



Report to Business and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date: 16th April 2024
Key Decision: Yes
Public/Private: Public
Portfolio: Councillor Bob Kelly, Cumberland Policy and Regulatory Services
Directorate: Darren Crossley, Place, Sustainable Growth & Transport
Lead Officers: Chloe Tringham, Assistant Director for Climate and Waste
Phil Duerdin, Corporate Decarbonisation Manager

Title: Draft Carbon and Energy Management Plan

Summary:

To receive a working draft of Cumberland Council's first Carbon and Energy Management Plan and to note, discuss and comment on the Plan.

This Plan sets out how the Council (we) will reduce the energy and carbon emissions of our services and operations and establish a route to Net Zero. The Plan is intended to be agile and will be subject to regular updates, thus remaining current and adapting to changes in technology, understanding and legislation. This first release covers the 2024-2027 period.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee:

- Receive and note a working draft of Cumberland Council's first Carbon and Energy Management Plan (summary report below and Appendix B for full working draft).
- Recognise the Plan's position in terms of the overarching Climate and Nature Strategy (refer to Appendix A), and its necessary integration into cross-cutting service plans.
- To review, discuss and comment on the Plan in relation to:
 - the climate emergency and the need to mitigate the organisation's carbon emissions.
 - the mitigation proposals identified within the energy and carbon reduction strategies.
 - the significance of the plan as whole.

Tracking

Executive:	xx June 2024
Scrutiny:	16 April 2024
Council:	Not applicable

1 The (Draft) Carbon and Energy Management Plan

Background

- 1.1 When the four previous councils came together to form Cumberland Council, there was a need to amalgamate and strengthen any existing plans, policies and strategies to suit the new authority. This was certainly the case for climate and the environment.
- 1.2 From within the Climate & Waste service an overarching Climate and Nature Strategy is being finalised, below which will sit two management plans – Biodiversity Management Plan and the Carbon and Energy Management Plan. This is further illustrated in Appendix A.
- 1.3 What follows, for the benefit of the committee, is a comprehensive summary of the developing Carbon and Energy Management Plan. The full working draft of the plan is also attached, and can be found in Appendix B.

Climate Change

- 1.4 There can be no doubt that global warming and climate change are drastically and detrimentally affecting the world in which we live. At any given time, there is visible evidence of the impact that the warming effect of greenhouse gas emissions is having on our planet. Global air and sea temperatures are reaching record highs; sea levels are rising; storms and extreme weather events are more frequent and severe; we see widespread flooding in some areas and catastrophic drought in others; our polar ice caps are in decline; and the challenges to our natural world continue to grow.
- 1.5 There is growing consensus that we are now at a tipping point, the point at which some of the damage caused may be irreversible. We need to push harder and faster towards reducing the impact we are having on the planet.
- 1.6 By slowing our rate of consumption and reducing energy use and wastage, we can lower carbon emissions. Minimising and mitigating carbon emissions and ultimately reaching Net Zero emissions will have a major impact on halting global warming and climate change.

Strategy and Management Plan

- 1.7 The Council's overarching Climate and Nature Strategy sets out how we will tackle the climate emergency and build environmental resilience across the whole Council area. The Strategy is positioned above two management plans, one for Biodiversity and this one for Carbon and Energy.
- 1.8 This Carbon and Energy Management Plan forms part of the overarching Climate and Nature Strategy and focuses on reducing the energy and carbon emissions of our Council assets, services and supply chain. It is through this Plan that we will set our Council's targets for emission reduction and ultimately the route to Net Zero.

Carbon Accounting

- 1.9 In order to gauge our current emissions and have a known starting point from which to measure progress we have calculated the Council's carbon 'Baseline'. The financial year 2023/24 was selected for the baseline, the Council's inaugural year. A significant proportion of this inventory was developed using financial budgets for the baseline year, alongside consumption figures for elements such as vehicle fuels, domestic gas and electricity use in our buildings. The baseline figures will be updated following the 2023/24 budget outturn report.
- 1.10 The total emissions forecasted for the year are 140,316 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e).
- 1.11 Of the total emissions calculated, 91% are attributable to the Scope 3 GHG emissions, reflecting the magnitude of the services provided by the Council's supply chain. The remaining emissions fall into Scope 1 (primarily gas and fuel consumption) at 6%, and Scope 2 (primarily electricity consumption) at 3%.

