setting a pathway for immediate action and deep cuts to emissions in order to avoid Cheshire West using its Paris aligned emissions budget to 2100 by 2026. The position shows the Council is just above of the target line but below the Paris Agreement line. The Council continues to reduce its emissions year on year and remains below the Government target line for Net Zero decarbonisation. The Council recognises this journey is a challenging one, to reach the Council's own targets. Increasing resources are required to continue to decarbonise the estates and services, particularly transitioning the heat to the many buildings in the Councils estate. A programme of delivery for this is in place however the recent challenges from third parties, Energy costs and the cost of living have delayed some projects from proceeding. New funding and technical solutions are being sought to continue the programme.

Year	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
Previous Target	54,5 19	51,2 48	47,9 77	44,7 06	41,4 35	38,1 63	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Paris Aligned Target	54,5 19	43,0 48	38,5 76	33,0 65	27,8 72	24,9 86	21,5 24	18,9 41	16,6 81	13,9 90	12,3 76	10,7 62	9,31 5	7,50 7	6,06 1	4,97 6
Actual	54,5 19	43,0 53	37,7 93	33,3 95	28,4 10	26,7 79	17,1 96	15,6 21	13,3 90							
Carbon Neutral Target	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	21,5 24	13,9 90	9,09 3	5,91 1	3,84 2	2,49 7	1,62 3	1,05 5	685	445
Carbon Offsets to be claimed*												13	39	-1		
Carbon Offsets set in motion*							3,85 4	7,06 4	2,63 4							
Carbon Neutral Position	54,5 19	43,0 53	37,7 93	33,3 95	28,4 10	26,7 79	17,1 96	15,6 21	13,3 90			-13	-39	1		

* Please see the carbon offsetting section for more information

Carbon Management Strategy

Vision

In recognition of all the drivers identified to embark upon this programme, Cheshire West and Chester Council has set out this vision:

‘Cheshire West and Chester Council to be operating carbon neutral services reducing our contribution to climate change.’

Target

The Council has set a target to achieve its vision of carbon neutral services on the current scope by 2030. The Council will also have made preparations to expand the scope of data capture and taken actions to limit the emissions associated with additional monitoring.

Action Plan

A 10 year action plan to deliver carbon neutral emissions on the current scope of Cheshire West and Chester Council’s operations and will be known as the Council’s Carbon Management Plan 2020-2030.

The Carbon Management Plan will, to set out how the Council will achieve carbon neutrality in relation to its own in-scope emissions by 2030, which are predominately Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions within the financial boundary. These are the emissions that the Council can directly influence.

The Council also has an ambition to monitor and reduce emissions throughout its supply chain, and ensure staff are supported to travel sustainably while at work. It is anticipated to baseline and provide additional information from the 2022-2023 reporting period.

In addition to current work to ensure carbon considerations are included in procurement activity, the Council will consider the expansion of the scope of reported emissions to include these supply chain (Scope 3) emissions during the 2030-2035 Carbon Management Plan.

The Council will also consider the move from market to the preferred location reporting i.e. using local instead of national carbon factors, to improve the accuracy for carbon accounting. A full explanation of the differences in reporting can be found in the [Greenhouse Gas Protocol](#)

Scope

It is only feasible at this stage to include within the Carbon Management Plan what can reasonably be baselined now and in the near future.

In scope factors will include all energy and water consumed in buildings within the Council's financial boundary and street-lighting that is paid for and maintained by the Council.

In addition, business mileage will be monitored and reported in scope. Emissions from services delivered by third parties on behalf of the Council will also be included where a reasonable measurement can be established or continued.

Improving monitoring methods and procedures for other sources of emissions, predominantly those defined in Scope 3, will continue over the initial reporting period.

The table below summarises which sources of emissions are in scope for this plan

Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3	Scope 4
Gas and Oil Consumption	Electric Consumption (Grid)	Business Travel Purchased Heat and Steam Consumption Transportation and Distribution (up and downstream)*	Currently being evaluated

*Selected categories

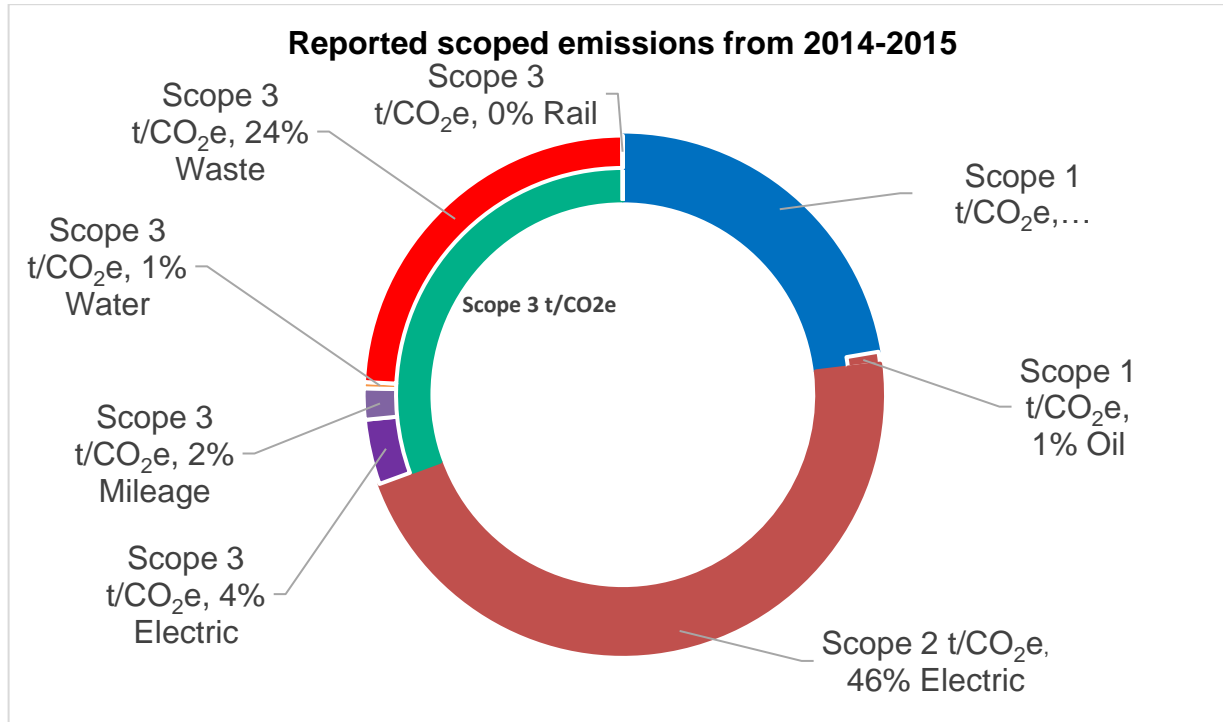
Baseline

The Council will retain the baseline scoped emissions for financial year 2014-2015 of 54,519 CO₂e.

The table and chart represent the derivative sources of emissions in the baseline year and show the largest source of emissions as scope 2; generated from the production of electricity consumed across the Council estate. This accounted for 46% to the total emissions measured. The remaining emissions are largely split between gas burnt on site (22%) to produce heat, and emissions associated with the collection and treatment of waste from the borough (24%). The remaining 8% are residual emissions split up from a variety of sources.

