

Report for: Environment Policy Development Group

Date of Meeting:	15 August 2023
Subject:	Climate and Sustainability Update
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Natasha Bradshaw - Cabinet Member for Climate Change.
Responsible Officer:	Jason Ball - Climate and Sustainability Specialist. Paul Deal - Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and Climate Change.
Exempt:	None.
Wards Affected:	All.
Enclosures:	None.

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To receive an update on the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and the wider Climate and Sustainability Programme.

Recommendation(s):

That the Environment PDG notes and accepts this report as an update on the Council’s response to the Climate Emergency, documenting progress with the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and the wider Climate and Sustainability Programme.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan places a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability matters in all aspects of its work, linked to everything from procurement to promoting nature recovery.
- 1.2 The Climate and Sustainability (C&S) Specialist leads development of the Council's Climate and Sustainability Programme, working inclusively with all colleagues and Councillors, particularly the Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and Climate Change; and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change.
- 1.3 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and aims to be climate neutral by 2030. The term 'climate neutrality' describes a balance achieved, for any given period, for carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases released into or removed from the atmosphere; related to the actions taken by organisations, businesses or individuals. The goal of climate neutrality is to achieve a net zero climate impact.
- 1.4 The Council's work to address the climate change crisis aligns with the climate emergency declaration across Devon, and the Devon Carbon Plan. Council actions with regard to **climate mitigation** (reducing greenhouse emissions) and **climate adaptation** (resilience to climate change risks) can be split into two work streams:
 - an internal organisational / corporate focus for the Council;
 - the wider agenda to enable actions across Mid Devon communities.
- 1.5 Therefore this report is divided into **corporate** and **community** items (some overlap is possible). Clearly the Council can monitor and manage matters related to our own assets and operations to a significant degree. For the wider agenda linked to the whole Mid Devon area, we will work as a partner with local businesses, organisations, community groups and residents.
- 1.6 This report emphasises activity and progress updates for brevity. For background details, please refer to previous reports, all archived online.

2.0 Performance

- 2.1 Aims, Priorities and Performance Indicators
 - 2.1.1 Progress on Performance Indicators (PI) is provided separately.
- 2.2 Climate Action Plan (CAP).
 - 2.2.1 The C&S Specialist has run team meetings for all Operations Managers / Service Leads and Corporate Managers; and hosts a monthly support call. Updates requested from all. Totals updated below.
 - 2.2.2 The CAP comprises both Corporate and Community work stream items**.
 - 2.2.3 ***Estimated costs identified thus far total £117,155,857 split as follows:
 - 2.2.4 For the Internal Structures and Processes strand, £643,138.

- 2.2.5 For the Housing Energy and Assets strand, £108,515,689. (This includes HRA planned works and estimates for the Council's facility buildings.)
- 2.2.6 For the Transport and Vehicles strand, £6,405,030.
- 2.2.7 For the Community and Wider Context strand, £1,511,000.
- 2.3 Cost estimates may be allocated within existing budgets, or may be additional; the CAP format shows where additional funding is required (or cost savings) in order to enable fundraising and budget planning.
- 2.4 The "estimated total tCO₂e saved 2020-2030" (tCO₂e = tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) indicates proposals could save 2,134 tCO₂e per year via Corporate projects and 11,837 tCO₂e per year in the Community work stream.
- 2.5 Caveats. Robust caveats must be provided with any CAP reporting to cover factors such as uncertainty and data gaps. Examples below.
- **Analysis gap. We have not identified all the projects required for the Council to achieve Net Zero. (Corporate impact.) Therefore we do not yet have a comprehensive carbon reduction plan.
 - Data gap. The majority of the CAP items require more information. Details will be enhanced by lead officers assigned to each prioritised project.
 - ***Estimates. The majority of costs are estimates. The majority of carbon savings are estimated, and not always based on an assessment.
 - Forecasting. The further ahead a project is planned, the less certain we can be about future costs.
 - Scope. Many items show capital costs but do not always forecast running costs of e.g. new installations or vehicles, or disposal costs. Embodied carbon is not considered. Business cases for each project / activity must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis (do not assume projects have been approved simply by being listed as an option in the CAP).

