

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

Date: 19 October 2020

Title: Climate Emergency Update

Portfolio:	Environment & Transport	Cabinet Member:	Councillor Carl Johnson
Report from Service Area:	Environment Housing and Leisure		
Responsible Officer:	Phil Scott, Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure	Tel: (0191) 643 7295	
Wards affected:	All		

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

In July 2019 Council declared a Climate Emergency, setting a target to reduce the carbon footprint of the Authority and the Borough by 50% by 2023 and to become carbon neutral by 2050.

This report updates Cabinet on the reductions in the Authority and Borough carbon footprints achieved since the declaration of a Climate Emergency, 46% and 40% respectively, and informs Cabinet of a number of actions taken since the previous update report in November 2019 that support carbon reduction.

The Authority has worked with a wide range of stakeholders to develop an action plan to reduce the carbon footprint of the Borough and to tackle a number of cross cutting challenges noted by Cabinet in November 2019, which includes four pathway scenarios to examine how the Borough can transition to carbon neutral in 2050. The action plan is included with this report as an appendix.

This report also includes a number of new policy proposals, developed by the Authority's Climate Emergency Board to support the delivery of the action plan and the work towards achieving the carbon reduction targets agreed by Cabinet in July 2019.

1.2 Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. notes the performance update in relation to the carbon footprint of the Authority and the carbon footprint of the Borough;
2. notes the content of the action plan to reduce the carbon footprint of the Borough and grants delegated authority to the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, in

consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and the Climate Emergency Board, to develop business cases for delivery of actions as deemed appropriate;

3. agrees to the list of proposed policies and associated actions in section 1.5.5 to support the work of the Climate Emergency Board; and
4. notes that a further progress report will be presented to Cabinet in 2021.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 19 June 2020.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The proposals in this report relate to a number of priorities in Our North Tyneside, the Council Plan 2020 to 2024, in particular:

Our places will:

- Recognise the climate emergency by further reducing the Borough's overall carbon footprint. This will include reducing the council's carbon footprint, along with encouraging and enabling everyone to reduce their carbon footprint.
- Provide a clean, green, healthy, attractive and safe environment.

1.5 Information

1.5.1 Carbon reduction targets and performance

In July 2019 Council declared a Climate Emergency, setting a target to reduce the carbon footprint of the Authority and the Borough by 50% by 2023 and to become carbon neutral by 2050.

The Authority's carbon footprint is made up of the power, heat and water used to run its operational buildings, including the sheltered accommodation offer but not schools, the electricity used to power over 31,000 street lighting apparatus, the fuel and power used to operate almost 400 fleet vehicles and the business miles staff travel in their own vehicles (not including commuting to and from work). This definition of the Authority's carbon footprint is in line with Central Government's Greenhouse Gas Protocol.

The Authority submits an annual performance report to the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) that details the year on year measurement of the Authority's carbon footprint. This is published on the Authority's website and is included as a background paper.

At the end of 2019/20, the Authority's carbon footprint had decreased by 46% since the baseline year of 2010/11. Given this current performance, it is likely that the Authority will achieve the 50% reduction target by the 2023 target date.

It is worth noting that the carbon footprint data runs up to 31 March 2020 so only includes one week of the COVID-19 "lockdown" period and therefore had no real impact on performance.

The Borough's carbon footprint is made up of the power and heat used in the commercial, industrial and domestic buildings across the whole of the Borough, emissions from road and rail transport, and land use and forestation activities, which can result in either a release into or removal of emissions from the atmosphere.

An annual report is provided to the Authority by BEIS detailing the carbon footprint of the Borough. The most recent report shows that between the baseline year of 2005 and 2018, absolute carbon emissions have decreased by 40% and carbon emissions per head of population have decreased by 44%.

The most recent data shows that the respective carbon footprints are:

- Authority – 16,134 tonnes of CO₂
- Borough – 842,662 tonnes of CO₂

1.5.2 What action has been taken?

The Authority is clear in its commitment to tackling the Climate Emergency and has taken a number of steps since the previous report to Cabinet in November 2019. These include;

- Establishing a Climate Emergency Board
- A £0.500m business case to install LED streetlights has been approved and installations will commence in January 2021
- The inclusion of a budget in the 2020/21 Investment Plan for projects to support the work of the Climate Emergency Board
- A feasibility study for the installation of renewable energy technologies on public buildings and adjacent land, including solar car ports on car parks, was completed. A number of potential solar PV projects were identified and being further investigated through soft market testing
- The Authority responded to the recent Government consultation on bringing forward the end of the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans (the 'phase-out date') from 2040 to 2035, or earlier if a faster transition appears feasible; and ending the sale of new hybrid cars and vans at the same time. The Authority recommended to government that the phase out date should be brought forward from 2040 to 2032 as well as identifying key barriers that need to be addressed to achieve a timely phase out
- The Authority responded to the recent Government consultation on its transport decarbonisation plan to achieve net zero emissions across all modes of transport, as announced in 'Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge'. The Authority was able to provide details of a range of locally implemented transportation measures and made a comprehensive suite of recommendations to inform government thinking on supporting regional and local organisations to reduce transport related emissions
- As part of the Authority's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a temporary 4km Coastal cycle lane and several pedestrianised areas have been introduced across the Borough to enable social distancing and encourage active travel

