



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	ENVIRONMENT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE
<b>DATE:</b>	7 DECEMBER 2021
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	CARBON REDUCTION PLAN, BOSTON
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	TO GAIN MEMBER INPUT INTO THE DRAFT CARBON REDUCTION PLAN PRIOR TO ITS ADOPTION BY CABINET
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	NO
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	CLLR PAUL SKINNER
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENT OFFICER
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	HEATHER PRESCOTT
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	N/A
<b>EXEMPT REPORT?</b>	NO

## **SUMMARY**

In 2020 Boston Borough Council declared a climate emergency and as part of the Council's commitment to tackling global climate change and addressing the impacts of its operations, agreed to develop a new Carbon Reduction Plan. The Carbon Trust was appointed to provide an updated baseline for the Council's carbon footprint via a Carbon Footprint Report and develop a Carbon Reduction Plan. These documents will help us benchmark the impact of our operations against the new 2019 footprint and drive action to take the Council towards its strategic objective of achieving net zero CO2 emissions. The Carbon Reduction Plan is a key step in Boston Borough Council's response to the climate crisis and sets out a number of strategic actions that should be implemented to achieve the abovementioned carbon reduction target.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Environment and Performance Committee provides comment and input into the draft Carbon Reduction Plan and recommends its adoption to Cabinet in accordance with the Council's commitment to reduce its carbon emissions as set out in the Corporate Strategy.

Environment and Performance Committee also recommends that Cabinet agrees to refine the Council's existing 'net zero in advance of 2050' to target to a more ambitious and measurable target of net zero by 2040 with a 45% reduction in carbon emissions by 2027. The Carbon Trust will be asked to update the Carbon Reduction Plan to reflect this ambition prior to it going to Cabinet.

#### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

This plan provides a baseline and models a target pathway of recommendations and actions to enable achievement of our net zero aspirations.

#### **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Cabinet could decide not to adopt the Carbon Reduction Plan however, local authorities have a legal obligation to produce plans and policies to adapt to and mitigate climate change in line with the provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008. The Council made a commitment to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero and this plan provides a baseline to model a target pathway to achieving these targets.

### **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. Climate Change is one of the greatest global challenges of our time and Local Authorities have a crucial role to play in driving forward change and leading by example to enable us to adapt to and mitigate against Climate Change effectively and achieve a more sustainable future.
- 1.2. The Carbon Trust was commissioned to produce an updated carbon footprint for Boston Borough Council to establish a revised carbon baseline, including measurement of selected Scope 3 emissions. Footprints for the financial years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 have been analysed to give the Council a better understanding of its impacts and to identify emissions hot spots and recommendations for reducing emissions in line with our targets. Comparison of the footprints for each year also provides the opportunity to quantify the impact of Covid-19 on the Council's emissions.
- 1.3. The Covid-19 pandemic significantly affected daily activity at Boston Borough Council as employees were encouraged to work from home, business travel was restricted and activity at leased sites was limited due to national restrictions. The impact is evident in the emissions results for FY20/21 compared to the baseline with emissions decreasing across all categories and a total emissions reduction of 40%.
- 1.4. Monitoring of our carbon emissions via an annual Carbon Footprint Report and producing plans such as the Carbon Reduction Plan will guide us via a pathway of recommended actions to meet our target of becoming net zero and this report sets out how this commitment would be strengthened by agreeing a set date with interim and annual targets. The Carbon Reduction Plan will serve to engage and inform key stakeholders on the level of ambition required to pursue decarbonisation across Boston Borough Council's

operations and support future decision-making.