3.0 Community and partnership activities

- 3.1 Community Groups.
- 3.2 The C&S Specialist and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change are liaising with local groups to understand their priorities and to seek partnership opportunities such as events, projects or community engagement.
- 3.3 Mid Devon Show.
- 3.4 The C&S Specialist joined the Communications team, the waste and recycling team, Councillors and other staff, to engage the public on sustainability topics.
- 3.5 Devon Climate Emergency (DCE) Partnership
- 3.5.1 The C&S Specialist is involved in a new working party to establish a partnership approach for a Devon local energy action planning. The purpose is to facilitate local / regional preparedness and development of Net Zero energy systems. The project emerged from DCE discussions but will sit independently of the DCE, involving a broader range of stakeholders such as community bodies and energy network operators.

4.0 Corporate activities

4.1 The Net Zero Advisory Group (NZAG).
(CS priority: 1.)

4.1.1 NZAG will meet 22nd August. An advisory group of the Environment PDG.

4.2 Sustainability appraisals for decision-making and reports.
(CS priority: 1.)

4.2.1 Cabinet endorsed Environment PDG recommendations, for the PDG and NZAG to liaise with Corporate Management Team (CMT) to:

- formulate a method for a Climate and Sustainability Statement that can be consistently applied to all business cases
- devise a consistent approach to climate change impact statements noted on committee reports

4.2.2 Final draft guidance has been circulated to this PDG and all PDG Chairs. Environment PDG may now wish to recommend it to Cabinet. The guidance would be a 'living' corporate reference document for the Council.

4.3 Sustainability in Planning.
(CS Priority 1.)

4.3.1 The Director of Place, Corporate Manager and Principal Managers worked with the C&S Specialist to deliver a detailed Member Briefing about Sustainability in Planning. Members are encouraged to participate in the Local Plan review and policies via the Planning Policy Advisory Group (PPAG).

4.4 Project: Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS).
(CS priority: 2, 3. CP aims: env01, env02, ec01.)

4.4.1 A new bid for PSDS funding for Culm Valley Sports Centre is being prepared for autumn submission. MDDC submitted a PSDS bid to fund a detailed design in advance of the capital bid, but this did not succeed due to over-subscription for PSDS on a national level.

4.4.2 The £2.8m PSDS funded project to decarbonise heating at Exe Valley and Lords Meadow leisure centres used combined arrays of ground-source and air-source heat pumps (and wood biomass heating at Lords Meadow) with extra power from new solar photovoltaic panels.

4.5 Bin-it-123.
(CP aim: env06.)

4.5.1 Since the change to Bin-it-123 collection cycles, Mid Devon's domestic recycling rate improved by circa 5%, with a considerable cut in residual waste.

4.6 Renewable Energy for Council Consumption
(CS Priority 2 and 3. CP aims: Env02, Ec01.)

4.6.1 [Cabinet 04 July 2023](#) decided to renew the Council's contract with LASER for gas and electricity for four years (01 October 2024 to 30 September 2028), based on factors such as the soundness of the procurement route, framework

performance track record, and its compatibility with achieving Net Zero. Cabinet also agreed a commitment to renewable electricity tariffs, seeking to achieve 100% renewable electricity supply within 2 years. A move to 100% renewable can avoid carbon emissions circa 560 tCO₂e annually.

4.7 The Council's 2022-2023 Carbon Footprint.

4.7.1 The Council's [annual Carbon Footprint reports](#) from 2018-2019 to 2022-2023 estimate the organisation's climate change impact from greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, measured in tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e).

4.7.2 The annual independent GHG inventory is carried out by the Centre for Energy and Environment at the University of Exeter. The latest inventory produced standard Scope 1-3 categories, and a set of alternative categories (based on the internationally recognised Greenhouse Gas Protocol and BS EN ISO 14064 1 standard). The summary report includes a method statement - an improved method was used this year and applied retrospectively to all assessed years in order to provide consistently comparable analysis.

4.7.3 Explaining Scopes 1, 2, 3 for Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- **Scope 1** (direct emissions). Activities owned or controlled by your organisation that release emissions directly into the atmosphere. Scope 1 emissions typically include fuel combustion by vehicles or on site e.g. gas fired boilers, and also include escaped/fugitive refrigerant gases from air conditioning or heat pump systems.
- **Scope 2** (energy indirect). Emissions linked to purchased electricity, heating and cooling. These indirect impacts are a consequence of the organisation's activities but the emissions occur at sources you do not own or control.
- **Scope 3** (other indirect). Emissions in Scope 3 also arise from your organisation's actions and purchases, and occur at sources that you do not own or control, but are outside Scope 2. Typically these encompass supply chains and/or delivery chains of goods and services, such as waste disposal, equipment, materials, or fuels. Also business travel by means not owned or controlled by your organisation.