Source	Scope 1 t/CO ₂ e	Scope 2 t/CO ₂ e	Scope 3 t/CO ₂ e	Total t/CO ₂ e	Percentage of Total
Electric		25252.6	2208.2	27460.8	50% (46%+4%)
Gas	12184.5			12184.5	22%
Oil	401			401.29	1%
Business Mileage			1058.9	1058.95	2%
Rail			16.5	16.55	0%
Water			209	209	1%
Waste			13188	13188.04	24%
Grand Total	12585.5	25252.6	16680.6	54519.13	100%

The chart below is intended as a visual aid and shows the make-up, in percentage, of the sources of emissions as shown in the right-hand column of the table above.



Latest results

The last full year of emissions reported by the Council was for financial year 2022-2023 with a total of 13,389.7 t/CO₂e. This represents a 63.48% reduction against the baseline year 2014-15.

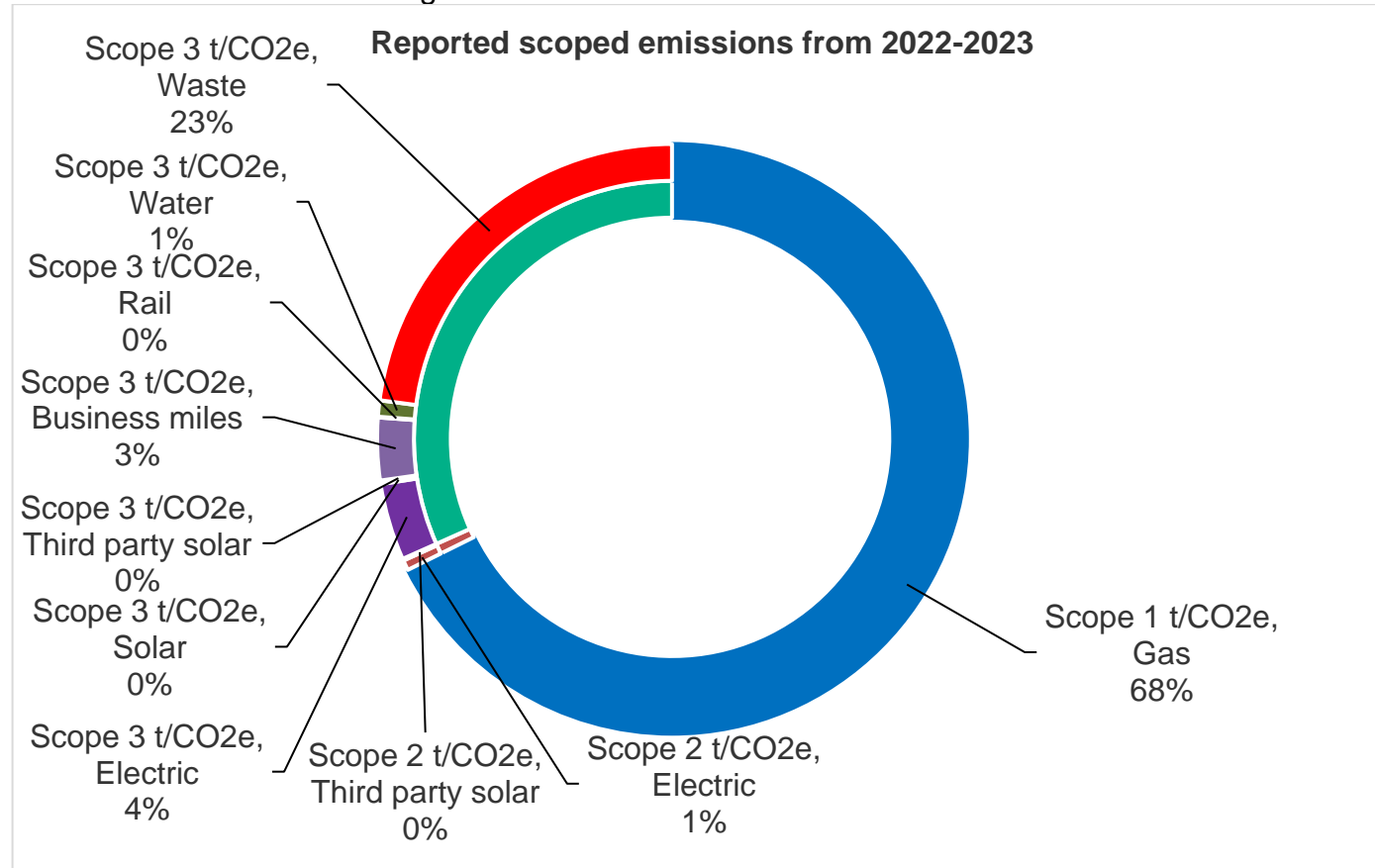
The table and chart represent the derivative sources of emissions in the baseline year and show the largest source of emissions as scope 1; generated from the gas burnt on site consumed across the Council estate. This accounted for 70% to the total emissions measured. The remaining emissions are largely emissions associated with the collection and treatment of waste (21%) and from electricity consumption (5%). The remaining 4% are residual emissions split up from a variety of sources.

Source	Scope 1 t/CO ₂ e	Scope 2 t/CO ₂ e	Scope 3 t/CO ₂ e	Total t/CO ₂ e	Percentage of Total
Electric*		74.9	564.9	639.8	5%
Owned Solar PV			23.4	23.4	0%
Third party Solar PV		13.0	2.6	15.7	0%
Gas	9060.5			9060.5	68%
Mileage**			458.2	458.2	3%
Rail			5.3	5.3	0%
Water			119.7	119.7	1%
Waste			3067.3	3067.3	23%
Grand Total	9060.5	87.9	4241.3	13389.7	100%

*Electric Scope 2 supported by the purchase of Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin certificates for the main contract. Solar continues to be spilt out this year as more generation occurs with increasing installations of Solar PV systems feeding direct electricity.

**Mileage is given as claimed business mileage where a member of staff has made a claim. Due to the systems in place this is given as a mile completed in an average diesel car.

The chart below is intended as a visual aid and shows the make-up, in percentage, of the sources of emissions of the latest results from 2021-2022 as shown in the right-hand column of the table above.



Key Actions

The key action tables are designed as live information resources and will be updated on regular basis. The Council's detailed project activity will be held separately and used to inform performance against the key themes.

Scope 1

Scope 1 emissions relate only to the use of gas in heating and cooking in the Councils estate. The Council recognises that over the period the following external trends will have an affect both in the actions the Council needs to take and the carbon emissions that the Council will be able to directly influence in this plan:

- **Asset disposal** - where the Council no longer occupies and pays for the gas used by a property. This includes where a school converts to an academy.
- **Hydrogen** – where hydrogen is injected into the gas grid as part of the fuel mix.

The Council under this plan intend to take action by:

- **Technologies (T)** – working with developing technologies over the period to increase efficiencies and decrease emissions including hydrogen technologies.
- **Heating and cooking electrification (HE)** – moving from using gas to heat buildings and cooking to electric allows the power to be produced from an direct owned or certified renewably generated source e.g. solar, wind, hydro or tidal.
- **Improving building envelopes (BE)** – where viable to increase insulation, install or renew windows and doors to increase thermal efficiency and reducing the amount of gas needed to heat to appropriate temperatures
- **Asset rationalisation* (AR)** – where a building is no longer efficiently used and could be repurposed if sold or leased.
- **Offset** – the balance of in-year residual emissions to net zero following all planned actions.
- **CO** – the number of certified offsets.

