

## Climate Change and Environment Strategy Progress Report and Annual Carbon Footprint for 2023 - 2024

To: Environment and Green Investment Committee

Meeting Date: 3 October 2024

From: Executive Director of Place and Sustainability

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2024/083

Executive Summary: The Council reports annually on its carbon footprint and progress towards delivery of its Climate Change and Environment targets. This report highlights positive climate action taken during the last year; the impact the Council's climate change programme is having on achieving its net zero and nature targets, and for the first time, is seeking to set annual carbon milestones for the Council's organisational emissions to improve forward planning for emissions reductions. Bringing this all together provides a more comprehensive approach to climate reporting for the Council.

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Approve the annual carbon footprint report as a record of the Council's known greenhouse gas emissions for the financial year 2023 - 2024 as outlined at Appendix 1;
- b) Approve the annual Climate Change and Environment Strategy Risk Report for the period October 2023 - October 2024 (Appendix 2);
- c) Note the progress, key challenges, and residual risk in delivery of the Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy targets as outlined at Section 5 of this report;
- d) Approve the setting of annual carbon milestones, see Section 6;
- e) Approve the updates to the Climate Change and Environment targets and action plan, as set out in Section 7;
- f) Support the next steps set out in Section 8 to continue alignment of council action with delivery of the Climate Change and Environment targets.

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# 1 Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

- 1.1 **Ambition 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 report outlines progress towards reaching this corporate ambition.

- 1.2 **Ambition 2:** Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable:

Transport is the largest contributor to Cambridgeshire's carbon footprint. The Climate Change and Environment Strategy (CCES) Action Plan includes actions to support sustainable travel.

- 1.3 **Ambition 3:** Health inequalities are reduced:

Improving the natural environment is a key wider determinant of health, supporting better health outcomes and reducing inequalities across the County. Reducing carbon emissions whether via transport or building improvements improves local air quality.

- 1.4 **Ambition 4:** People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs:

The actions within the strategy deliver several wider co-benefits that align to this ambition. For example, managing flood risk and water supplies for safety and health; managing waste, supporting building retrofits and adapting services to ensure they continue at their best despite the changing climate.

- 1.5 **Ambition 5:** People are helped out of poverty and income inequality.

Just transition is a key theme of the strategy. For example, work on community energy and wider energy system changes serve to support individuals and communities to benefit financially and manage future fuel poverty, whilst work in managing flood risk supports communities and the most vulnerable to climate impacts.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 The UK has a legally binding national target to reach Net Zero by 2050 and reports annually at the UN International Climate Conference (COP) on its 'Nationally Determined Contribution' to the Paris Agreement. There is no statutory duty on Local Authorities to achieve Net Zero status, however, government strategies, policies, and incentives are aimed at achieving this at a national level.

- 2.2 Full Council approved the Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy in February 2022. This strategy sets out how the Council will support its communities, businesses, and wildlife to thrive whilst tackling the causes of climate change, reducing carbon, and dealing with the effects of a changing climate on services and people. It includes seven targets across carbon reduction, adaptation, and improving nature as set out below.

2.3 The current targets within the Climate Change and Environment Strategy are as follows:

Target 1	Understand and grow our natural capital account to benefit people and nature by 2025
Target 2	The Council will reduce emissions from our buildings and fleet transport to net zero by 2030 (scopes 1 and 2)
Target 3	The County Council will reduce its supply chain emissions (all scope 3) by 50.4% by 2030
Target 4	Improve our Biodiversity across Council estate by 2030
Target 5	Cambridgeshire carbon emissions will be net zero by 2045
Target 6	Support our communities and businesses to decarbonise by 2045
Target 7	All Council buildings and infrastructure to be resilient to climate change impacts by 2045

2.4 To facilitate delivery of the strategy and its targets, the Council has allocated a total £4.78m from the Just Transition Fund to deliver the following programme which comprises:

- Enabling Net Zero (£2.175m) – a four-year programme to set a council-wide framework to facilitate delivery of the CCES across the organisation
- Flood Management and Community Led Nature Restoration- a four-year programme of £1.735m to deliver community flood mitigation schemes; community led nature restoration and data improvements to set evidence-based targets.
- Delivering the strategy actions (£854K) – supporting delivery of nature and biodiversity improvements; community energy and scoping of adaptation and climate risk impacts on council services.

2.5 This report brings together the monitoring of the Climate Change and Environment Strategy, targets and programme to inform the Council as to whether it is on track to deliver its ambitions. It includes a backward look (annual carbon footprint and progress reporting) and a forward look that includes setting annual carbon milestones. The report also includes key delivery highlights and recommends next steps.

