

# Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

**REPORT TO:** Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**DATE:** 01 November 2021

**LOCATION:** Online

**TITLE:** Net-Zero Action Plan – Progress Update

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:** To provide a progress update as to the actions set out within the Net Zero Action Plan

**REASON SCRUTINY HAVE REQUESTED THE INFORMATION:** It was agreed that a periodic progress update would be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## **BACKGROUND:**

The meeting of Ceredigion County Council on 20 June 2019 (Full Council 20 June 2019) agreed to:

- Commit to making Ceredigion a net zero carbon Local Authority by 2030
- Develop a clear plan for a route towards being net zero carbon within 12 months
- Call on Welsh and UK Governments to provide the necessary support and resources to enable effective carbon reductions

Further to this, on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Ceredigion County Council declared a global climate emergency, committing to meeting the most significant challenge facing our county and our planet.

The Net Zero Action Plan was approved by Scrutiny (May), Cabinet (May) and Full Council (June) in 2021 and as part of this it was agreed that periodic updates would be provided on progress to date.

The focus of the Plan is currently upon operational energy usage and emissions (Scope 1 and 2 emissions), as these are routinely recorded and calculated annually as part of the annual review of the Carbon Management Plan.

## **CURRENT SITUATION:**

### Carbon Footprint

Operational emission figures for 2020/21 financial year have now been calculated and are as follows:-

Carbon Management Plan 3						
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Buildings	5,557	5,177	4,909	4,125		
Streetlighting	518	436	326	255		
Fleet	1,867	1,802	1,762	1,602		
Business Mileage	761	735	642	180		
	<b>8,649</b>	<b>8,150</b>	<b>7,639</b>	<b>6,161</b>		
		5.77%	6.27%	19.35%		

The above equates to a cumulative 28.77% reduction against a 15% target (2017/18 to 2020/21)

All service areas saw emission reductions during 2020/21, when compared to the previous financial year. The table below notes emissions & cost by category/service area.

Category		2019/20		2020/21	
		tCO <sub>2</sub>	Cost £	tCO <sub>2</sub>	Cost £
Buildings and Street Lights	Civic buildings	502	£289,722	373	£171,490
	Education	2,689	£915,166	2,391	£782,179
	Leisure	523	£191,275	389	£135,156
	Social Care	565	£187,067	510	£164,633
	Libraries & Community	236	£84,074	173	£60,034
	Other buildings	232	£90,014	198	£73,793
	Other miscellaneous	162	£99,224	91	£37,085
	Streetlights	326	£188,917	255	£163,362
Transport	Fleet	1,762	£660,763	1,602	£530,142
	Business Mileage	642	£1,032,307	180	£297,738
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,639</b>	<b>£3,738,529</b>	<b>6,161</b>	<b>£2,415,610</b>

The most notable reduction was in relation to business mileage (travel undertaken by staff in their own vehicles), which was reduced by 71.96% when compared to the previous financial year.

In 2020/21 total cost of energy and fuel reported within the scope of the Carbon Management Plan was £2,415,610. Ceredigion County Council spent £1,322,919 less on energy in 2020/21 than they did in the previous financial year (2019/20) – this equates to a 35.39% spend reduction.

Although overall spend on energy decreased during 2020/21, we have seen year on year increases in the utility and fuel prices. Contract prices are likely to rise further in future years, however the way that we procure energy should mean that we limit the large record-breaking price increases we are currently seeing. The increasing utility prices, further highlight the need for emission reductions across the Authority and further supports the business case for schemes for schemes.

Carbon Management and Climate Change Group – the attendance list has been updated to include representatives from all political parties, as well as expanded to additional service areas to ensure that the Net Zero Action Plan is integrated throughout the Authority.

Electric Vehicle Charging – Two Grants have been received, which will look at increasing the EV charging infrastructure within the County.

- 1) We have been successful in our application for grant funding from the Welsh Government this financial year, and have been awarded the sum of £420k from the “Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle Transformation Fund” (ULEVTF) which will be used for the development of a Ceredigion Strategy in alignment with the Growing Mid Wales Energy Strategy for the development of ULEV work programmes, which will include further charging points being located in car parks across the County – this funding will need to be spent before the end of March 2022.
- 2) WG/ WLGA EV charging grant in the sum of £300,000. This is specifically for installation of EV charging in Council Depots, to support the decarbonisation of fleet.

Purchase of Green Energy – CCC already procures ‘green’ electricity via the corporate electricity contract. There is further scope to look at procurement of ‘green’ gas, as well as liquid fuels (e.g. LPG or biodiesel), although there is little benefit in regard to the carbon accounting figures, it could be considered best practise to ensure that the utilities we do use come from ‘green’ sustainable sources.

Renewables – A land asset review undertaken by the Welsh Government Energy Service has looked at various sites for renewables, these are mostly subject to significant grid constraints. It has however highlighted that there is going to be a need to ensure that renewable installations are adequately sized and that locations are chosen dependant on their ability to use the energy generated on site.

Canolfan Rheidol car park has been identified as a potential location for solar canopies. The initial scheme looked at would provide 258kW of solar PV, which would satisfy 33% of the building’s electricity usage and provide a £29,000 electricity reduction for the site. Grid connection estimates suggest that it would be more beneficial to reduce the size of the scheme to utilise any generation on site – the scheme is being reviewed.

Renewables are also routinely being introduced as part of building refurbishment works and also 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme.

Net Zero Buildings – New extension at Llwyn yr Eos School, has the potential to become the Council’s first net-zero building. Ground source heating and solar panels have been installed as part of the scheme and it is hoped that this will set a benchmark for future building works undertaken by the authority in future.

21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme - As part of the programme, when looking to build new schools, Ceredigion County Council will work towards decarbonisation and net-zero buildings.

WG Reporting Methodology – This documentation has been released since the production of the Net-Zero Plan. We are currently working to calculate our entire carbon footprint, which goes beyond just the scope 1 and 2 emissions noted within the Carbon Management Plan. It will also look at emissions from Transport, waste and the procurement of goods and services. This data should be available in time for the next update.

Grid Infrastructure – It is widely noted that grid constraints in Ceredigion mean that large scale renewable schemes are not viable, it can also has the potential to hinder roll-out of EV charging infrastructure and slow economic growth. It is therefore important that we continue to have meaningful and constructive dialogue with both WG and the County’s District Network Operators (DNO), ensuring that the grid capacity issues within the County are addressed. These conversations are ongoing and are being had in a number of formats; CLAW, WGES, Mid Wales Regional Group, PSB, WPD Stakeholder Workshops etc.

**Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why**

**Summary:**

**Long term:** The Zero Action Plan will support the Council’s 2030 net zero carbon ambition

**Integration:** Will help integrate and embed emission reduction across the Authority

**Collaboration:** The Council is already working in collaboration with a number of public bodies in relation to carbon reduction and delivery of emission reduction.

**Involvement:** The Climate Change and Carbon Management Group is well established and attended by both Members and officers, this provides a good initial forum for stakeholder engagement, but scope for wider involvement following publication of the net-Zero Action Plan

**Prevention:** The Action Plan supports implementation of actions and measures to reduce carbon emissions that contribute to reducing the effects of climate change

**WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS:**

**RECOMMENDATION (S):** To note the progress in relation to actions set out within the Net-Zero Action Plan

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S):** To support the Council's commitment to becoming a net zero Local Authority by 2030 and reducing the effects of climate change.

**Contact Name:** Bethan Lloyd Davies  
**Designation:**  
**Date of Report:** 12/10/2021  
**Acronyms:**