The table below demonstrates the planned actions, so far, the Council are undertaking to meet carbon neutrality under this plan. The table will be updated following reviews of additional planned actions

2019-20 Baseline		20-21 (Covid)	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
Gas 10774.1	T	0	0	0	0	0	-2	0	0	0	1965.5
	HE	0.0	0.0	-982.4	-337.0	-380.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	BE	-14.0	-2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	AR	-109.5	0.0	0.0	-130.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Offset	11474.76	10895.46	9060.06	(9445.66)	(8965.46)	(8965.46)	(8965.46)	(8965.46)	(8965.46)	(7478.16)

	CO	0	0	0							
Outturn		11474.76	10895.46	9060.5							

*The Council recognises where an asset passes out of this plan it will be covered under the wider borough plan for decarbonisation.

Scope 2

Scope 2 emissions relate only to the use of electricity in in the Councils estate and street lighting. The Council recognises that over the period the following external trends will have an affect both in the actions the Council needs to take and the carbon emissions that the Council will be able to directly influence in this plan:

- **Asset disposal** - where the Council no longer occupies and pays for the electricity used by a property. This includes where a school converts to an academy.
- **Grid emission factor** – where the production of electricity by renewable or low carbon sources in the electricity grid affects the carbon emitted per unit of electricity consumed.
- **Electrification of other fuels (E)** – the move from gas heating systems and transport to electric has the consequence that additional emissions for electric will need to be planned for to reduce to carbon neutral services.

The Council under this plan intend to take action by:

- **Technologies (T)** – working with developing technologies over the period to increase efficiencies and decrease emissions including in particular LED, direct solar PV and energy storage technologies.
- **Heating and cooking electrification (HE)** – the move from gas heating systems to electric has the consequence that additional emissions for electric will need to be planned for to reduce to carbon neutral services.
- **Improving building envelopes (BE)** – where viable to increase insulation, install or renew windows and doors to increase thermal efficiency and decrease the electric need to heat/cool to appropriate temperatures.
- **Asset rationalisation* (AR)** – where a building is no longer efficiently used and could be repurposed if sold or leased.
- **Offset** – the balance of in-year residual emissions to net zero following all planned actions.
- **CO** – the number of certified offsets.

The table below demonstrates the planned actions, so far, the Council are undertaking to meet carbon neutrality under this plan. The table will be updated following reviews of additional planned actions.

2019-20 Baseline		20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
	T					-2.47					
		-61.2	0.0	-225.0	-162.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Electricity	HE	0.0	0.0	321.0	71.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

10245.5	BE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	AR	-103.9	0.0	0.0	-463.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Offset	7707.7	7242.1	(6204.4)	(5650.4)	(5647.9)	(5647.9)	(5647.9)	(5647.9)	(5647.9)	(5647.9)
	CO	-7664.8	-7147.8	-6100.7							
Outturn		42.9	94.3	87.9							

*The Council recognises where an asset passes out of this plan it will be covered under the wider borough plan for decarbonisation.

Scope 3

Scope 3 emissions are more varied in the source of the emissions and generally are strongly influenced by factors outside of the Council. The Council recognises that over the period the following external trends will have an affect both in the actions the Council needs to take and the carbon emissions that the Council will be able to directly influence in this plan:

- **Asset disposal** - where the Council no longer occupies and pays for the electricity used by a property. This includes where a school converts to an academy.
- **Grid emission factor (T&D)** – where the carbon emission associated transmitting and distributing and electricity across the grid affects the carbon emitted per unit of electricity consumed.
- **Water Emissions** –where the carbon emissions associated transporting water/treatment of waste water from a site affects the carbon emitted per unit of water consumed/treated.
- **Staff vehicles used for business mileage** – the council can influence the ways in which staff travel and incentivise use of carbon efficient or not travelling. However staff vehicle choice in personal vehicles will influence emissions going forward.

The Council under this plan intend to take action by:

- **Technologies (T)** – to work with developing technologies over the period to increase efficiencies and decrease emissions including in particular LED technologies.
- **Improving building envelopes (BE)** – where viable to increase insulation, install or renew windows and doors to increase thermal efficiency and decrease the gas need to heat to appropriate temperatures
- **Asset rationalisation (AR)** – where a building is no longer efficiently used and could be repurposed if sold or leased.
- **Policy (P)** – where an implemented policy change will lead to direct reduction in emissions.
- **Organisation Change (OC)** – where a change in the organisation will affect the scope and emissions to be accounted for.
- **Offset** – the balance of in-year residual emissions to net zero following all planned actions.
- **CO** – the number of certified offsets.

The tables below demonstrate the planned actions, so far, the Council are undertaking to meet carbon neutrality under this plan. The tables will be updated following reviews of additional planned actions

2019-20 Baseline		20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
Electricity (Grid Emissions T&D)	T	-1.0	0	-1.12	-6.71	0	0	0	0	0	0
	HE	0	0	28	6.71	0	0	0	0	0	0
	BE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	AR	-12.0	0	0	-41	0	0	0	0	0	0

1086.3	Offset	662.86	668.86	564.93	(654.74)	(654.74)	(654.74)	(654.74)	(654.74)	(654.74)	(654.74)
	CO	0	0	0				13	64		
Outturn		662.86	668.86	564.93	668.86	668.86	668.86	641.86	590.74	591.86	591.86

2019-20 Baseline		20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
Business Miles 836.3	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	P	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Offset	307.03	369.36	458.2							

2019-20 Baseline		20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
Rail 21.5	P	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Offset	2.03	3.84	5.3							

2019-20 Baseline		20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
Water & Sewerage 187.9	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	AR	-9.8	-57.3	-130.7	-130.7	-130.7	-130.7	-130.7	-130.7	-130.7	-130.7
	Offset	167.53	249.04	119.7							

2019-20 Baseline		20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
Waste 3627.0	P	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	OC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Offset	4473.2	3346.8	3067.3							

Actions to embed Carbon Management in the Organisation

The following action are considered essential for ensuring carbon emissions are reduced over the period of the plan.

- Directorate carbon emission reduction targets
- Increase monitoring and baseline to expand scope
- Implementation of the key actions outlined in this plan
- Development of refined monitoring and reporting systems
- Core centralised team with external support to maintain direction and focus
- Annual reporting against annual budgets
- Reduction of annual budgets where previous year has been exceeded (1 year lag).

Extended Scope

The following emissions sources have been identified as being able to put in place monitoring and baseline to add to the scope at an appropriate time.

- Fugitive emissions – Planned baseline 2022-2023
- Hotel emissions baseline 2021-2022

2021-22 Baseline	22-23
Hotel 1.1	TBC

- Fleet – Baseline for 2022-2023

2022-23 Baseline
Fleet 298.6

Flights – Baseline for 2022-2023

2022-23
Baseline
Flights
2.1

Note flight data is incorporating Radiative Force (RF) data.