2.6 The report is set out in the following sections:

- Key Programme highlights from the last year
- Carbon Footprint 23/24; key findings – Full Report, see Appendix 1
- Annual progress update on the delivery of the targets in the Climate Change and Environment Strategy – Full report, see Appendix 2
- Setting Annual Carbon Milestone, please see Section 6
- Proposed updates to the CCES targets and actions, please see Section 7
- Areas of focus from 24/25 onwards, please see Section 8

### 3 Key Delivery Highlights of the Climate Change Environment Strategy during the last year

3.1 Below are highlights delivered during the last year

<b>Cross- CCES target support</b>	<b>Key actions delivered</b>
Organisational learning and data improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To date 3468 staff have undertaken climate e-learning (64.5% of staff in current workforce)</li> <li>• 393 staff at P4 and above have been trained on carbon literacy</li> <li>• 467 staff have been trained in 'Net Zero – Getting There and My Part'.</li> <li>• All staff have an outcome on Climate and Nature for a second year. This is driving training uptake.</li> <li>• A new automated dashboard is being created to generate future annual carbon footprints. This will reduce officer time collating data.</li> </ul>
External funding secured (or forecast) for low carbon and environment projects in CCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £19.56m of grant funding has been secured from external bodies towards the costs of capital and revenue project delivery. For example, Innovate UK, Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, Flood Levy.</li> </ul>

<b>CCES - Current Targets</b>	<b>Key actions delivered</b>
<p>Target 1: Understand and grow our natural capital account to benefit people and nature by 2025</p> <p>Target 4: Improve our Biodiversity across Council estate by 2030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity audits on the Council estate have been completed and are being incorporated into the Draft Biodiversity Strategy</li> <li>• A Tree and Hedgerow Canopy survey delivered to identify the data for the Trees and Woodland Strategy <i>(NB. Scheduled for January 2025 EGI Committee approvals)</i></li> <li>• Repairs on Giant's Hill, Rings End, Kingston, Isleham nature reserves</li> <li>• 128 Great Crested Newts identified at Worts Meadow LNR</li> </ul>

<b>CCES - Current Targets</b>	<b>Key actions delivered</b>
<p>Target 2: The Council will reduce emissions from our buildings and fleet transport to net zero by 2030 (scopes 1&amp;2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 Council buildings have been retrofitted for low carbon heating reducing carbon emissions. See how this contributes in Figure 1 below</li> <li>• 44 heat decarbonisation plans have been completed to assess feasibility and access external funding to support projects</li> <li>• A comprehensive fleet review sets out how the Council can improve and decarbonise its fleet. A business case for implementation is underway.</li> </ul>
<p>Target 3: The County Council will reduce its supply chain emissions (all scope 3) by 50.4% by 2030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 47 companies have signed the Council's Carbon Procurement Charter</li> <li>• Low Carbon Procurement Guidance published for contract managers</li> <li>• The Net Zero by Design guidance issued and incorporation into the Council's Project Management Framework underway</li> <li>• 15 procurements including Waterbeach station, All Age Carers Service and QoL survey have specifications and evaluation processes incorporating climate and nature outcomes</li> <li>• Established a Net Zero baseline and high-level action plan for the Rural Estate with the support of consultants</li> <li>• A Net Zero Strategy for Highways Maintenance and route map to deliver emissions reductions by 2030 and 2045. 702 tCO<sub>2</sub>e reduced in the last year and more planned in 24/25.</li> <li>• A Net Zero Waste report was commissioned to inform the waste management service and closed landfill sites future planning</li> <li>• 10 heat decarbonisation plans delivered for maintained schools to help access funding</li> </ul>
<p>Target 5: Cambridgeshire carbon emissions will be net-Zero by 2045</p> <p>Target 6: Support our communities and businesses to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A £5m business case was submitted to government for approval to resource public EV Charging Infrastructure</li> <li>• Swaffham Prior Community heat project saved 260 tCO<sub>2</sub>e with clean heat supplied to 65 customers during the last year</li> <li>• Triangle Solar Farm generated over £1.3m revenue (excl VAT) last year and produced c.12,500,000 kWh of clean electricity saving on average 3121 tCO<sub>2</sub> emission</li> </ul>