Targets

- 1.12 We will set interim targets for the decarbonisation of our services in line with the UK Carbon Budget 5-yearly accounting cycles, our first interim targets will be for 2023-2027.
- 1.13 By March 2027 we will reduce our GHG emissions of scope 1 and scope 2 by 18% from the baseline year.
- 1.14 By March 2027 we will reduce our GHG emissions across all scopes (1,2 and 3) by 2% from the baseline year.

- 1.15 Emissions reduction targets for the subsequent accounting cycles will be set in the autumn of the final year of the current cycle. This allows a measured and realistic target to be set which accounts for the latest developments and advances in this ever-changing world.
- 1.16 Some of the proposed decarbonisation measures offer increased efficiencies and opportunities to make energy savings. The resulting financial savings will be monitored but no specific savings targets have been set at this time.

Management and Mitigation

- 1.17 The Councils approach to energy savings and carbon reduction follows the most significant emissions sources:
- Buildings - including offices, care homes and corporate.
 - Transport - including staff travel and fuel use in fleet vehicles.
 - Supply chain - including emissions from Procurement and Capital Programme (including highways, suppliers and external care suppliers).

Buildings

- 1.18 By targeting specific elements within our buildings we can establish emission reduction pathways. Buildings are the largest generator of Scope 1 and 2 emissions for the Council. This includes both the energy used by the building systems, such as lighting and heating, as well as the plant, equipment, and office systems used by the occupants.
- 1.19 To consume less, a review of the Council's existing assets will be undertaken, assessing whether property is appropriate for its intended use in terms of suitability, sufficiency, condition, health & safety, cost and environmental impact. The Council may improve, replace or release property that is no longer considered appropriate and in doing so increase efficiencies and lower emissions.
- 1.20 For all buildings the measures identified to reduce emissions follow a hierarchy of activities and include behaviour change, building fabric improvements and energy reduction measures which will involve prudent capital investment and invest-to-save initiatives.
- 1.21 Reduction measures include the upgrading of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems switching from fossil fuel power to electrically powered alternatives, and a programme to replace the existing lighting with low energy LEDs, and the electrification of our domestic hot water (DHW) generation systems.

- 1.22 Where appropriate local solar PV installations and small-scale wind generation may be installed on or around buildings, generating energy at point of use.
- 1.23 The management of emissions from buildings will be a driver for the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans.

Transport

- 1.24 Transport will follow two principal strategies for the management of its GHG emissions. Firstly, improve management and staff training to ensure that the existing plant and equipment is being used efficiently. This will include initiatives to support active travel such as cycling and walking.
- 1.25 Secondly, where possible, implement alternative fuelled vehicles such as electric cars and vans (EVs), and adapt to low carbon fuel replacements such as HVO (a biofuel alternative) for the larger diesel fuelled vehicles. Infrastructure upgrades supporting the increased use of electric vehicles, and alternative fuels will also be necessary. Emerging and developing opportunities such as 'green' hydrogen will also be considered.
- 1.26 The management of emissions from transport and plant will be a driver for the Fleet Strategy.

Supply Chain

- 1.27 The Council's supply chain includes the purchases and contracts required for the operation and delivery of our services, in particular delivery of the capital programme (including highways and place based contracts), and the operation of care services.
- 1.28 The supply chain accounts for approximately 127,000 tCO₂e per annum and covers the greatest proportion of Council emissions.
- 1.29 The strategy recognises that the emissions associated with the delivery of these services are outside of the direct control of the Council but through active engagement and encouragement with the service providers, improvements in emissions will be delivered.
- 1.30 The strategy for improvements in this area will be developed in 2024/25 and will be a driver for our approach to procurement and commissioning.

Residual Emissions

- 1.31 Residual emissions are those left after the reduction measures have been implemented or accounted for. The Council will set out a plan for the management of residual emissions in 2024/25.
- 1.32 This plan will include options such as: carbon offsetting through initiatives on Council land or in partnership through an approved code (Sequestration); utilising insetting through development of renewable energy on Council land or in partnership; identifying opportunities for Carbon Capture and Storage; and reacting to measured opportunities in emerging carbon reduction technologies.