- Supply Chain planned baseline in 21-22 with reporting in the 22-23 extended scope. This will be in next years report following data cleansing
- Services supplied externally

Carbon Management Plan Financing

Parallel to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the Carbon Management Plan aims to reduce costs on an on-going basis. This needs to be set against a context of rapidly increasing fuel costs; decreasing resources available to local authorities; and that a high portion of savings being attributed to schools' devolved budgets instead of the Councils core budget.

This Plan will seek to maximise the use of existing resources including the existing planned maintenance programme, new capital investment, and schools devolved budgets. A strong proactive asset rationalisation programme will have a significant impact on the Council's own carbon footprint however it will serve only to shift emissions into the borough wide footprint.

It is the intention to address many of the financing gaps with innovation and partnering arrangements. Examples of this include utilising our estate to generate electricity and creating a further investment partnership with schools for the utilisation of renewable energy sources.

Corporate Funding

In order to support low-carbon projects and programmes, the Council's budget and capital programme includes provision for permanent revenue funding to enable the Council to support borough-wide decarbonisation.

The Council's capital programme totalling around £400m will leverage carbon reductions across the borough, as schemes will be required to evaluate their impacts, positive and negative on climate change.

The budget includes £7.5m of dedicated carbon reduction investment between 2020-2024, and £8m of funding for the LED street lighting programme. The dedicated capital funding will be used to support a range of priorities, including support for energy investment, energy efficiency, and offsetting residual emissions from Council activities. In addition to traditional value for money considerations, these investments will also be considered in terms of which offer the best carbon return on investment, to ensure that activities are appropriately prioritised.

Furthermore, there is not a requirement that this expenditure should only be used to fund 'invest to save' projects; funded projects may exclusively deliver carbon benefits. In this regard, elements of this capital expenditure may be seen as support for the maintenance and repair of the natural environment, in the same way that the Council invests to protect the value of other crucial assets, such as highways or facilities.

Salix Funding

Funded by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Salix has been working with local authorities in England for over ten years.

Salix is able to fund energy efficiency projects across local authority estates, with over 100 energy efficiency technologies supported, including boilers, combined heat and power, insulation, LED and lighting upgrades.

Cheshire West and Chester Council have been using Salix since 2010 for solar PV installations and street lighting conversion to LED. This funding ceased in loan form in April 2021. Remaining loans will be repaid.

Salix funding has subsequently been replaced by the Public Sector Decarbonisation Grant, a competitively applied for grant with criteria aimed at decarbonisation of heat. The Council have today been successful in 3 separate applications totaling £8.4m to support decarbonisation efforts. The effects of these should begin to be seen in the 2022-23 and 2023 to 2024 period respectively. The Council has made a further £2.5m bid which would be supported by up to £1.5M match funding from the capital reserves.

Monitoring and Annual Review

Systems to effectively monitor and demonstrate reductions have been selected for the current scope. However the Council will continue to develop effective methods for analysing and reporting, working with technology and policy as it develops.

Carbon emission management is not a static process. It has multiple feeds of data information, as such, it is recognised that the scope, emissions and targets may need to be adjusted over the lifetime of this document.

This Plan sets out a strategy based on all available information to direct urgent action towards reducing directly influenced and managed quantities of emissions.

The Carbon Management Plan is designed as a working document. The Plan, its effectiveness, and additional actions will be continuously reviewed by the Climate Emergency Governance Board and Climate Emergency Taskforce and updated with public reporting on an annual basis.

Any adjustments to the Scope, baseline, targets, additional or adjusted actions will be noted with explanation to the rationale.

Offsetting

The Council recognises that by 2030 there will be carbon emissions from its services even after following the extensive planned actions to reduce them throughout the life of this plan. These are known as residual emissions and will be offset by certified schemes. The certified schemes are schemes recognised, independently checked, are traceable to source and accepted as reducing quantified carbon emissions.

Following annual review, the Council will purchase offsets to the residual emissions remaining after accounting for all scoped emissions sources.

Examples include:

- Reforestation and tree planting
- Lowland peat restoration
- Gold Standard Carbon offsets

All offsets are to be demonstrated to be additional or accelerated and would not have taken place without the Council offsetting residual emissions.

It is acknowledged that Carbon offsets e.g., tree planting will not be able to begin to certify their emission offsets for several years following the planting. Despite adding significant tree cover, the Carbon benefit only begins to generate in the life of this plan but also sets the course for future plans and generations over the next 60 years, in-line with the Woodland Code certification body. Therefore, an indication is given in the plan of future offsets that have already begun (Carbon offsets set in motion). They will only be counted as offset at the point of certification, which is also indicated in the plan (Carbon offsets to be claimed).

Governance

Reduction of carbon dioxide emissions from the Council's services to achieve the target needs to be embedded throughout the organisation. There is a need for ownership of this plan to be the responsibility of all staff, it cannot be delivered by one team in isolation.

The success of the Carbon Management Plan will be the result of appropriate, organised and responsible programme governance aligned to existing and created structures to deliver the Climate Emergency agenda.

This framework will ensure that the Carbon Management Plan is effectively scoped, planned and managed. A robust monitoring system will be implemented and reported to the Council on at least an annual basis. This will ensure that the Carbon Management Plan continues to be managed effectively and in accordance with corporate standards.

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
BEIS	Government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.
Carbon Equivalent (CO ₂ e)	An estimate of how much global warming a given green-house gas may contribute, using carbon dioxide as the reference.
Carbon Management Plan	The Council's strategic document detailing actions required and timescales set for achieving reduced carbon emissions.
Carbon Neutral	Describes actions taken that result in no net release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, usually as a result of carbon offsetting.
Carbon Sequestering	Process by which carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere and stored in a solid or liquid state to mitigate against or help reverse global warming.
Climate Change	Global, long term shift in average weather patterns which remain in place for extended periods of time.
Climate Emergency	Recognition that human-induced excess GHG's in the earth's atmosphere are posing an existential threat to life.
Climate Emergency Declaration	Statement of Intent produced by the Council to address, with urgency, GHG emissions across the borough, setting targets to reach carbon neutrality
Climate Emergency Task Force	Cross-party working group set up to better understand, plan for and identify new opportunities and practical actions to tackle climate change across the borough.
Decarbonisation	To reduce the amount of carbon from a process, product, activity, service etc.
Energy Efficiency	Reducing the amount of energy used through better more efficient use of a product or service
EPC Rating	An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) provides an energy efficiency rating for a building, from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient). An EPC also provides information of the most cost effective ways to improve a building.
Electric Vehicle (EV)	Vehicles which operate fully or partially on electricity
Fugitive Emissions	Emissions e.g., Methane released from landfill sites and gases used in refrigeration.
Global warming	A slow and steady increase in the temperature of the earth and its atmosphere.
Green Energy	Otherwise referred to as renewable energy, and produced using renewable sources such as the sun, wind and wave technologies which are less polluting.
Green House Gas	A type of gas that absorbs and emits radiant energy. Most common GHG's are, carbon dioxide (CO ₂), water vapour (H ₂ O), ozone (O ₃), methane (CH ₄) and nitrous oxide (N ₂ O); all of which contribute to the greenhouse effect or warming of the planet.