<b>CCES - Current Targets</b>	<b>Key actions delivered</b>
decarbonise by 2045	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £300,000 funding secured for Cambridgeshire Local Area Energy Planning. Stakeholder engagement specialists appointed to progress business and community engagement</li> <li>• £150,000 Innovate UK funding supported research and collaborations on a shared climate evidence base, delivery and investment framework – also called a ‘Locally Determined Contribution’ for Cambridgeshire</li> <li>• Recruitment for a Net Zero Finance Innovation Manager underway to attract inward investment into net zero projects collaborating with businesses, investors and communities</li> <li>• Draft Community Energy Action Plan consultation secured over 140 responses with mostly positive support and comes to November committee for approval</li> <li>• 39MW North Angle Solar Farm delivered and energising from October 2024</li> </ul>
Target 7: All Council buildings and infrastructure to be resilient to climate change impacts by 2045	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessed 111 flood risk options at 16 ‘at risk’ locations across Cambridgeshire</li> <li>• 517 new planning applications assessed for climate and flood risk impacts</li> <li>• Updated the Flood Risk enforcement policy</li> <li>• 1 x Community flood conference delivered with 100+ attendees</li> <li>• 30 water level monitors installed across the County to monitor data and inform community flood plans</li> <li>• 5 community drop-in events hosted in Cambridgeshire libraries</li> <li>• £60k secured from The Environment Agency for SuDS retrofit in the town of March</li> <li>• 1 x Flood management scheme implemented in Alconbury Brook through the local community Flood Group</li> <li>• Data analysis on historical Cambridgeshire floods, drought and over- heating events to identify costs on Council services and infrastructure</li> </ul>

## 4 Annual Carbon Footprint Report 2023/24

4.1 The Council has previously published its annual carbon footprint for the financial years

2018/19 to 2022/23. This is the sixth annual carbon footprint developed and covers the Council’s organisational carbon footprint for the year 2023-24, and also that of the geographical area of Cambridgeshire as a whole (for which the most recent data available is the calendar year 2022). The full report for 2023/24 is available in Appendix 1.

- 4.2 **Organisational emissions:** Scopes 1 and 2 are those that the council has the most control over, as they comprise emissions from our own assets, such as council buildings or vehicles. Our scopes 1 (direct) and 2 (purchased electricity) emissions for 2023-24, together amounted to 941 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- 4.3 Scope 1 and 2 emissions in 2023-24 were 42% lower than in our baseline reporting year of 2018-19. The largest share of scope 1 emissions was from gas to heat our buildings. The main reason for the reduction in scope 1 emissions this year is the Council’s programme of low carbon heating projects, where fossil fuel-based heating systems (such as gas or oil boilers) have been replaced with low carbon air source heat pumps. The Council’s Asset Improvement Programme is likely to further reduce the Council’s scope 1 and 2 emissions in future years.
- 4.4 All of the emissions for scope 2 are zero, because the Council purchases a zero-carbon electricity tariff through our supply contract.
- 4.5 Figure 1 below identifies Scope 1 emissions reductions to date and predictions for 24/25 onwards.