- The Authority continues to work with our young elected representatives to shape our plans, including our Climate Emergency Action Plan, and our work around waste, recycling and reducing single use plastics usage
- The redevelopment and decarbonisation of the Killingworth depot site is progressing;
 - Air Source Heat Pumps will reduce primary gas consumption by around 60%;
 - The Authority has tendered for the rooftop Solar PV solution. This will inform battery storage requirements, and these will be subsequently tendered;
 - The Authority has awarded the contract for solar canopies within the car parks and works commence in October; and
 - The on-site solar PV electricity generation will help to reduce demand from the national grid by between 80-90%
- Expanding the range of materials that could be included in kerbside recycling, to include pots, tubs and trays
- The Authority published its 2019/20 Annual Greenhouse Gas Report, detailing performance on reducing the carbon footprint of the Authority and the Borough
- Securing grant funding to retrofit 69 buses to accelerate carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide reduction within the North Tyneside bus fleet
- Adoption of the revised North Tyneside Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy including new age and emissions standards for vehicles
- Launch of a 12-month e-Cargo bike trial for small and medium size enterprises in North Shields, Whitley Bay and Tynemouth for zero emission last-mile deliveries starting in October
- Secured provision of grants for upgrading North Tyneside Taxi's so they are compliant with the Tyneside Clean Air Zone due to come into operation in 2021
- Refresh of Organisational Development processes which have included:
 - New organisation behaviours framework which is drawn from our values and includes specific behaviours around carbon reduction;
 - New IPR process and now short form to include climate emergency for discussion with employees;
 - Draft new job descriptions which include a statement around climate change; and
 - The development of our Workforce and Organisational Development Plan which also includes climate change as part of key organisational and workforce challenges
- The Authority's partnership with E.On, which installed solar PV generation systems on over 1,400 council houses, produced over 3,000 megawatt hours of renewable electricity in 2019.

1.5.3 Development of an action plan

In November 2019 Cabinet approved the establishment of a Climate Emergency Board which would:

- Shape an action plan to be presented to Cabinet in the summer of 2020
- Receive regular updates on a number of workstreams
- Consider and advise on key issues as they emerge
- Oversee performance and budget management

The inaugural board was held in March 2020, shortly before the national “lockdown” in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this the board was able to oversee the development of an action plan for the Borough, which had commenced earlier in the year.

Working with The Carbon Trust and in consultation with an extensive range of stakeholders, both in person pre-lockdown and electronically post-lockdown, an action plan to reduce the carbon footprint of the Borough has been developed. This action plan sets out to address the cross-cutting themes noted by Cabinet in November 2019:

- Collective approach to environmental protection
- Improving energy efficiency in building stock
- Cleaning up (de-carbonising) our electricity supply
- Cleaning up (de-carbonising) our heat supply
- Cleaning up (de-carbonising) our travel
- Waste

To bridge the gap between current performance and 2050, the action plan includes a number of pathway scenarios to examine how the Borough can transition to carbon neutral in 2050. The modelling that was undertaken specifically examined four different scenarios. The scenarios do not set out a pre-determined path that must be followed to meet the carbon neutral target by 2050, instead they provide a framework to:

- Inform the Borough of the scale of decarbonisation that must be achieved
- Help in decision making processes
- Identify areas of focus and opportunities
- Inspire radical action

The four scenarios are:

Business as usual

Under a business as usual (BAU) scenario, where existing and already agreed government proposals are the primary focus of action.

Energy efficiency and alternative fuels

This scenario focusses on a shift to dramatically reduce energy demand through energy efficiency, and then switching fuels to low carbon alternatives, predominantly hydrogen and biogas.

High Electrification

The high electrification scenario prioritises the adoption of electric vehicles and heating above all else, energy efficiency and fuel switching still play an important part though.

Radical Response

The ‘Radical Response’ scenario represents an aggressive, proactive, and profound effort to ensure the region does everything it can to reduce its emissions as close to net zero by 2050 as possible.

The action plan is included as an appendix and the Climate Emergency Board will be responsible to develop business cases and work with stakeholders, through the proposed new Borough wide board, to deliver actions as appropriate.

1.5.4 COVID-19 pandemic and the climate emergency

The action plan has been prepared in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of development, the true economic and societal costs of the pandemic for the UK and North Tyneside are not fully known. Whilst the lockdown measures and economic damage caused will undoubtedly result in a short-term reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, it is possible that emissions could rebound if climate positive solutions are not included as central elements in recovery plans.

The Climate Emergency Board is reviewing, and will continue to review, appropriate funding packages from Government that aim to decarbonise the economy and stimulate economic growth.