## 2. REPORT

- 2.1. The Carbon Trust have worked closely with the Climate Change & Environment Team to identify and prioritise carbon reduction projects and develop a set of recommendations to reduce carbon emissions across the organisation via the Carbon Reduction Plan. The projects identified show a potential to reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions by 74% by 2030 and 90% by 2050 (as per the current target) from the FY 2018/19 baseline. The projects identified also have the potential to reduce total emissions (including scope 3 which are usually outside of the Council's direct control) from 3,859tCO<sub>2</sub>e tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year to 2,423tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year by 2050.
- 2.2. In terms of contributors to emissions, operational emissions (electricity and natural gas) and fleet, together with emissions from leased buildings are the main contributors to the footprint and therefore should be prioritised for emissions reduction measures. However, the Carbon Reduction Plan identifies opportunities to reduce fleet and operational emissions as these are within direct control of the authority but excludes leased buildings. Leased buildings present a more significant challenge and it is recommended that a decarbonisation strategy for these sites is developed to address how we can influence emissions reductions for these sites that we don't have direct control of.
- 2.3. The Geoff Moulder Leisure Complex is currently responsible for 51% of operational emissions, the vast majority of which result from the gas heating system. However, as a result of funding via the Towns Fund there are plans to move to a new electrically fuelled site with state-of-the-art facilities that should reduce emissions considerably.
- 2.4. The Crematorium is responsible for 22% of operational emissions and the vast majority of these are resultant from gas combustion in the cremator furnace and gas heating system. Along with potential fabric, glazing upgrades and solar opportunities at the site it is recommended that a Decarbonisation/Waste Heat Strategy should be developed in the short term. In the medium term it is recommended that a biogas blend be considered to fuel the furnace and a move away from gas entirely to be considered in the longer term. It is important to note that as the electrical grid decarbonises, resultant emissions from electricity consumption will decrease whereas emissions from gas consumption will remain constant.
- 2.5. The Guildhall Building is currently the fourth largest site for emissions however due to the Listed Building status this site currently has limited potential for carbon reduction opportunities and it is considered likely that a specialist survey will be required to identify achievable emissions reduction measures.
- 2.6. The Municipal Buildings account for 17% of all operational emissions with 62% of this arising from electricity consumption. Opportunities have been identified to upgrade fabric, HVAC and heating systems and install renewable energy measures in the short term however there are challenges associated with these proposed upgrades. In the medium term, Building Management System upgrades and development of a solar car port are recommended however payback will be an important consideration at this site

due to the long term recommendation to relocate to a more energy efficient building which would allow for a more drastic reduction to emissions.

- 2.7. Emissions from Fleet were equivalent to 15% of the Council's total Carbon Footprint and the most effective way to decarbonise in this case would be electrification of the fleet. Electric Vehicles (EV) are a particularly attractive option due to reduced running costs, and air and noise pollution however cost is currently still a potential barrier. The Carbon Reduction Plan therefore recommends an initial trial and later rollout of Compressed Natural Gas vehicles followed by a trial and roll out of electric Refuse Collection Vehicles once supply chains have become more established.
- 2.8. The Carbon Reduction Commitments detailed on pages 28-30 of the draft plan and the Timeline of Opportunity Implementation shown on page 43 highlight small milestones that we should be seeking to meet along our journey to net zero. The next step towards delivery will be for us to produce a Carbon Reduction Action Plan to include more detail and clearer delivery timescales.
- 2.9. It is noted that the current net zero target 'in advance of 2050' is difficult to report against and it is recommended a more quantifiable target is adopted. Although Boston Borough Council declared a Climate emergency in 2020 the current target does not reflect this level of ambition, and as shown on page 24 of the Carbon Reduction Plan, all other neighbouring authorities do have a net zero or net neutral target date. East Lindsey District Council has annual, interim, and net zero targets which it is recommended that Boston bring its own targets in line with. This would ensure a joined up approach and allow for streamlined funding bids to be made by the two authorities. Introducing annual and interim targets would keep Boston Borough Council on track to meet their net zero ambitions and also aim to galvanise action in the short and medium term.
- 2.10. The recommendation is to be net zero by 2040 with a 45% reduction in carbon emissions by 2027. The year-on-year reductions target from a 2018/19 baseline would therefore be an average of 4.55% reduction each year against the baseline. This could be split in to a 5.00% reduction each year against the baseline between now and 2027, and then a 4.23% reduction each year against the baseline from 2027 to 2040. The Carbon Reduction Plan will be updated to reflect the proposed new timeline before it is presented to Cabinet.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1. The Carbon Reduction Plan is a key step in Boston Borough Council's response to the climate crisis and will drive a pathway of actions to aid us in achieving our objective of net zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Member support to refine the current target to a more ambitious and quantifiable date will be important to help keep the Council on track. Implementation of the recommendations in the Carbon Reduction Plan will significantly reduce scope 1 & 2 emissions and a strong commitment to bring these actions to fruition will be crucial to our success in meeting these ambitions. However, it will also be vital that we embrace new green technologies as they become available and viable; and identify new ways to reduce our emissions further over the coming years particularly in relation to scope 3 emissions which are beyond our direct control. It should be noted that Carbon Reduction Plan is a

high level document and therefore a more detailed action plan to include anticipated delivery timescales will be brought to Cabinet in Spring 2022.

