

**ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP  
10 JANUARY 2023**

**REPORT – CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE – ANNEX A**

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr C R Slade - Cabinet Member for the Environment and Climate Change.

**Responsible Officer(s):** Andrew Busby - Corporate Manager Property, Leisure & Climate Change. Jason Ball, Climate and Sustainability Specialist.

**1.0 Performance**

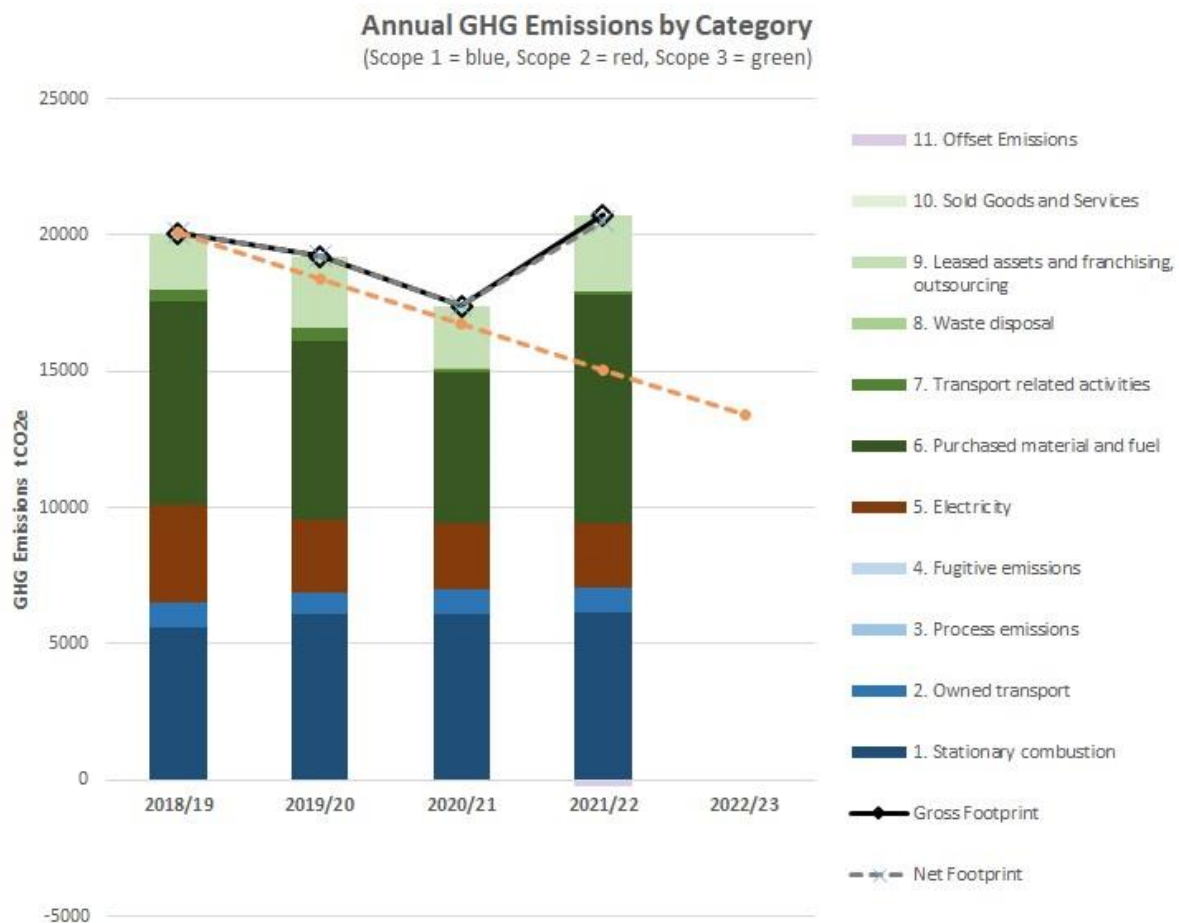
**1.1. Monitoring the Council’s Carbon Footprint.**

- 1.1.1. The Council reports its ‘Greenhouse Gas Inventory’ or ‘Carbon Footprint’ which is an assessment of its climate change impact as an organisation, measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e). The tCO<sub>2</sub>e is based on the Global Warming Potential (GWP) of different greenhouse gases over a 100-year period in comparison to carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>).
- 1.1.2. Carbon Footprint reports, a progress chart and headline figures are published at <https://sustainablemiddevon.org.uk/our-plan> and updated annually.
- 1.1.3. The reporting period inclusive of April 2018 to March 2019 was the ‘baseline’ year. Results for this and subsequent years are shown in Table 1 below.
- 1.1.4. Carbon Footprint assessments were carried out by the University of Exeter using internationally accepted methods, and cover Scopes 1, 2, and 3. Methods are applied consistently to all financial years. Net emissions are calculated based on reductions in greenhouse gas emissions linked to e.g. renewable energy generation.

