

# Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	01 March 2023
Title of Report:	<b>Plymouth City Council Net Zero Action Plan 2023-2026</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor James Stoneman (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Governance )
Lead Strategic Director:	Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place)
Author:	Paul Barnard (Service Director for Strategic Planning & Infrastructure)
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Your Reference:	EM
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

The report seeks the Scrutiny Committee's consideration of a draft Net Zero Action Plan (NZAP) prior to the plan being taken to the City Council's meeting on 27 March 2023.

The NZAP is a new-style climate action plan for the Council, replacing the process of preparing annual Corporate Carbon Reduction Plans and Climate Emergency Action Plans. It follows an informal review of the Council's approach to climate strategy and action planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Governance and the main opposition members. In considering the review, the Climate Emergency Board agreed that a more strategic approach would be beneficial as the city's 'net zero agenda' reaches its acceleration phase. The key elements of this new approach are:

- The identification of a 'strategic narrative' which sets out the overall game plan for a net zero city. This is published on the Climate Connections Plymouth website.
- A three-year corporate NZAP, to be rolled forward on an annual basis. This will set out the Council's strategic commitments to support this overall game plan.
- The NZAP to include both corporate-facing and city-facing commitments. It will include actions relating to reducing the Council's own directly and indirectly generated greenhouse gas emissions, and to influencing and supporting the city itself to become net zero.

## Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that the Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Support and endorse the Plymouth City Council Net Zero Action Plan 2023-2026.
2. Review the Council's progress towards delivering its Net Zero Action Plan on an annual basis.

**Reason:** To ensure that the Council continues to play its part in helping Plymouth to become a net zero city by 2030, in accordance with the decision of the City Council on 18 March 2019 to declare a climate emergency (Minute 89 refers) and to prepare annual action plans through to 2030, as first agreed on 16 December 2019 (Minute 7 refers).

### Alternative options considered and rejected

The main alternative considered was to continue with the preparation of separate annual Corporate Carbon Reduction Plans and Climate Emergency Action Plans. However, this has been rejected as there are some weaknesses in this approach, particularly relating to the short term nature of the plans and the fact that they don't articulate an overall game plan for net zero. The combination of the 'strategic narrative' and NZAP address these weaknesses and strengthen the overall approach, which is important as we enter the acceleration phase.

### Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Policy GRO7 of the Plymouth Plan sets out that: 'The city will pursue the following approaches to deliver significant reductions in carbon emissions in Plymouth, aiming to achieve net-zero by 2030 ...' The NZAP sets out the City Council's commitment to support the implementation of this policy.

### Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The NZAP will include a range of actions that require funding. As a three-year plan, not every measure will have full funding in place from day one, although some will. Their inclusion demonstrates a commitment to explore funding and delivery options over the three-year period of the plan, including grant applications.

### Financial Risks

The NZAP itself does not introduce financial risks. However, there may be some risks associated with specific actions and projects, depending on how these become funded and delivered. These will need to be considered in accordance with the relevant governance arrangements in place at the appropriate time.

### Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

The driver and focus of NZAP is reducing both the Council's and the city's carbon footprint.

### Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

*\* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

Climate change affects every person and every sector of the community, and climate action is ultimately about creating a healthier, safer, more sustainable world for everyone. Climate action often brings co-benefits. For example, it can have benefits in relation to the impacts of high inflation and the cost of living crisis through supporting people and businesses reduce energy consumption.

Additionally, actions that reduce transport related carbon emissions (and associated particulates) will improve air quality and support healthier lifestyles, with associated health benefits.

However, not everyone has equal ability to take climate action and it is therefore important that the NZAP includes some key principles about how initiatives will be designed and delivered so that no one is left behind.

### Appendices

*\*Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		<i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	PCC Net Zero Action Plan 2022-2026: Background Paper and Draft Plan							

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**Background papers:**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Sign off:**

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Anthony Payne											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 15/02/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor James Stoneman - approved at Portfolio Holder meeting											
Date approved: 20/02/2023											