Route to Net Zero

- 1.33 The Council is a partner in the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership (ZCCP). The UK has a target of net zero by 2050 but the ZCCP has acknowledged that this isn't going to be fast enough to limit warming to safe levels so has risen to the challenge to accelerate its contribution to reducing greenhouse gases with a commitment to be a net zero county by 2037.
- 1.34 We will work with the ZCCP and others to influence national decision making to accelerate green growth in Cumbria, recognising the partnership target of a carbon neutral county by 2037.
- 1.35 The Council aims to set out its own route to Net Zero in 2026 as it sets the emissions reduction targets for the next carbon accounting period. By affording this new council the time for further transformation and reorganisation, to develop a medium term financial plan, and to embed the suite of strategies and plans in development, we will be better able to set realistically ambitious net zero plans.

Delivery

- 1.36 Only 3% of greenhouse gas emissions in the Cumberland area are attributed to the Public Sector. However, it is widely understood that a local authority's place-shaping powers and actions potentially influence around a third of UK emissions (principally in the buildings, transport, waste and land-use sectors).
- 1.37 Delivery of this strategy will be through a combination of direct control measures and our ability to influence.

Spheres	Example
Direct Control	Council's Assets and Fleet; Operations; Workforce.

Indirect Control	Procurement and commissioning. Development Control; Local Plan; Transport Planning; Waste strategy.
Influence	Town and Parish Councils; Place and thematic partnerships. Communications and engagement; consultation on national policy.

1.38 The climate and environmental emergency will be at the forefront of our decision making and policy development. We will encourage others to do the same and lead by example in using resources sustainably, looking for low carbon or carbon neutral alternatives in what we buy and how we work. Combining to make a fair and just transition to a more sustainable Council and Cumberland.

2 Implications

2.1 As a council we must lead by example and give confidence to our communities that we are taking climate change seriously and actively addressing our own contributions towards it. We have an opportunity to act now and implement mitigation measures that reduce the level of adaption required later.

2.2 We must recognise and deliver on the need for carbon and energy management, embedding sustainability and efficiencies measures across our services plans. The management plan provides the necessary guidance for our services to implement change.

2.3 In doing so there may be service area cost implications and a need to invest. Wherever possible this investment will be on a spend-to-save basis delivering savings through higher efficiencies, energy generation, and also carbon savings through greener alternatives.

2.4 By continuing and building on our engagement with communities with a focus on energy and carbon we can help inform and motivate community action towards more sustainable homes, greener travel and the co-benefits of nature based interventions.

3 Contribution to the Cumberland Plan Priorities

3.1 Carbon and energy management is fundamental to our tackling of Environmental Resilience and the Climate Emergency. It is a key area of focus, and one that heavily impacts and influences our ability to deliver on the other three (excellent public services, addressing inequalities, local economies for local people). A considered and robust plan to mitigate the effects of climate change has direct impact upon improving the Health and Wellbeing of our communities.

3.2 This Management Plan and the work it will promote cuts across many of our fundamental Council Plan priorities, including: Sustainability; Driving Change; Collaborative Working; Local First; and Listening, Involving and Engaging. Successful deployment and integration of the Management Plan will use these priorities to bring about a collaborative, sustainable and deliverable approach, that delivers for Cumberland.

4 Relevant Risks

4.1 The risks associated with continuing without robust strategy and management plans in place include:

- inaction or prolonged deliberation vs leading by example
- continued global warming resulting in climate change
- climate change impact upon local communities
- inaction will hamper the contribution to Council Plan Priorities
- rising energy costs causing budget pressures
- reputational damage of not addressing climate change
- mitigate now to limit cost and impact of adaption later
- potential to meet the net zero 2050 mandate

4.2 The relevant risks are managed through Risk Management and Framework as follows:

- Overarching Corporate Risk for Climate Change
- Directorate and Service Risk Registers
- Programme and project risks through the Programme Management Office

4.3 The development of the overarching strategy and this plan and related plans has highlighted a number of opportunities for greater cross-sector collaboration on risk and opportunities, especially where there are existing interdependencies. We will need to take an equal reporting focus on mitigation (Net Zero, 1.5°C), adaption (2°C), and protecting and enhancing nature.