**Table 1 - Carbon Footprint Figures**

| <b>Mid Devon District Council - Carbon Footprint</b> |                                 |                                |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Gross (tCO<sub>2</sub>e)</b> | <b>Nett (tCO<sub>2</sub>e)</b> |
| <u>April 2018 - March 2019</u>                       | 20,078                          | 20,078                         |
| <u>April 2019 - March 2020</u>                       | 19,231                          | 19,223                         |
| <u>April 2020 - March 2021</u>                       | 17,414                          | 17,406                         |

**Figure 1 - Carbon Footprint bar charts 2018-2019 to 2021-2022.**



## 1.2. Performance Indicators

1.2.1. Progress on Performance Indicators (PI) is provided separately, on the Council's regular Performance and Risk Reports.

1.2.2. The tables below summarise actions and progress in achieving the Council's Corporate Plan *aims* and Climate Strategy *priorities*.

**Table 2 - Corporate Plan Aims**

| ref           | Relevant aims in the Corporate Plan (CP)   | Notes on actions taken   |
|---------------|--|--|
|               | <b>Environment</b>   |  |
| <b>env 01</b> | Encourage retro-fitting of measures to reduce energy usage in buildings.   | <p>The Climate &amp; Sustainability Specialist (C&amp;S Specialist) continues to support teams.</p> <p><b>Property.</b> Solar PV on Council facilities. Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Heat Decarbonisation Plan completed 2021 for Phoenix House and leisure centres. New £2.8m decarbonisation project under way at 2 leisure centres, funded by PSDS. Previous £300k PSDS project complete. New £350k PSDS bid submitted for Culm Valley.</p> <p><b>Housing.</b> Ongoing operational maintenance and improvement cycles. Roof solar PV generation.</p> <p><b>Revenues and Benefits.</b> Teams will administer green rebates for carbon / energy reduction retrofit measures.</p>   |
| <b>env 02</b> | Encourage “green” sources of energy, supply new policies and develop plans to decarbonise energy consumption in Mid Devon. | <p><b>Property.</b> Around 50% of the Council’s power supply is REGO-backed renewable. Aiming for 100% renewable supply delayed due to energy market volatility.</p> <p>The C&amp;S Specialist has encouraged Council investments in local renewable energy; also to support community renewable energy schemes.</p> <p><b>Housing.</b> The Council has leased roof space on social housing to host Solar PV panels - these generate renewable power for tenants with substantial cost savings, which also reduces demand on the local network. Exported surplus power adds to local flexibility.</p> <p><b>Community.</b> Solar PV for Mid Devon householders - the Council is part of the Solar Together Devon project.</p> <p>The Council promotes e.g. Green Homes Grant and community support e.g. energy saving advice and funding via Exeter Community Energy.</p> <p>Electric Vehicle Chargepoints (EVCs) at Council car parks use renewable energy; leisure centres each host a pair of EVCs. New rapid EVCs at 6 car parks secured via Deletti partnership, installation to begin early 2023. Liaison with District Network Operator to promote development of the local power infrastructure.</p> |
| <b>env 03</b> | Identify opportunities to work with landowners to secure additional hedgerow planting, biodiversity and reforestation.     | Outreach with stakeholders e.g. parishes and landowners to identify opportunities. Partnership work with community groups e.g. Sustainable Crediton, Tiverton Tree Team.   |
| <b>env 04</b> | Consider promoting the designation of the Exe Valley as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).                      | Please refer to Corporate Plan mid-term review.  |