IPCC	The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change is the United Nations Body responsible for communicating the science relating to climate change.
LED Lighting	Long lasting, energy efficient lighting.
Low Carbon Energy	Energy produced from renewable sources including the sun, wind, waves and nuclear.
Net Zero	The point at which emissions produced are equal to or less than emissions removed – usually by offsetting.
Offsetting	Act of compensating for emissions produced, for example tree planting or carbon capture and storage.
Solar PV	Photo voltaic panels used to generate electricity from the sun
Zero Carbon	Production of no carbon dioxide emissions or CO ₂ e

Appendix 4: Land Action Plan Summary:

Action (as in Land Action Plan)	Lead Team	Comments
1.1 Champion this 'Land Action Plan: for the climate and nature emergencies' and embed it in the broadest range of policies, strategies, plans, programmes, initiatives, decision making, and ongoing work across the Council and borough, not just those directly related to the environment.	Climate change	The plan was adopted by Council in March 2022 and informs decisions across the organisation where applicable.
1.2 Establish an ongoing dialogue and reporting between all Council teams, the climate change team and senior management on promoting and actioning the delivery of this Action Plan and the rest of the Climate Emergency Response Plan.	Climate change	There is ongoing liaison with team leaders on delivery of actions. Regular reports to the Climate Emergency Board and Annual Report to Council.
1.3 Identify and meet the skill gaps within the current and future workforce needed to deliver this Action Plan.	Climate change	Woodland Projects Delivery Officer was appointed end of August 2023 to enable the Council demonstrate leadership in woodland and habitat creation on CWAC and partners' land within the borough.
1.4 Review the Council's approach to business case development in order to take into account whole life costs, bringing together capital outlay, maintenance and carbon accounting.	Procurement	This is also a responsibility of the commissioning service and finance - procurement may be able to provide additional support in advising on bespoke TOM's for specific projects in respect of carbon reduction and review any opportunity to include as a quality weighted question if appropriate.

<p>1.5 Procurement of products and services must seek to minimise greenhouse gas emissions, store residual emissions (e.g. in timber products), ensure they are adapted to inevitable changes in climate, minimise nature depletion and contribute to nature recovery, and be sustainable and free from deforestation throughout the supply chain. Imported commodities must come from certified sustainable sources.</p>	<p>Procurement</p>	<p>Specifications are provided from the commissioning service, procurement can support with market analysis. Tender docs can include references to certain certification "or equivalent".</p>
<p>1.6 Use strategic regeneration programmes in Ellesmere Port, Northwich and Winsford, and Chester to act as exemplars, showcasing partnership working and community engagement to deliver multifunctional green infrastructure, with optimised climate change services.</p>	<p>Economic Growth</p>	<p>When designing and delivering regeneration programmes we are focused on our climate change ambitions. All projects take into consideration how our outputs can positively contribute to this policy area. An example of this would be Ellesmere Port LUF (Active Travel, Low Carbon Homes & Green Retrofit of EP Market) We are also actively working with Exeter University on the IDRIC- 'Net Zero Sense of Place' Project which investigate how stakeholders such as local authorities and economic partnerships in six industrial clusters are creating a 'net zero' sense of place with a distinct local identity, fostering innovation, attracting inward investment and recruiting skilled workers.</p> <p>As part of the Land Action Plan, we are looking to support the conversion of a 8ha former landfill site into a biodiversity lead amenity.</p> <p>The Local Industrial Decarbonisation Plan proposed bid will lead to the creation of a Mid-Cheshire Decarbonisation Business Group, which may feed into a wider CWAC/Sub-regional energy group.</p>

<p>1.7 Work with the Local Enterprise Partnership to develop, finalise and launch a Natural Capital Audit, Investment and Implementation Plan for Cheshire and Warrington, and target strategic interventions using this.</p>	<p>Total Environment</p>	<p>The Natural Capital Audit has been developed, finalised and published. This will be used and further developed within the statutory process of developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cheshire, so that opportunities to invest in nature's recovery are targeted and prioritised to where they may deliver additional benefits at a strategic level to help tackle climate change, benefit people and the economy</p>
<p>1.8 Review the Council's land holdings, including its farm estate, to explore the case for this land to contribute to the Council's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030, as well as helping adapt to climate change and nature recovery, including the potential to introduce a biodiversity net-gain commitment on this land.</p>	<p>Property, Cheshire Farms</p>	<p>The Climate & Total Environment Teams reviews are continuing to crystallise the potential for environmental gain on sites prior to disposal.</p>
<p>1.9 Engage with other public or public facing land holders to look at assets and how land is managed collectively to better tackle climate and nature emergencies. This could include health, defence, education, police, as well as Housing Associations, Parish and Town Councils, and large land holders.</p>	<p>Environmental Commissioning</p>	<p>The Yourstreets team are currently delivering year 3 of the wildflower strategy. In years 1 + 2 have created 15 acres of new wildflower mini meadows which is equivalent to nearly 15 full size football pitches. Year 3 will see one additional meadow created in each of the 45 wards.</p>

<p>1.10 Review the opportunity following the Local Plan Conversation to use updates to the Local Plan, if any, to strengthen existing green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain, and other policies in relation to this Action Plan; and ensure more expedient enforcement and implementation of policies.</p>	<p>Total Environment</p>	<p>At the moment there is no staff time to proactively develop stronger policies and enforcement in this area, other than in response to statutory guidance and legislation.</p>
<p>1.11 Engage with and support the Planning Team to share best practice and support ambitious net-zero, nature recovery, and climate adapted policy making and enforcement.</p>	<p>Total Environment</p>	<p>At the moment there is no staff time to proactively develop stronger policies and enforcement in this area, other than in response to statutory guidance and legislation.</p>
<p>1.12 Encourage and enable new or revised Neighbourhood Plans to incorporate climate change, nature recovery, and green infrastructure policies. This could include providing templates, exemplars, and other guidance or facilitation methods.</p>	<p>Planning</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Plan policies must be In general conformity with strategic policies in the Local Plan. More localised neighbourhood plans provide opportunities to build on policies in the Local Plan to address climate change. The Council helps to support groups to do this through comments on emerging plans, Community Energy Advice Note and links to external resources from the Centre for Sustainable Energy.</p>
<p>1.13 Review the Council's tree replacement policy and promote the value of urban trees to justify and secure resources for urban planting, taking into account the range of ecosystem services they provide across the borough.</p>	<p>Total Environment</p>	<p>Investment will be necessary to strengthen our tree replacement and enforcement policies (e.g. ward tree cover mapping, more monitoring and trees benefit studies) to promote retention, to help justify additional contributions from developers or through enforcement, where trees are lost+W14</p>