#### **EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP**

This plan provides a baseline and models a target pathway of recommendations and actions to enable achievement of our net zero aspirations.

#### **IMPLICATIONS**

##### **SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP**

*None*

##### **CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

*The Carbon Reduction Plan will support us in achieving Priority 3 of the Corporate Strategy.*

##### **STAFFING**

None

##### **CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Local authorities have a legal obligation to produce plans and policies to adapt to and mitigate climate change in line with the provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008 and failure to do so could result in a legal challenge being made.

##### **DATA PROTECTION**

None

##### **FINANCIAL**

Recommendations identified in the Carbon Reduction Plan will require funding. External funding opportunities will be sought whilst ensuring that future expenditure within existing Council budgets seeks to include carbon savings as part of the procurement and delivery of services.

The Council may seek to implement an invest to save fund for Carbon Reduction which can be used to support initiatives as well as provide match funding for external bids.

##### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

None

##### **STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES**

Key officers together with members of the Climate Change Working Group were engaged with via a workshop and follow up interviews to enable better understanding of decarbonisation opportunities. Delegates who were invited to the workshop have also been consulted on the draft Carbon Reduction Plan.

##### **REPUTATION**

None

##### **CONTRACTS**

None

## CRIME AND DISORDER

None

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

None

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

If implemented successfully, the Carbon Reduction Plan has the potential to not only reduce carbon emissions but also to deliver positive outcomes for the natural environment and the health and wellbeing of our communities.

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Commitment to achieving net zero will be crucial alongside the work of all other authorities, businesses and individuals in the global battle to reduce our carbon emissions and limit climate change to temperature increases of well below 2% in line with the Paris Agreement. Failure to do so would be catastrophic to the environment with extreme weather events expected to become more frequent and severe. Rising sea levels would also potentially create the need for mass migration inland and huge losses to biodiversity could lead to water and food shortages amongst many other negative impacts on life as we know it. It is a global problem of which we can only make a small contribution, but we must seek to reduce our operational footprint as far as possible.

## ACRONYMS

None

<b>APPENDICES</b>	
Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
<i>APPENDIX A</i>	<i>Carbon Reduction Plan</i>
<i>APPENDIX B</i>	<i>Carbon Footprint Report</i>

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	
Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -	
<b>Document title</b>	<b>Where the document can be viewed</b>
<i>Corporate Strategy</i>	<a href="#"><u>Our Plan for Your Future   Boston Borough Council (mybostonuk.com)</u></a>
<i>Environment Policy</i>	<a href="https://www.mybostonuk.com/environmental-protection-and-services/climate/"><u>https://www.mybostonuk.com/environmental-protection-and-services/climate/</u></a>

<b>CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT</b>
---

<i>A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.</i>
--

<b>REPORT APPROVAL</b>
------------------------

Report author:	Heather Prescott Climate Change and Environment Officer
----------------	--

Signed off by:	Christian Allen Assistant Director Regulatory
----------------	--

Approved for publication:	Councillor Paul Skinner
---------------------------	-------------------------

**FINANCE PROFORMA**

PROFORMA FOR APPROVAL OF THE RELEASE OF RESOURCES

(CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS)

FROM:

THIS PROFORMA PROVIDES THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS  
IN RESPECT OF THE ATTACHED

REPORT:

REPORT DATE:

<b>OPTION 1</b>	£ Year 1 2020/21	£ Year 2 2021/22	£ Year 3 2022/23	£ Year 4 2023/24	£ Year 5 2024/25
-----------------	---------------------	---------------------	---------------------	---------------------	---------------------

**Revenue**

**Total Revenue Cost**

**Funding required:**

Total capital cost      £

Revenue cost              £

**Considered by:**

Enter committee here

Enter Council or  
Cabinet/Executive here

**Date:**

**Financial Services Comments**

**Risk**

**Procurement**

**Value for Money Efficiency**

This FP is valid for 3 months from FP date	If this FP is no longer required please advise Finance	If there are changes to the original report it may invalidate this document, it must be reviewed by Finance.