|               |  |  |
|---------------|--|--|
| <b>env 05</b> | Encourage new housing and commercial developments to be “exemplars” in terms of increasing biodiversity and reducing carbon use.   | <p><b>Housing.</b> Zed Pods programme on target (Regional award winner.) Plans approved for the Council’s Passivhaus design affordable and social housing.</p> <p><b>Growth and Economic Development.</b> Teamwork to review Plans and Strategies. Promoting teamwork on rural business, local procurement etc.</p> <p><b>Planning.</b> Drafted the Non-Statutory Interim Policy Statement: Climate Emergency. Out for consultation Oct-Dec 2022). The Council’s Net Zero Housing Assessment Tool is now available for planners and developers. The Council has published a Net Zero Toolkit as guidance on retrofit and new-build.</p> <p>The C&amp;S Specialist works with colleagues to promote sustainable development, such as the importance and benefits of Net Zero performance buildings, sustainable materials, biodiversity net gain, Natural Capital conservation, climate adaptation etc. Advising and supporting major infrastructure and development programmes such as CGV, HAZ, M5 J27, EUE e.g. input to Neighbourhood Plans, Masterplans.</p> |
| <b>env 06</b> | Increase recycling rates and reduce the amounts of residual waste generated.   | Systemic change to cut emissions associated with recycling and waste disposal e.g. <i>Bin It 123 is projected to save thousands of tCO<sub>2</sub>e annually.</i> Teamwork to promote sustainability messages e.g. at Mid Devon Show, Devon County Show.   |
| <b>env 07</b> | Explore large-scale tree-planting projects and re-wilding to enhance biodiversity and address carbon pressures.  | The C&S Specialist worked to position the Council as strategic partners to deliver tree planting via the Devon County Council’s Emergency Tree Fund, a grant provided by The Woodland Trust. Over 600 trees planted 2021-2022. Community Orchard created by Tiverton Tree Team. Council land assessed for potential planting. The C&S Specialist proactively seeks planting proposals (ongoing) from members, staff and parishes. Officers seek external funding and partnership work to support nature recovery and habitat enhancements. Successful bid to Urban Treescapes Challenge Fund for 2023-2024 planting.   |
| <b>env 08</b> | Promote sustainable farming practices in partnership with local farmers, district and county councils; including research into best practice re better soil management and animal husbandry. | The C&S Specialist has engaged with farmers and others about the Mid Devon situation and will support partnership work with land managers. Sustainable Farming report provided to Environment PDG. Farming discussed at State of the District Debate. Signposting and resources online.  |
| <b>env 09</b> | Work with parish and town councils to promote development and retention of parks and play areas.   | Outside the C&S Specialist role, but relevant to e.g. healthy lifestyles, green infrastructure, nature recovery, climate adaptation.   |
| <b>env 10</b> | Support community activities that improve the environment  | Ongoing outreach with groups, partnerships and at district, town and parish level to support activity. The new climate and sustainability website. The Housing team has given away free plug-in electricity monitors to social housing tenants.  |
| <b>Homes</b>  |  |  |

|                  |  |  |
|------------------|--|--|
| <b>h 01</b>      | Introduce <b>zero carbon</b> policies for new development.   | Non-Statutory Interim Policy Statement: Climate Emergency. Net Zero policies yet to be established, but that the Statement emphasises the climate change emergency is a material consideration in the planning process.<br><br>The C&S Specialist worked with the Housing Strategy team to respond to Council's Net Zero priority. |
| <b>h 02</b>      | Encourage the piloting of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and self-build opportunities.   | Zed Pod modular housing with renewable energy; delivery ongoing. The Council is a supporter of the National Custom and Self Build Association; continues to invite proposals for custom and self-build projects.   |
| <b>h 03</b>      | Use new development as opportunities to help communities to become increasingly sustainable and self-sustaining at neighbourhood level (district heating, energy use, recycling/reuse systems etc.). | The C&S Specialist works with others e.g. Planning to help realise this aim. Provided input to help develop: Culm Garden Village Sustainability Strategy; Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan; Cullompton Heritage Action Zone ideas; Neighbourhood Plans.   |
| <b>Economy</b>   |  |  |
| <b>ec 01</b>     | Promote zero carbon exemplar sites within commercial settings.   | The C&S Specialist will support others in the Property team and colleagues in Planning and Regeneration to realise this.   |
| <b>ec 02</b>     | Use car park pricing mechanism to effectively balance the needs of vehicular access with those of reducing car use.  | Could be considered as next step after 2022 Electric Vehicle (EV) project.   |
| <b>ec 03</b>     | Promote the development of the farming economy and local food production.  | Local sourcing and networks signposted on Sustainable Mid Devon website. (as above)  |
| <b>ec 04</b>     | Working in partnership with farmers to develop and grow markets on the principle of reducing carbon emissions and sustainability.  | The Council will work with others in partnership to promote good practice and knowledge sharing. Example: 'Connecting the Culm' steering group.  |
| <b>Community</b> |  |  |
| <b>c 01</b>      | Work with developers and DCC to deliver strategic cycle routes between settlements and key destinations.   | Discussed at Net Zero Advisory Group (NZAG) at Environment PDG. Potential links via latest Neighbourhood Plans etc. Transport led at county level.   |
| <b>c 02</b>      | Secure decent digital connectivity for all of Mid Devon.   | The C&S Specialist will work with others e.g. Planning and Regeneration to realise this.   |
| <b>c 03</b>      | Work with education providers to secure appropriate post-16 provision within the district to minimise the need to commute out for A/T level studies.   | The C&S Specialist will work with others e.g. Planning and Regeneration to realise this.   |
| <b>c 04</b>      | Promote new, more integrated approaches to promoting good health and healthier living especially in the context of planned new developments.   | The C&S Specialist will work with others e.g. Planning and Regeneration to realise this.   |