<p>1.14 Use nature based solutions to climate change where possible, in order to tackle the climate and nature emergencies together. Ensure that biodiversity is a consideration in the delivery of all actions. All interventions should also seek to: optimise other green infrastructure services through careful design and management, take into account other considerations (including landscape character, historic environment), make provisions for long term management, involve appropriate partners including local communities in decision making and delivery.</p>	<p>Total Environment</p>	<p>Application made to the Climate Emergency Fund and if successful will enable working with landowners, with an effort made to target dairy farms to deliver 5km of new hedgerows throughout the borough for their carbon, landscape, wildlife and animal welfare benefits. Grants would be made available to plant new hedges and potentially to enter into longer agreements with some landowners (under BNG) for new hedgerows to be laid 10 years after they have been newly planted. New Community volunteers (citizen science) will be recruited to undertake Hedgerow Health surveys, trained by People's Trust for Endangered Species and using a hedgerow health app. These volunteers would be matched with interested landowners to map and assess hedgerow health and make suggestions for significant reinstatement of historic hedgerows or new hedges that may benefit animal husbandry. The action would demonstrate our willingness to work to find a suite of opportunities to help the dairy industry migrate to becoming more sustainable.</p>
<p>1.15 Proactively engage, communicate, and support the wider community and businesses to raise awareness, educate, elicit ideas and expertise, co-create, encourage and support delivery of actions, and in some cases explain why the actions taken are needed. This will include volunteering and community action (e.g. through Friends of Groups, community groups, and charities), meaningful engagement with disadvantaged and underrepresented sections of society, and the use of citizen science or participatory research where appropriate.</p>	<p>Communications</p>	<p>Timely communications releases through the Council platforms. Residents are consulted. Responses are provided to comments and questions on matters affecting communities. Specific audiences are targeted where applicable.</p>
<p>1.16 Collect and regularly update GIS data on urban and rural green infrastructure, including quantity, types, functions,</p>	<p>Mersey Forest</p>	<p>Only use PSGA or open source data that is always updated by partners.</p>

and where it is needed for different socio-economic and environmental reasons.		
1.18 Monitor, review and report on delivery of actions and their effectiveness via the reporting mechanism of the Climate Emergency Response Plan, which provides an annual report to Council, and use this information to refine the Plan.	Climate Change	The plan was implemented in March 2022. Monitoring, reviewing and reporting being carried out as part of Climate Emergency Response Plan Annual Report to the Council. This process is important to refine the Land Action Plan and work on actions which have slipped
2.1 Encourage dietary change in line with national recommendations to free up land for habitat creation and other uses by reducing intake of carbon intensive foods such as beef, lamb and dairy. Encourage locally sourced (or British), seasonal agricultural produce, including meat and dairy, including through public procurement.	Communications	Climate Change Team to work with Nutrition colleagues and liaise with schools to develop menus. To liaise with schools food procurement to source local British seasonal produce where possible.
2.2 Safeguard the 'best and most versatile' agricultural land (grades 2 and 3a) for food production.	Planning	STRAT 1 and other Local Plan policies seek to avoid the loss of high grade agricultural land. Planning decisions take account of BMV land in decision making.
2.3 Keep up to date with advice and best practice and encourage low carbon/methane farming practices, regenerative farming, and agricultural practices adapted to a changing climate, and optimise the delivery of other services. According to the Climate Change Committee, cost effective mitigation measures include: biological nitrogen fixation with grass-legume mixtures, livestock breeding, increased milking frequency, high sugar content grasses, anaerobic digestion of manure, better health planning for livestock, precision feeding, high starch diet for dairy cattle, covering slurry with impermeable plastic, nitrate and 3NOP as feed additives, catch/cover crops. Adaptation practices include farm water management to reduce flooding and provide for droughts,	Climate Change	Ongoing engagement with farming organisations, NFU and CLA to encourage farmer to farmer exchange and sharing best practice on low carbon/sustainable farming and how to implement DEFRA's Code of Good Agricultural Practice for protecting water, soil and air.

<p>changing crop types, field and hedgerow trees and copses to provide shade for livestock.</p>		
<p>2.4 Advocate livestock are not fed on soy linked to rainforest destruction.</p>	<p>Climate Change</p>	<p>The Council regularly engages with agricultural stakeholders to seek their views. The NFU and the wider UK supply chain are strongly opposed to illegal deforestation and the NFU supports the UK Soy Manifesto. This is a collective industry commitment to ensure all physical shipments of soya to the UK are deforestation and conversion free by 2025. British farmers recognise the importance of moving towards more sustainable and resilient sources of soya. 65% of soya imported into the UK is already covered by a sustainability certification scheme or sourced from the USA, Canada, and Europe which is low risk. However, the remaining 35% is stubbornly difficult to certify because some countries don't allow for segmentation of product and their size means our market is not big enough to impose change. This is why the NFU are looking to collaborate with EU and global businesses and Governments to work collectively to meet our 2025 targets and would like to see more action from the government through trade and diplomacy to support these aims.</p>

		Alongside improving the sustainability of soya supply, poultry farmers are also integrating alternative protein sources into their systems. These include rapeseed, pea, or bean blends and some farmers are feeding live insects to their birds and therefore support ongoing research into the use of innovative protein sources for poultry feed.
2.5 Review the Council's approach to supporting allotment and community growing.	Total Environment	Successful bid to UKSPF for a Feasibility Study relating to community garden & growing. (Not an Allotment Strategy). Consultant appointed September 2023. Looking for an opportunity to create new allotment provision is included within this piece of work. An Action Plan will draw together all findings including where new opportunities are for creating new community gardening or growing initiatives for a range of spaces (i.e. community orchards, community gardens, containerised growing spaces or other types not specified). The aim is to then seek further funding for a delivery / implementation phase for a number of priority projects identified within the Action Plan.
2.6 Use new and re-development to encourage and incorporate urban food production, through the creation of allotments, community farms and gardens, inclusion of orchards, fruit trees and bushes into urban design, and including 'meanwhile' and temporary uses of land.	Total Environment	See comments in 2.5 plus, we are also working with 5 parish councils this autumn to create small scale community orchards within existing open spaces or allotment sites. These will be managed by the parish councils going forward. To support those agencies a pruning workshop for volunteers will be run in January to help them with maintaining the orchards and maximising yields. Last year we planted 4 community orchards and ran 2 workshops

2.7 Encourage community and home food growing, through practical work and awareness raising programmes, including in schools, faith-based land, allotments, orchards, and parks.	Total Environment	As per 2.5 this will link into the Feasibility Study currently underway. Part of the work includes developing a garden share scheme. This would be helpful for those areas with no or limited opportunities for creating likes of orchards, allotments, community gardens or other growing opportunities.
3.1 Manage land to optimise the carbon stored in soils and vegetation (e.g. agricultural practices to increase soil carbon stores, regenerative farming, increased tree and woodland establishment, hedgerows, agroforestry (both silvoarable and silvopastoral), wetland, peatland and woodland management).	Climate Change	Continue to promote farming practices which optimise carbon storage in soils including minimum tillage, cover cropping, and agroforestry/hedgerows and woodland which enhance productivity of grassland and improves livestock and animal welfare.
3.2 At least double the cover of woodland, as well as trees outside of woodlands, across the borough by 2045, through natural regeneration and planting, as appropriate. Planting will be a mix of broadleaf and conifer, to provide a range of services and benefits, adhering to UK Forestry Standards and a "right tree, right place" approach.	The Mersey Forest	This action is ongoing as part of the delivery of the trees for climate programme.
3.3 To continue to be the accountable body, programme managers, funding recipient and distributor for the Trees for Climate national programme, ensuring the effective management of this nationwide programme.	The Mersey Forest	This action is ongoing.
3.4 Support the ongoing delivery of The Mersey Forest Plan.	Mersey Forest	CWAC Woodland Creation Projects Delivery Officer working with Mersey Forest colleagues to help deliver the MF plan in Cheshire West