There are lessons to learn from the pandemic that can be applied to the climate emergency, perhaps the biggest being the population's capacity and willingness to accept lifestyle changes for the wider benefit of society. Learning lessons from the response to a global health emergency and applying them to a global climate emergency could pave the way for the accelerated and sustained change that is critical in solving the problem of climate change.

By embracing these lessons, the Borough may be able to enjoy long term sustainable carbon emission reductions from changes in behaviours, such as the increase in active travel, reduction in travel by private car, increased working from home practices and willingness to invest in domestic property improvements.

During the pandemic it has been evident how much residents have used and enjoyed the parks, beaches and open spaces North Tyneside has to offer. The Authority's ambitious carbon reduction programme seeks to protect this natural capital through mitigation against climate change and a subsequent climate breakdown.

1.5.5 Policy Development

Working in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, the Climate Emergency Board has developed a number of policy proposals that will support the work of the board in achieving the targets announced by Council in July 2019 in the declaration of a Climate Emergency. These are:

- By 2023 all Authority Street Lights will be converted to LED (with the possible exception of specialist heritage columns)
- Newly built Authority operational buildings will not use gas or oil as the primary fuel for heating
- The Authority will identify renewable energy investment opportunities on its own buildings and land, and across the Borough on non-Authority assets
- The Authority will replace 100% of all Light Goods Vehicles which are due to be replaced by 2030 with electric vehicles and we will continue to explore the possibility of replacing all Heavy Goods Vehicles with electric vehicles
- The Authority will encourage team members across the organisation to tackle the climate emergency by:
 1. Ensuring all employees have access to online educational tools to build knowledge and understanding of climate change;
 2. Introducing climate change discussions into annual individual performance reviews;
 3. Delivering campaigns annually across the organisation; and

4. Reviewing the employee benefit package to determine if the Authority can incentivise actions to reduce carbon emissions such as prioritising electric cars in leasing offers
- The Authority will establish a Borough wide board, with a range of stakeholders, to reduce the carbon footprint of the Borough
- The Authority will reduce car-based school trips by 5% annually
- The Authority will require all new developments to provide EV charging points
- The Authority will remove all 'non-essential' single use plastics from council premises and council activities, where possible, by 2025
- The street trading licensing scheme will include conditions to end the use of single use plastics
- From 2022, where practical and other alternatives can be sourced, single use plastics will not be permitted at Authority managed events. The Authority will also implement an Events Charter to reduce our environmental impact.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

To agree to the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

Option 2

To not approve the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Agreeing the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report will support the delivery of the commitments made in the Climate Emergency report to Council of 25 July 2019.

1.8 Appendices:

'Appendix: North Tyneside Climate Emergency Action Plan'.

[North Tyneside Climate Emergency Action Plan](#)

1.9 Contact officers:

Paul Nelson, Environmental Sustainability & Street Lighting Manager, Technical & Regulatory Services, tel. (0191) 643 6467

Colin MacDonald, Senior Manager, Technical & Regulatory Services, tel. (0191) 643 6620

Michael Keenlyside, Environmental Sustainability Officer, tel. (0191) 643 6505

Cathy Davison, Principal Accountant Investment (Capital) and Revenue, tel. (0191) 643 5727

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) [Annual Greenhouse Gas Report 2019-20](#)
- (2) [Low Carbon Plan 2016-2027](#)
- (3) [BEIS Local Authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics 2005-2018](#)
- (4) [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report 2018: Summary for Policymakers.](#)
- (5) [Committee on Climate Change: Net Zero](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The financing of specific projects to reduce carbon emissions will be considered as part of the development of each business case. Any investment required in addition to existing budgets will be reported to Cabinet / Council, with analysis of any savings projected and how these are to be accounted for as appropriate, for a decision before any expenditure is incurred.

2.2 Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

Individual residents, community groups and businesses have demonstrated a passion to ensure North Tyneside is sustainable. Our low carbon work has been informed by working with business on specific technologies, with cycling organisations as we increase North Tyneside's cycling infrastructure and working with our Young Mayors, Members of the Young Parliament and Youth Councillors to listen to their views about how we protect North Tyneside for their future. As a landlord, the Authority has worked with Tenants' representatives and individual tenants on energy efficient products and how to use them. As a leisure business, the Authority has worked with its customers, experts and the sector to reduce energy consumption and as a waste business, the Authority has spent time working on best practice with the sector and local universities to review and revise operations. Recently we have been working closely with our bus operators to apply Government funding to their fleet to reduce emissions.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan has been developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including the public, private and third sectors.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equality and diversity issues directly arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk issues directly arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

This report supports the recent declaration of a Climate Emergency and includes an action plan that will deliver carbon emission reductions.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive ☒
- Head of Service ☒
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) ☒
- Chief Finance Officer ☒
- Monitoring Officer ☒
- Head of Corporate Strategy and Customer Service ☒