

## Annual Carbon Footprint Report 2022-23

To: Environment and Green Investment Committee

Meeting Date: 18 January 2024

From: Executive Director of Place and Sustainability

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Outcome: This report provides an update to the Committee on the Council's annual carbon footprint. It outlines the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions from the Council's activities in the financial year 2022-23 and the Council's progress against its carbon targets.

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

Approve the annual carbon footprint report, attached at Appendix 1 to this report, as a record of the Council's known greenhouse gas emissions for the financial year 2022-23.

Officer contact:

Name: Sarah Wilkinson

Post: Carbon and Energy Manager

Email: [sarah.wilkinson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.wilkinson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Tel: 01223 729157

## 1. Background

- 1.1 In February 2022, the Council approved its Strategic Framework for 2022/23, which includes the vision to create a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire. It also approved seven ambitions for the Council, the first of which is relates to achieving Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and supporting communities and the natural environment to adapt and thrive as the climate changes.
- 1.2 Furthermore, the Council updated its Climate Change and Environment Strategy, which was approved in February 2022. It contains a number of targets relating to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, including reducing the Council's own direct emissions (scope 1 and scope 2) to net zero by 2030 and reducing indirect emissions (scope 3) by 50.4% by 2030.
- 1.3 Scope 1 emissions are those that occur directly from sites or assets owned or controlled by the organisation (for example, gas boilers at the council's own premises, fleet vehicles, etc.). Scope 2 emissions are those from purchased electricity, heat or steam. Scope 3 emissions are emissions that occur due to the organisation's activities / products / services, but at assets not owned or controlled by that organisation (for example, travel in employee-owned vehicles or public transport, purchased goods and services through the Council's supply chain, etc.).
- 1.4 The Council has previously published its annual carbon footprint for the financial years 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22. This is the fifth annual carbon footprint developed and covers the year 2022-23. The Annual Carbon Footprint is the process to monitor progress with carbon emission reductions and progress towards achieving the Council's carbon targets.

## 2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The Council's total known greenhouse gas emissions in 2022-23 for all three scopes amounted to 99,104 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e (gross). This is 47% lower than its baseline year of 2018-19, but 21% higher than the equivalent emissions in the previous year. The majority of the increase in 2022-23 is in emissions from waste disposal. Much of the reduction in emissions since the baseline year is due to a reduction in construction work, but if construction work increases again in future years, then those emissions would increase.
- 2.2 The Council's scope 1 and 2 emissions in 2022-23 were 1,412 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e, which is 34% lower than in the previous year and 32% lower compared to the baseline year.
- 2.3 The largest share of the Council's scope 1 and 2 emissions (after taking into account purchasing of 100% renewable electricity) was due to the use of gas to heat its buildings. This has reduced since the previous year due to the Council's programme of low carbon heating projects, replacing gas boilers with air source heat pumps at some sites.
- 2.4 Scope 1 transport emissions have also reduced since the previous year due to the Highways service switching away from diesel to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil fuel for some of the larger vehicles.

- 2.5 The vast majority of the Council's emissions fall under 'scope 3', which means these are indirect emissions from assets outside of the Council's direct control, although the Council exerts influence through its procurement activity, policies and investments to reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.6 The largest share of scope 3 emissions was from waste, largely due to the Council's statutory duty as the Waste Disposal Authority. Waste emissions have increased in 2022-23 compared to previous years. Reducing carbon through its waste disposal arrangements is a key consideration in reviewing the future waste strategy for the Council.
- 2.7 Greenhouse gas emissions for the whole area of Cambridgeshire are also presented in the attached report. Data for the geographical area of Cambridgeshire has a two-year time lag before publication, so 2021 data is the most recent data now available. In the calendar year 2021, the total emissions for the geographical area of Cambridgeshire were 6.78 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e. Transport was the highest emitting sector in the county, accounting for 27% of emissions, followed by 'land use, land use change and forestry' at 23%. Due to the global Covid-19 pandemic, 2020 was an exceptionally unusual year which saw global carbon emissions reduce by 4%, followed by an increase in 2021 as activity began to return towards pre-pandemic levels.
- 2.8 The full findings, with a breakdown, for both organisational and county-wide emissions, are presented in the report attached at Appendix 1, which will be published on the climate change pages of the Council's website.
- 2.9 The Council will be taking forward further activity to continue to reduce carbon emissions in the coming year, which includes undertaking a review of the Council's fleet, further review of the Council's estate, bringing forward a strategy relating to the future of waste disposal and ongoing activity to promote active travel, use of electric vehicles and public transport, which will all have a positive contribution to the reduction of carbon emissions. The impact of this will be captured in the Council's Climate Change and Environment programme.
- 2.10 During 2024, work will continue to improve data quality, to update carbon accounting and reporting methodologies, and to develop a next report that engages a wide range of audiences. The intention is to bring together the next annual carbon footprint report (for 2023-24) alongside the Climate Change and Environment Strategy progress report and risk analysis, in late 2024.

### 3. Alignment with ambitions

- 3.1 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes

The Annual Carbon Footprint highlights progress reducing carbon emissions across the whole of Cambridgeshire and for the Council's operations.

### 3.2 Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable

The Annual Carbon Footprint reports progress on carbon emission reductions and highlights the contributions from transport.

### 3.3 Health inequalities are reduced

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

### 3.4 People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

### 3.5 Helping people out of poverty and income inequality

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

### 3.6 Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

### 3.7 Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

## 4. Significant Implications

### 4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The finalised annual carbon footprint report will be published on the climate pages of the Council's website.

### 4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

#### 4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

#### 4.8 Climate Change and Environment Implications on Priority Areas:

##### 4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Positive

Explanation: Understanding the sources of GHG emissions will inform how best to reduce emissions further in future.

##### 4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Positive

Explanation: Understanding the sources of GHG emissions will inform how best to reduce emissions further in future.

##### 4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: No impact

##### 4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: No impact

##### 4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: No impact

##### 4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: No impact

##### 4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure, and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: No impact

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement and Commercial? Yes

Name of Officer: Clare Ellis

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or Pathfinder Legal? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Emma Duncan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your EqIA Super User? Yes

Name of Officer: Sheryl French

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?  
Yes

Name of Officer: Kathryn Rogerson

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: Sheryl French

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?  
Yes

Name of Officer: Iain Green

If a Key decision, have any Climate Change and Environment implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer?

Not applicable.

## 5. Source Documents

5.1 [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics](#)

5.2 [Government conversion factors for company reporting of greenhouse gas emissions](#)