<p>3.5 Review the existing peat habitats and soils within west Cheshire, in order to develop appropriate retention and restoration targets. This could be in line with national recommendations by the Climate Change Committee to restore at least 25 per cent of lowland peat by 2050 (or 50 per cent under a higher level of ambition), while allowing food production to continue on the most productive land.</p>	<p>Total Environment</p>	<p>Cheshire Wildlife Trust have mapped peat resource to develop appropriate planning policy to protect peat and provide a plan of sites with opportunities to invest in peat restoration for carbon storage and/or encourage associated habitat restoration in response to the LNRS.</p>
<p>3.6 Review procurement processes to confirm that contracts are peat-free, and take corrective action where necessary.</p>	<p>Procurement</p>	<p>The Procurement service implement this requirement as part of business as usual.</p>
<p>4.1 Review potential to expand growing of bioenergy crops (e.g. short rotation coppice, miscanthus, or other crops) for use with carbon capture and storage in appropriate locations, including on temporary/meanwhile land to provide some income. Encourage bioenergy with carbon capture and storage facilities in the borough to source their feedstock from within west Cheshire.</p>	<p>Climate Change</p>	<p>Scoping the potential to expand bioenergy crop production and supporting existing growers with local marketing opportunities to enhance viability of growing bioenergy crops. If Miscanthus production proves to be economically viable, farmers will be encouraged to grow at scale especially on marginal areas on farms. Working with industry players on developing carbon capture and storage (BECCS) and this is linked with ongoing AD work.</p>
<p>4.2 Encourage low-carbon energy production from anaerobic digestion of livestock manure. Support the development of the bioenergy with carbon capture and storage sector in partnership with the Local Enterprise Partnership.</p>	<p>Climate Change</p>	<p>Continue to support AD and BECCS initiatives within the borough and region. The Grosvenor AD project is on course. The LEP carried out the feasibility on the Cheshire wide AD with potential to expand across the borough and county.</p>

<p>4.3 Support other renewable energy generation from the land, e.g. photovoltaics, wind.</p>	<p>Climate change</p>	<p>Exploration of Council owned land is underway and specific sites targeted for further exploration. Grid constraints present a challenge for sizable schemes. Industrial partners are exploring their own scheme which the Council is supporting and is covered in the industrial section. However significant additional renewable generation will be required to address local targets.</p>
<p>4.4 Keep up to date with potential new ways of generating energy, such as the potential for ground source and water source renewable heat generation in urban green spaces.</p>	<p>Climate change</p>	<p>Reviews of the shallow Geothermal (down to 4km subsurface) have been undertaken and specific sites for down to 8km boreholes) Cheshire west has good potential for shallow geothermal for localised use, however previous studies have shown as cost prohibitive. Water source has also been studied from Chester. Canal and renewed interest from partners is currently being explored. Technological advancement is constantly under review for opportunities for the estate and borough.</p>
<p>5.1 Bring under and unmanaged rural and urban trees and woodlands into management for the range of services they can provide, and to retain these for longer term.</p>	<p>The Mersey Forest</p>	<p>This action is ongoing.</p>
<p>5.2 Review the potential to make use of timber and natural materials in construction, including in public buildings, and ensure that green infrastructure (e.g. trees, green roofs, and Sustainable Drainage Systems where appropriate) is incorporated to make it well adapted to projected climate change.</p>	<p>Planning</p>	<p>Policy DM4 of the Local Plan expects all development to achieve the highest levels of energy and water efficiency and supports innovative sustainable design solutions. Sustainable design features include green roofs and walls; SUDS and sustainable sourcing of materials. This policy may be updated as part of</p>

		changes to the Local Plan in the context of national policy.
5.3 Develop public procurement policies, as well as Council Funds, Grants and Capital programmes, that enhance market opportunities for local sustainable materials.	Procurement	Teams are implementing social value principles when purchasing goods and services.
5.4 Support innovation and entrepreneurship in developing new products and market opportunities from timber and other natural low carbon alternatives to energy intensive materials, ensuring that any value added processing is carried out locally.	Economic Growth	We are currently supporting businesses within Cheshire West to start up, grow, innovate, and decarbonise using UK Shared Prosperity Funds. This project launched in July 2023 and will end in March 2024. We will be able to provide a progress report at the end of the programme. We always promote the use of using local business suppliers and our Let's Talk Business website has created access to a local business directory. We also provide access to the Go4Growth online support for micro or small business, third sector or voluntary enterprise to make them public sector supplier ready. This includes Go4Growth's new and free carbon net zero action plan. This is an easy-to-use planning tool which will help local businesses plan and reduce carbon emissions and provide evidence admissible in public sector bids.
6.1 Create and green active travel routes to make them more accessible, safe, attractive and comfortable for walking, cycling and wheeling. Existing green corridors can be used (e.g. rivers, canals, disused railway lines, public rights of way) as well as tree lined streets.	Transport	The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan aims to deliver where good quality design would include healthy streets principles, including street trees. The networks set out in the LCWIP are within more densely populated urban areas.

		However the creation of green corridors as per the activities in the supplementary wording would require delivery by other Council teams for example Total Environment, and landowners.
6.2 Explore and remove barriers to the use of public green spaces, both physical and non-physical.	Environmental Commissioning, Total Environment	The Council will continue to explore options for the delivery of this intention.
7.1 Protect 30 per cent of land in west Cheshire for nature by 2030 (in line with national and international commitments), including the Council's own land holdings, in-line with the Wildflower and Grasslands Strategy. As well as more land for nature, we also need to increase the size of habitats where possible, improve their management so that they are in more favourable conditions and take into account climate change impacts, and link these sites with nature-enhancing land uses into a more coherent Nature Recovery Network.	Total Environment, Environmental Commissioning	We've created another 12ha of Biodiversity Net Gain habitats this year and are working with the Parks & Countryside Service, plus Cheshire Farms to identify and plan further habitat improvement or creation. We also continue to create and restore ponds across the borough through the Natural England's District Licencing Scheme. Works continue to expand sites in our urban areas as part of the Wildflower & Grasslands Strategy. We are also an active partner in the Nature Recovery Corridor Project for Chester & Ellesmere Port which aims to help improve habitats and people's contact and stewardship of nature, led by Chester Zoo, delivering in 2025.
7.2 We will work with the Local Nature Partnership and other partners to develop a Nature Recovery Strategy for Cheshire, to aid recovery of key habitats and species.	Total Environment	Role of CW&C confirmed as 'responsible authority' and LNRS Programme Officer recruited. Initial Comms and public consultation planned Dec/Jan 23/24.
7.3 Identify where there may be substantial barriers to species dispersal, such as major roads, and explore the potential to create green bridges to allow for species migration.	Total Environment	Undertaken in respect of highway and other infrastructure on a scheme by scheme basis.