4.7.4 Charts below illustrate the figures split by Scope, then by alternative categories. The results show growth overall, despite real progress in certain areas. Annual net emissions increased circa 700 tCO₂e between 2018-2019 and 2022-2023.

4.7.5 Since the 2018-2019 baseline year:

- Scope 1 impacts (direct emissions e.g. fossil fuel use) rose by circa 2%.
- Scope 2 impacts (indirect energy emissions e.g. linked to electricity) reduced by c.37% with a clear downward trend.
- Scope 3 impacts (indirect other e.g. good and services) dipped in 2020-2021 but rose by c.31% overall.

Table 1 - Annual GHG Emissions in Tonnes of CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)

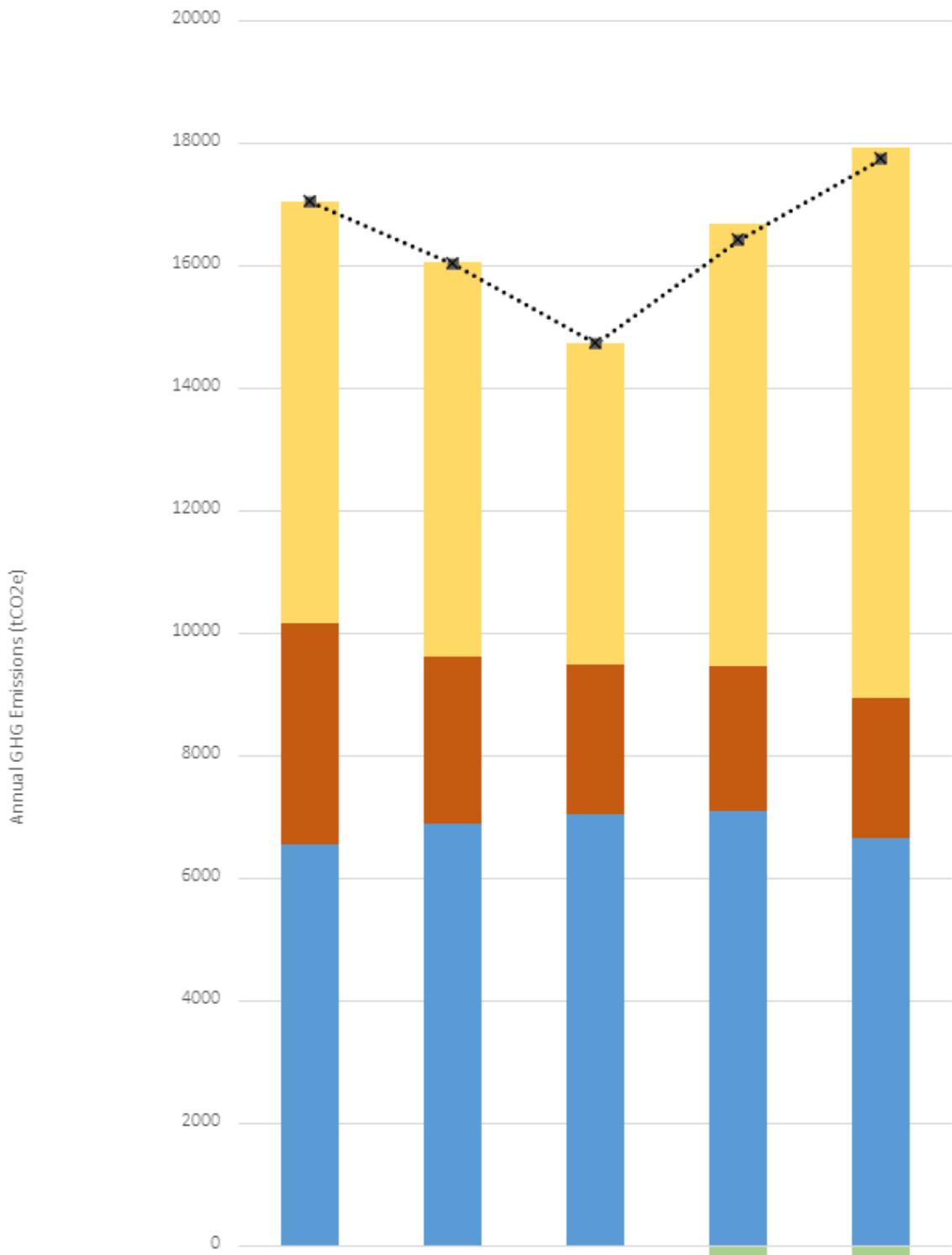
Tonnes of CO2 equivalent	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Scope 1	6,535	6,887	7,026	7,077	6,655
Scope 2	3,625	2,705	2,460	2,367	2,270
Scope 3	6,872	6,440	5,238	7,213	8,985
Offset Carbon	-	(9)	(8)	(241)	(181)
TOTAL (net)	17,032	16,024	14,717	16,415	17,730
TOTAL (gross)	17,032	16,033	14,725	16,656	17,911

