

# CORPORATE CARBON REDUCTION PLAN 2021



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL



OFFICIAL



As a City Council we recognise how crucial it is that we show strong leadership in committing to move all council activities to become net zero by 2030. We also recognise that as far as the Climate Emergency is concerned, actions speak much louder than words. We need to lead by example and engagement if we are to bring others with us in tackling the Climate Emergency.

Although the City Council accounts for only 1% of total carbon emissions in Plymouth, our second Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan continues to demonstrate how we will make changes to our buildings, our transport fleet, how we will minimise the generation of waste, and crucially how we can encourage more sustainable behaviours, in order to deliver major reductions in carbon emissions. These reductions will help us lay the foundations of a net zero Plymouth: foundations that will hopefully inspire others to make the urgent changes required to reach our climate goals.

The actions in this plan are clearly designed to make reductions in carbon emissions – but they are also designed to send a message to the whole of Plymouth, be that our own council staff and councillors, our local businesses, schools, voluntary and community groups or individuals: everyone can, and should, play a part in tackling the Climate Emergency. This plan allows everyone across all the departments of the City Council to do their bit, working with our partners to encourage engagement at many levels to drive real change.

As the democratic leaders of the city I am determined the City Council itself continues to play a decisive leadership in how it responds to climate change by ensuring that all of its services are delivered in a more sustainable way that helps reduce our emissions to zero by 2030. But in order to change how we deliver services to the people and businesses of the city we need their help to support a sustainable greener city that will contribute to the overall protection of the planet. Ultimately all the actions we as a City Council need to take are about people, place and planet and how those can work together in greater harmony for a more sustainable future for humanity.

**Sue Dann**

**Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene, Plymouth City Council**







## I. Introduction

This second plan sets out the actions the City Council will undertake in 2021 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from its own operations. It builds on last year's plan, with clear, specific and measurable actions.

The City Council is increasingly determined to have a positive effect on the environment and to avoid any unintended consequences through its actions. This plan presents the Council's approach and also, how it will lead the way on tackling carbon emissions by:

- Getting its own house in order by reducing the emissions from its estate and operations to work towards net zero emissions by 2030.
- Using its influence and role as a community leader to work with partners, businesses and communities to tackle climate change through a common framework for action.
- Revising and updating this plan each year until 2030.



If NOT NOW, WHEN?

## 2. How it started

The decision by the City Council on the 18 March 2019 to declare a Climate Emergency produced a number of key actions. These included a pledge to make Plymouth carbon neutral by 2030 and to produce a new Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan. This report provides a brief review of progress so far and proposes a set of new actions for delivery during 2021.

The aim of the Council's Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan 2021 is to:

- Achieve net zero emissions by 2030.
- Provide a green, sustainable city that cares about the environment.

### Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan 2021

The Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan 2021 maintains the same structure as the plan created for year 1. It has two themed sections:

- Section A. Emissions and significant energy uses within the Plymouth City Council estate.
- Section B. Engagement, behavioural change and governance arrangements in Plymouth City Council.

The majority of the City Council's greenhouse gas emissions are accounted for in Section A, whereas Section B describes the personal and governance changes that will lead to reductions. The focus will be on delivering behavioural change, across the whole organisation, to elicit the required outcomes.





### 3. What's next – on the journey to zero emissions by 2030

This challenging and exciting journey to 2030 has only just started, and success will only be achieved through a collective effort. All services and departments of the City Council have Cabinet Member commitment together with cross-party support to achieve these ambitions. We know that over 95% of all corporate emissions come from five key areas:

#### **Council buildings and the corporate estate**

Emissions from buildings, which will be reduced through a combination of measures including the implementation of a replacement LED lighting program.

#### **Fleet and equipment**

Emissions from core fleet (vehicles owned by the Council), which will be reduced through a replacement program with the electrification of cars and vans.

#### **Roads and street furniture**

Emissions from roads and street furniture, which includes changes to illumination bollards, sign lighting and LED traffic lighting.

#### **Staff and councillor travel**

Emissions from staff and councillor travel which will be reduced significantly following the introduction of a Sustainable Travel Policy.

#### **Waste which is council generated**

Emissions from waste that is generated by the council.





## 4. We'll reduce emissions from council buildings

Emissions from heating and powering the City Council's buildings (excluding schools) account for over half of the overall emissions from the Council's operations. If the Council is to achieve net zero emissions, a concerted effort is required to both reduce energy consumption through improved energy efficiency measures and to increase the amount of renewable energy generation.

The proposed actions on City Council buildings for 2021 are:

- 2.1.1 Increase by 125% the City Council's PV (solar photovoltaic) provision by commissioning 720kW of new capacity.
- 2.1.2 Implement an LED lighting and controls replacement programme for the Plymouth Life Centre, Council House, Ballard House, Chelson Meadow, Prince Rock and four car parks (Western Approach, Mayflower East, Theatre Royal and Mutley).
- 2.1.3 Provide every new commercial tenant with a Sustainable Occupancy Pack to encourage action on carbon reduction initiatives.
- 2.1.4 Develop a business case and multi-million pound funding bid for a district heating system for the Guildhall, Council House and Midland House, utilising low carbon heat pump technology and a low carbon heat pump solution at Ballard House.