<p>7.4 Planning should continue to identify and protect ecological networks, including internationally important sites, sites of special scientific interest, Local Wildlife Sites, ancient woodlands, other priority habitats and features, and areas for restoration.</p>	<p>Planning</p>	<p>Planning is continuing to meet this action through the application of policies in the Local Plan that identify ecological networks and protect nationally and locally important sites. Additional guidance note published on Biodiversity Net Gain and implementation of Local Plan policies ENV4 and DM44</p>
<p>7.5 Invest in Council skills and ability to act as lead for Biodiversity Net Gain investment.</p>	<p>Total Environment</p>	<p>More training undertaken to prepare for BNG, and further recruitment of right skills is required as this area of work expands. Awaiting national Government legislation clarification and implementation to determine optimum process going forwards, with LNRS to be fully developed over the next eighteen months.</p>
<p>7.6 Reduce the frequency of mowing, collect cuttings, and reduce use of pesticides and weedkillers on Council owned land, in line with the Wildflower and Grasslands Strategy.</p>	<p>Environmental Commissioning</p>	<p>We are now moving into year 3 of the wildflower scheme. in 2022 funding helped create 8548.829m² of wildflower beds throughout. As part of the wildflower strategy, more areas long grass are being left across strategic positions in the borough.</p>
<p>7.7 Encourage all land to be managed to create a more permeable landscape and reduce pressure on wildlife.</p>	<p>Environmental Commissioning</p>	<p>Chester zoo had a successful bid for phase 2 of the networks for nature, and we are currently working with them to identify 5 urban parks to increase biodiversity by changes to land management.</p>
<p>7.8 Encourage low carbon and wildlife friendly gardening practices, that take into consideration potential impacts of climate change.</p>	<p>Environmental Commissioning</p>	<p>Your Streets are continuing to educate members of the public at roadshows. Chester Zoo and the Your Streets team are presenting a best practice presentation at the September APSE seminar (Association of Public Service Excellence) which is attended by councils from across the UK.</p>

8.1 Review the potential to target areas to protect existing and create new green infrastructure, and increase tree cover (including trees which will have large mature canopies) to provide shade and cooling.	Total Environment	Work has continued to consider update to tree replacement policy, with associated targeting of replacement trees to wards with poor coverage, with a weighting to help positively contribute towards health, economic and social inequalities through greater tree cover. This is dependent on additional resource.
8.2 Explore the potential to use green space and building alignment to incorporate cool air flows into new developments, and the wider settlement.	Total Environment	Design support and guidance will be needed to progress this action. Time and resources will be required to progress.
9.1 Implement the Local Plan policies requiring Sustainable Drainage Systems (for water quantity, quality, amenity, and biodiversity), where appropriate, in new developments and restructuring.	Planning	Local Plan Policy DM41 requires major development to incorporate SUDS.
9.2 Target areas to retrofit Sustainable Drainage Systems (for water quantity, quality, amenity, and biodiversity), using existing or creating new green infrastructure, subject to funding.	Planning	Local Plan Policy DM41 requires major development to incorporate SUDS.
9.3 Divert rainwater falling on properties (including roofs, drives, patios, yards etc) away from public sewers using Sustainable Drainage System techniques such as soakaways, or diverting it to water courses where possible (prior permission required from the Environment Agency or Canal and River Trust).	Planning	Local Plan Policy DM41 requires major development to incorporate SUDS.
9.4 In line with Local Plan policy, avoid new developments in areas at risk of flooding, using these areas as open space, with provision for temporary water storage.	Planning	2022-2023 no applications were recorded as being approved contrary to Environment Agency Advice.
9.5 We will identify where natural flood management approaches can be used through an opportunity mapping exercise.	Mersey Forest	NFM in CWAC yet to start with plans to implement ward wide interventions in specific localities.

9.6 Encourage and use natural flood management within river catchments to help manage riverine flooding and soil erosion.	The Mersey Forest	NFM in CWAC yet to start with plans to implement ward wide interventions in specific localities.
9.7 Identify and prioritise river stretches for rehabilitation and restoration (e.g. reconnecting rivers to their floodplains).	Total Environment, with The Mersey Forest	Same position as 2022, but extensive scheme fully planned and designed for Chester Wetlands delivery in 2025, subject to sufficient funding for delivery and maintenance. Further development of opportunities with Weaver & Gowy Catchment partnerships which should feed into LNRS priority areas for investment.
9.8 Ensure a sustainable water supply for vegetation in times of water stress in order to maintain its evaporative cooling function.	Environmental Commissioning	Reviewing potential S106 and CIL for allotment watering systems
10.1 To embed an understanding of the interactions between climate change, visitor behaviour and environmental capacity into any tourism-oriented policy.	Environmental Commissioning	Sustainability conference programme for visitor economy businesses in 2022/2023 and a priority theme for emerging Local Visitor Economy Partnership as identified in their Growth Plan and will a consideration of the new Destination Management Plan in 2024. Cheshire Day activity & workshops highlighted importance of area's greenspaces and landscapes to what people think about Cheshire.
10.2 Carefully manage adverse impacts of climate change and visitor pressure on valuable landscapes.	Economic growth	Sandstone Ridge shortlisted for AONB designation. Evidence gathering underway to support process. Development of Mid Cheshire Waterways Strategy and having Chester Waterways Strategy contributes to managing adverse effects of visitor pressures whilst maximising the opportunities - for Chester, the One City Plan includes actions A6 & A8 look to increase blue green infrastructure, connecting natural & greenspaces for communities & wildlife.

<p>10.3 Create outdoor tourism resources in areas with a high capacity to accommodate visitors, linking in to public right of way network.</p>	<p>Economic growth</p>	<p>Use of outdoor spaces for events continues to grow, including at Delamere, National Waterways Museum, Bolesworth and Chester Zoo and town & city centres. Deans Field and Grosvenor Park in Chester continue to offer outdoor cinema and theatre; Anderton Boat Lift, Northwich secured first phase funding from NHLF for lift repair and visitor facilities improvement programme, Burton Mere Wetlands nature reserve near Neston awarded 'Welcome Accolade' . Chester Zoo hosts the Nature Recovery Corridor Project, rewilding 10 miles of land between Chester & Ellesmere Port; LUF funding secured as part of Ellesmere Port town centre transformation plans to improve pedestrian and cycle links and secure bike storage linking railway station to town centre.</p>
<p>10.4 Promote natural visitor destinations.</p>	<p>Economic growth</p>	<p>Visitor marketing campaigns delivered through Marketing Cheshire, e.g. 'Escape the Everyday' promote natural visitor destinations, and as the DMO work with attractions such as Delamere, Canal & River Trust amongst others to promote natural visitor destinations across Cheshire & Warrington and with the Destination Cheshire network members.</p>
<p>10.5 Encourage sustainable travel to and around natural tourism resources.</p>	<p>Economic Growth</p>	<p>Visitor marketing campaigns delivered through Marketing Cheshire, e.g. 'Escape the Everyday' promote natural visitor destinations, and as the DMO work with attractions such as Delamere, Canal & River Trust amongst others to promote natural visitor destinations across Cheshire & Warrington and with the Destination Cheshire network members.</p>
<p>10.6 Explore the use of innovative funding measures, such as visitor payback schemes, in order to increase investment in landscape management.</p>	<p>Economic growth</p>	<p>Voluntary donation points introduced on City Walls to help fund improvements to heritage assets; new partnership enables Chester Cathedral specialist</p>

		heritage skills team to also work on Chester's historic City Walls. Future Business Improvement District models being considered with visitor economy operators.
10.7 In areas where there is high visitor pressure, ensure that footpaths and public rights of way are maintained to reduce erosion. Tourism policy should recognise the reliance that the visitor economy has on key landscapes and ensure that their use as a visitor resource is sustainable.	Environmental Commissioning	Pathway mapping on GIS is underway. Continuing to identify funding via s106 and CIL for major projects in parks that would see rejuvenation/ replacement of paths.