4.7.6 Scope 3 impact can be difficult to estimate and to interpret. Each spend category is assigned an 'Emissions Factor' (EF) and this scoring system is linked to price as kgCO2e per £ spent. The university report states:

"...whilst emission factors have been reduced to account for inflation, any wider decarbonisation from supply chains would not have been captured."

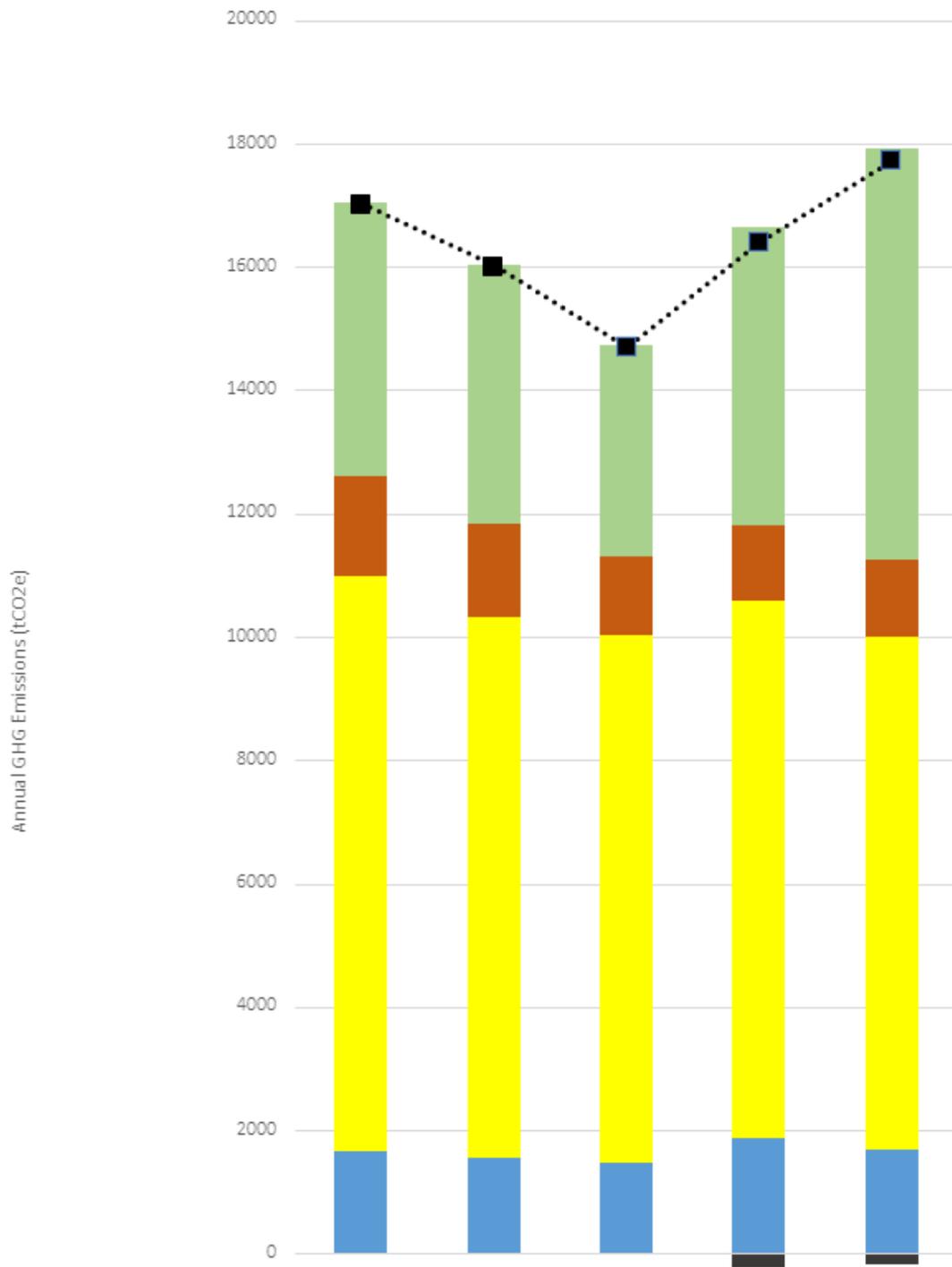
"The current spend based method should therefore only be used as a guide."