5 Consultation / Engagement

5.1 Consultation has been focussed on the Climate and Nature Strategy to help develop and test the proposals and measures. The Community Engagement Framework is being used to guide our approach to engagement and consultation. It is through improved community participation that we can build trust and understanding, which can help better shape the delivery of the strategy and improve decision-making.

5.2 The **Climate and Nature Advisory Group**, brings together elected Members, Executive Portfolio Holders and internal officers to provide advice to the Executive on policies and initiatives. Co-opted members of the group also bring their knowledge of nature and climate issues to assist this work. It has been meeting since August 2023

as a forum for discussing the development of the strategy and related programmes. It now has a forward plan of agenda items for future meetings which will help the further development of the strategy.

- 5.3 The content on the **website for climate and nature** will be reviewed and updates prepared as the strategy and plans are finalised.
- 5.4 Since Vesting Day we have been publishing an **Environment and Climate Newsletter** with the goal of growing the subscribers issue by issue. In March 2024 we published our fourth issue of the newsletter which reached 14,823 recipients. We will continue to promote the newsletter as our main source of information on the development and delivery of the strategy, plans and programmes.
- 5.5 As part of the consultation on the draft strategy we will be **publishing an online survey** which sets out the sections of the strategy and plans with related links and information.
- 5.6 Cumberland has over 14 active **local groups** work on climate and nature. Many of these groups are part of the Cumbria Sustainability Network, supported through the Zero Carbon Cumbria Programme. We will be engaging with these groups during the consultation on the strategy to brief them on the draft and seek their views. We will take this opportunity to connect these groups to their local **Community Network** and **Community Panel**.
- 5.7 We have been developing our understanding of the position and progress of our partners on climate and nature. The **Economic Summit** (29 February 2024) created a great opportunity to discuss the draft objectives and programmes through the two climate and nature workshops. The workshops were attended by representatives of 31 different organisations and the engagement on the two questions generated feedback that has informed both this strategy and the emerging Economic Strategy.

Legal

- 5.8 The Committee's terms of reference include the consideration of all powers and duties the council has relating to corporate policy.
- 5.9 The recognition of this Management Plan is encompassed within the adoption of the overarching Climate and Nature Strategy. The strategy relates to the exercise of Executive functions and is therefore a decision of the Executive as to its adoption.
- 5.10 The Council has a duty under s.3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to ensure the Council makes arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its

functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. The proposed strategy should therefore represent best value for Cumberland.

- 5.11 It is anticipated that the delivery of the strategy and accompanying management plans will require legal advice on a case-by case basis.

Finance

- 5.12 There are no direct financial implications within the recommendations for the draft strategy and related plans. A criteria for action planning, based on the Financial Procedure Rules, has been part of the development of the strategy. As projects are developed to deliver against the strategy and plans, detailed business cases will be needed setting out the costs and savings as well as the potential for external funding.
- 5.13 The 2024/25 Budget sets out the following programmes and plans that are linked to the strategy:
- Transformation Programme
 - Capital Programme
 - Asset Management Plan and Fleet

Information Governance

- 5.14 Climate and nature topics give rise to Environmental Information Regulations 2004 requests. We will review these requests annually to see if we can routinely publish more information through the updates to the strategy and management plans. Should there be notably higher levels of interest demonstrated through EIR requests then we will look to review sooner than the annual review.

Impact Assessments

- 5.15 The draft Climate and Nature Strategy, encompassing the Carbon and Energy Management Plan, has been screened using the Impact Assessment tool. The screening will be updated once the consultation and engagement is completed.

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Appendices attached to report:

Appendix A – Draft Plan on a Page. A summary of the overarching *Climate and Nature Strategy* showing interconnectivity to its two Management Plans, and key Service Plans.

Appendix B – the developing Draft Carbon and Energy Management Plan.

Background papers:

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- The Council Plan
- Cumberland Council's Climate and Nature Strategy (Place OSC agenda item on 17/4/24)