## 5. We're electrifying our council-owned fleet and machinery

Emissions from fleet account for around one fifth of the overall emissions from the Council's operations. The plan for replacing end-of-life diesel vehicles with electric alternatives is now firmly in place. It will see 177 electric vehicles delivered in three phases over six years. In 2020, 20 diesel vans were replaced for electric vehicles. The replacement of older refuse vehicles, including refuse trucks will start to be ordered in 2020/21, for delivery in 2021/22. These are diesel vehicles with electric bin lifts. These and other activities have resulted in the Council being nominated for a 'Green Fleet of the Year' award.

The proposed actions on City Council fleet and equipment for 2021 are:

- 2.2.1 Purchase a further 38 electric fleet vehicles in 2021 as part of the plan for all City Council vehicles below 3 tonnes to be electric by 2022.
- 2.2.2 Purchase and install electric bin lifts for seven vehicles in the fleet.
- 2.2.3 Pilot the use of electric tools in managing the City Council's green estate, as a step towards removing petrol powered tools.
- 2.2.4 Trial new approaches to managing the city's green infrastructure which reduce the need for machinery and increase carbon capture.
- 2.2.5 Install a new tracker system that captures and reports the carbon dioxide emissions from all fleet vehicles.
- 2.2.6 Implement and monitor vehicle-to-grid charge points on the City Council estate at Prince Rock Depot, Windsor House and Ballard House.
- 2.2.7 Purchase an electric powered road sweeper for trial in the city.





## 6. We're mapping out emissions from roads and street furniture

Emissions from street lighting and road furniture account for approximately a quarter of the City Council's total emissions. Reductions have been achieved this year through a programme which replaces sodium bulbs with LED lighting, part-night lighting and night-time dimming.

The proposed actions on City Council roads and street furniture for 2021 are:

- 2.3.1 Reduce emissions from 50 road islands, by changing illuminated bollards and sign lights to LED.
- 2.3.2 Increase to over 50% the number of road junctions with LED traffic light units.





## 7. We're driving down emissions from staff and councillor travel

Emissions from staff and councillor travel (grey fleet) account for approximately 3% of the City Council's total emissions. The grey fleet comprises the vehicles owned by employees and councillors that are used for business travel. The implementation of The Way We Work programme in a post COVID-19 environment will be translated in the development of a Sustainable Travel Policy for Plymouth City Council staff and councillors.

The proposed actions for City Council staff and councillor travel for 2021 are:

- 2.4.1 Implement a Sustainable Travel Policy for Plymouth City Council staff and councillors to instill behavioural change relating to business travel, commuting, parking and more sustainable modes of travel.
- 2.4.2 Provide electric pool bicycles and training for use by staff and councillors to help reduce car travel.





## 8. We're reducing waste which is council generated

Emissions from waste which is generated and disposed of as a consequence of activities of Plymouth City Council are not currently known. However, actions undertaken in 2020 saw a review of the contracts the City Council has with providers of waste collection, which have now been standardised. Waste production has and will be analysed going forward.

The proposed actions on City Council waste for 2021 are:

- 2.5.1 Install standardised and improved recycling facilities in all City Council corporate buildings.
- 2.5.2 Create an internal online system to inform staff about spare equipment that is available for them to re-use.
- 2.5.3 Reduce waste production to a minimum within grounds maintenance and ensure products from land management activities (such as timber) are repurposed for positive reuse.





## 9. We're changing behaviours

This second action plan seeks to go beyond the 'hard' initiatives and challenges described above and tackle carbon emissions by other means, namely by changing our governance, behaviours, engagement activities and the way we invest. Whilst emissions from these are less measurable, the way people tackle these will be fundamental. These are all set out in Section B of the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan.

### Section B of the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan 2021

Actions undertaken in 2020 have influenced decisions that have led to reductions in carbon emissions. The new actions for 2021 seek to tackle specific challenges faced.

Governance	Behaviours	Engagement	Finance/Investment
2.6.1 Ensure that any changes to the Council's Corporate Plan and associated policies take account of the climate change ambitions of the Council.	2.7.1 Deliver an extensive programme of awareness raising and behaviour change to all employees and building users.	2.8.1 Deliver a joint City Council/ CATERed single use plastic communications campaign.	2.9.1 Initiate a new procedure that requires City Council Officers to consider Climate Emergency implications for all procurement activity where possible, including additional sign off procedures where Climate Emergency outcomes are not included in the procurement.
	2.7.2 Roll out an e-learning training programme on climate change and the importance of reducing carbon emissions for all staff and councillors.		2.9.2 Set minimum environmental social value targets for all City Council procurement decisions, where appropriate.
			2.9.3 Benchmark the City Council's staff pension performance against those of other authorities in terms of its investments in carbon intensive industries, and compare the performance of these carbon intensive investments to its other investments.





## 10. What can you do to help?

Technological advances, behaviour changes, societal norms and our understanding of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions will change between now and 2030. An annual review of the City Council's emissions and future projections will therefore be undertaken to ensure the plan remains up to date and fit for purpose.

For the City Council, this document sets out the corporate commitments to the journey to zero emission by 2030. The City Council, Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team fully support and endorse the plan.

Behavioural change is at the forefront of achieving zero emissions. All decisions of council officers and councillors will influence energy consumption to some degree. This plan seeks to raise awareness at every level, as together we can make a difference. What you do, what you decide and approve, can and will influence energy consumption.

We will continue to work with the City Council's Green Champions to develop further actions to address climate change. If you think there is more you can do to help please contact us at [ClimateEmergency@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:ClimateEmergency@plymouth.gov.uk).





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