4.7.7 Some key expenditure items that made an impact in Scope 3 will actually help to reduce future GHG emissions in Scopes 1 and 2, particularly the leisure centre decarbonisation projects, through which the Council has invested to improve energy efficiency and to cut carbon. (noted later)



	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Offset Carbon	0	-9	-8	-241	-181
Scope 3	6872	6440	5238	7213	8985
Scope 2	3625	2705	2460	2367	2270
Scope 1	6535	6887	7026	7077	6655
GRAND TOTAL (net)	17032	16024	14717	16415	17730

Figure 1 - Carbon Footprint figures split by Scope



	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
5. Offsets	0	-9	-8	-241	-181
4. Procurement	4425	4207	3420	4858	6659
3. Transport	1626	1513	1289	1222	1238
2. Social Housing	9326	8758	8547	8711	8319
1. Buildings (exc. housing)	1654	1554	1469	1865	1694
Series5	17032	16024	14717	16415	17730

Figure 2 - Carbon Footprint figures split by alternative categories.

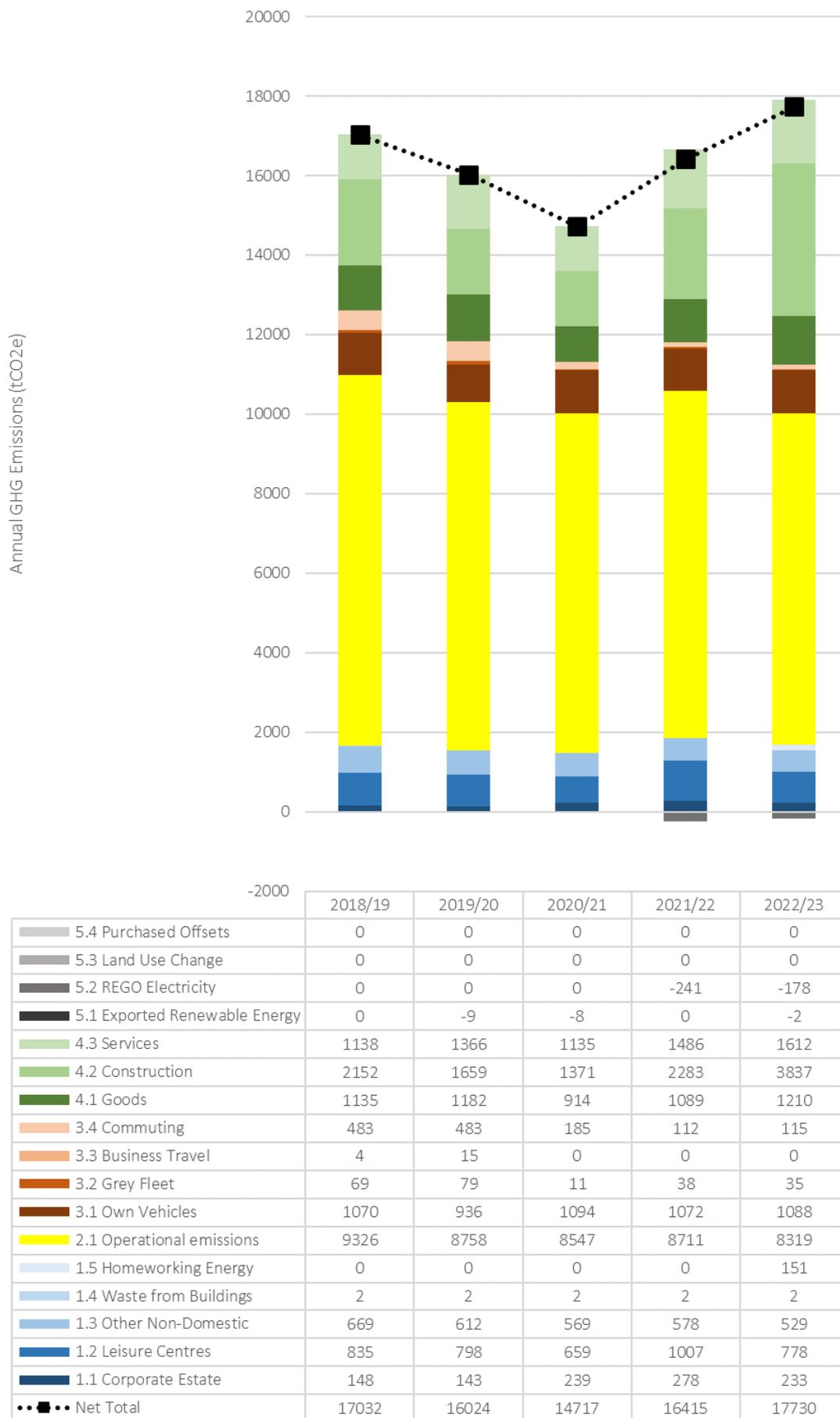


Figure 3 - Carbon Footprint figures split by alternative categories - in more detail

4.7.8 Reflecting on the Council's position will help to prioritise options for investment in the Climate Action Plan and shape strategy looking forward.

4.7.9 Progress 2021-2022.

Much of the increased emissions seen post-pandemic were linked to a significantly greater procurement spend (Scope 3). A phased and partial return to the workplace meant we switched heating back on but at the same time we had to comply with guidance to keep windows open, ventilate leisure facilities, etc.

Positives in 2021-2022 included:

- Hybrid working made a difference. Since 2018/2019 we have cut down on commuting, business travel in staff cars (grey fleet) and Councillor travel.
- Council facilities made only 13% of the climate impact linked to buildings.
- Buying renewable electricity for circa 53% of supply saved 241 tCO_{2e}.

4.7.10 Progress 2022-2023

The Council has rapidly reduced emissions from lighting, heating and cooling, with significant moves to green tariff electricity, and over £4million spent on *Salix funded* invest-to-save projects, most notably to decarbonise heat and cooling systems at Tiverton and Crediton leisure centres (circa £3m) with new solar arrays, heat pumps and building management systems. These projects build on the success of previous upgrades at MDDC facilities e.g. more energy-efficient lighting systems, and improvements will take effect in the 2023-2024 carbon footprint.

The latest leisure centre renewable energy projects are a massive achievement and a transformational milestone, set to save 572 tCO_{2e} of greenhouse emissions and over £130k in costs annually.

4.7.11 Priority Action Ahead

- We have just added our first electric vans to the Council fleet.
- Our new wave of Council-owned Zed Pod housing will be capable of Net Zero carbon energy performance.