**Table 3 - Climate Strategy Key Priorities**

|   | <b>Climate Strategy (CS) 2020-24<br/>Key Priorities</b>   | <b>Notes on actions taken</b>  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | <p><b>Increase climate knowledge, literacy and capacity at Mid Devon District Council.</b></p> <p>Climate literacy training will be created and rolled out to staff and Councillors. This will take the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic online modules for everyone.</li> <li>• More in-depth training of key staff who can act as internal experts on particular activities.</li> <li>• In-person thematic briefings to relevant officers and Councillors.</li> </ul> <p>Extra staff time will be brought in to drive and coordinate our climate work.</p> | <p>Net Zero Advisory Group (NZAG) active. C&amp;S Specialist in post.</p> <p>C&amp;S Specialist and learning manager are now trained as Carbon Literacy trainers; dates set for member training.</p> <p>External training resources promoted via web and newsletters to Members and staff. Seeking online module resources.</p> <p>Thematic briefings to relevant Members have included: The need for urgent focus on the Net Zero by 2030 ambition; emissions targets; the Climate and Sustainability Programme; Sustainable Development and climate considerations; Plan Mid Devon – setting Climate as an overarching priority for the Local Plan; Sustainable Farming; the local electricity supply network.</p> |
| 2 | <p><b>Identify schemes that will put us on track for net zero carbon by 2030.</b></p> <p>Working with partners and residents, we will identify new initiatives and ways of working that will develop and progress our plan. This includes working with the Devon Carbon Plan, as it emerges.</p>  | <p>Ongoing work to facilitate and manage the Council's Climate Action Plan (CAP). Costed items on the CAP considered by Corporate Management Team with regard to Medium term Financial Plan (MTFP), etc.</p>   |
| 3 | <p><b>Enable and encourage the use of renewable energy locally.</b></p> <p>Including getting the hydroelectric scheme in Tiverton running to provide renewable energy to the Council offices.</p> <p>Roll out Electric Vehicle charging points - residential and commercial.</p> <p>Partner with Solar Together to support residential solar panel uptake.</p>  | <p>Hydroelectric scheme Planning Application submitted; MTFP budget updated; need to address the key issues behind objections.</p> <p>Council hosting chargers.</p> <p>Solar Together project delivery almost completed (solar PV and battery installations).</p> <p>Regular liaison with District Network Operator for local infrastructure needs.</p>  |
| 4 | <p><b>Create a 'Community Climate &amp; Biodiversity Support Fund'.</b></p> <p>There are many local residents and community-led organisations that, with a bit of financial support, will work to reduce carbon emissions and increase local biodiversity. We see this as part of our partnership approach.</p>   | <p>One of the options for investment passed from Environment PDG to Cabinet.</p>   |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 5 | <p><b>Identify cycling and walking priorities and opportunities.</b></p> <p>The Covid19 lockdown in the UK saw increased demand for cycling and walking infrastructure, and the Government committed funding for Active Travel schemes.</p> <p>Though Devon County Council is responsible for transport infrastructure, MDDC nonetheless wants to create partnerships and opportunities to improve active and public transport in Mid Devon.</p> <p>Transport is one of the biggest contributors to CO<sub>2</sub> in Devon.</p> | <p>The C&amp;S Specialist will work with colleagues to seek funding and partnership opportunities. Must link into Devon level plans.</p> |
| 6 | <p><b>Review and update MDDC Procurement strategies.</b></p> <p>MDDC's supply chains are a significant contributor to emissions. There are various tools and frameworks that can improve the social and environmental value achievable through procurement.</p>  | <p>The C&amp;S Specialist initiated a review, ongoing.</p>   |

**Contact for more Information:** Andrew Busby - Corporate Manager Property, Leisure and Climate Change: Email [ABusby@MidDevon.gov.uk](mailto:ABusby@MidDevon.gov.uk) Tel: 01884 255255. Jason Ball - Climate and Sustainability Specialist: Email: [JBall@MidDevon.gov.uk](mailto:JBall@MidDevon.gov.uk) Tel: 01884 255255.

**Circulation of the Report:** Cabinet Member for the Environment and Climate Change, Leadership Team.

**List of Background Papers:** The previous climate change and sustainability report was provided to the [Environment Policy Development Group](#) on [13 September 2022](#). Link to [Report](#). Link to [Appendix A](#).