- Cabinet has agreed to increase commitment to renewable electricity tariffs. Buying 100% renewable power can avoid circa 560 tCO_{2e} annually.
- Cabinet portfolio holders support further investment in solar power.
- The Council has a new Procurement Strategy, staff training has begun and improvements will be made to ensure procurement delivers on policy.

Financial Implications: The financial implications associated with this report are the overall costs of the Climate and Sustainability Programme, budgets linked specifically to the Council's Corporate Plan, Climate Strategy and CAP.

Legal Implications: [Full Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019](#). The Environment Policy Development Group (PDG) is responsible for developing relevant council policies; considering how best to implement the Council's approved policies; and for making informed recommendations to Cabinet on the matter.

Risk Assessment: Progress on Performance Indicators (PI) provided separately by Performance and Risk Reports. There are 2 main risks (to the Council): 1) that the Council does not take sufficient actions to enable it to meet its Climate Emergency declaration ambitions; and 2) that the financial implications of Climate Change are not adequately measured and reflected in the Council's decision making.

Impact on Climate Change: The role of the Climate and Sustainability (C&S) Specialist in support of the corporate officer team is central to the Council's Climate and Sustainability Programme by actions such as the development of strategic positions and delivery of projects through internal, community and partnership work.

Equalities Impact Assessment: There are no equality impacts associated with this report. Specific projects and policies are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty. (Assessing the equality impacts of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices is not only a legal requirement, but also a positive opportunity for authorities to make better decisions based on robust evidence.)

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Please refer to [Our Plan - Sustainable Mid Devon](#) which outlines the progress on Corporate Plan aims and Climate Strategy priorities.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 01 Aug 2023

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 01 Aug 2023

Chief Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director

Date: 01 Aug 2023

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 01 Aug 2023

Cabinet member notified: Yes.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Jason Ball - Climate and Sustainability Specialist: Email:

JBall@MidDevon.gov.uk Tel: 01884 255255.

Background papers: Related papers: The previous report was provided to the [Environment Policy Development Group](#) on [20 Jun 2023](#).