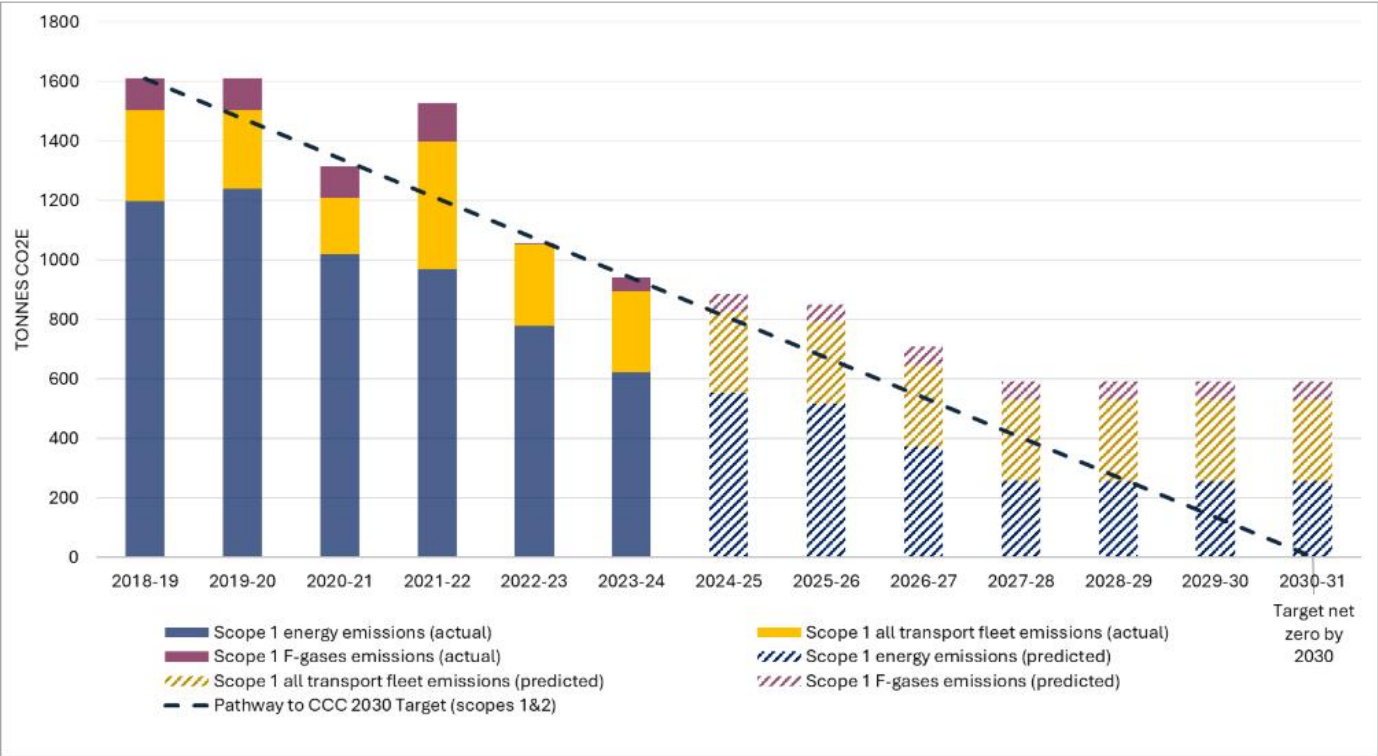


Figure 1 CCC annual GHG emissions, scope 1 (actual and predicted)

- 4.6 The vast majority (~99%) of all known emissions by the County Council were within scope 3 (indirect). Scope 3 means indirect emissions from assets outside of the Council’s direct

control, such as those of our contractors and suppliers. Scope 3 emissions were 111,307 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2023-24, excluding the rural estate. (For details on the rural estate emissions and why they are calculated separately, please see paragraph 4.9 below.) Scope 3 includes transport emissions from vehicles not under Council control (such as employees' own cars or contractors' vehicles), emissions from county waste disposal and treatment, emissions from Local Authority maintained schools' energy usage, and emissions associated with purchased goods and services delivered by third parties, such as construction works. The largest share of scope 3 emissions was from purchased goods and services, in particular waste disposal.

- 4.7 Scope 3 emissions were 39% lower in 2023-24 than in the baseline year of 2018-19. The largest reduction in scope 3 emissions (and overall emissions) since the baseline year is due to reduced construction work.
- 4.8 The Council's total known greenhouse gas emissions in 2023-24 for all 3 scopes amounted to 112,248 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e (using the market-based method for scope 2). This is 39% lower than our baseline year of 2018-19. The largest share of emissions outside the rural estate was from waste, largely due to the Council's statutory duty as the Waste Disposal Authority. There is a more detailed breakdown of all the sources of emissions and methodology, alongside further information and graphs, in the full accompanying annual carbon footprint report (Appendix 1).
- 4.9 During 2023/24, the Council procured expert consultancy support to identify the baseline carbon emissions for the rural estate and to produce a high-level action plan. Data previously held for the Council on its rural estate was out of date, particularly for peat, and therefore the Council had low confidence in its accuracy to inform monitoring and improvement planning. It is clear from the recent consultancy work the carbon emission baseline is greater than originally understood, and that achieving net zero in agriculture, land use, and land use change is not possible. Even very ambitious plans could only reach 54% emissions reductions, and this would require significant national policy support and new business economic models. There are further constraints achieving this level of emissions reductions, for example, the volume of land that would need to be taken out of food production. More work is needed to identify what can be achieved on the rural estate, by when and which partnerships are needed to support delivery.
- 4.10 On this basis it is proposed to separate out the targets for scope 3 rural estate emissions from the Council's target for all other scope 3 emissions. This would allow an increased focus on this important area, and the intention is to develop a target specifically for the rural estate as it is part of the Council's scope 3, whilst still monitoring and measuring the carbon emissions associated with all parts of scope 3.
- 4.11 More detailed analysis will be conducted to agree an achievable target for the Rural Estate aspect of the scope 3 emissions. Calculating carbon emissions from land use and agriculture is complex but an estimated baseline of emissions for the rural estate is around 200,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e – significantly more than all other sources of emissions from Council activities put together. The implications of this, and proposals for re-alignment of carbon



reduction targets is discussed in Section 7.

4.12 In summary, the Council has successfully invested into reducing scope 1 and 2 emissions as shown by Figure 2 below. The difference between the black line and the orange line highlights the difference or impact between doing nothing and investing in carbon emissions reductions.

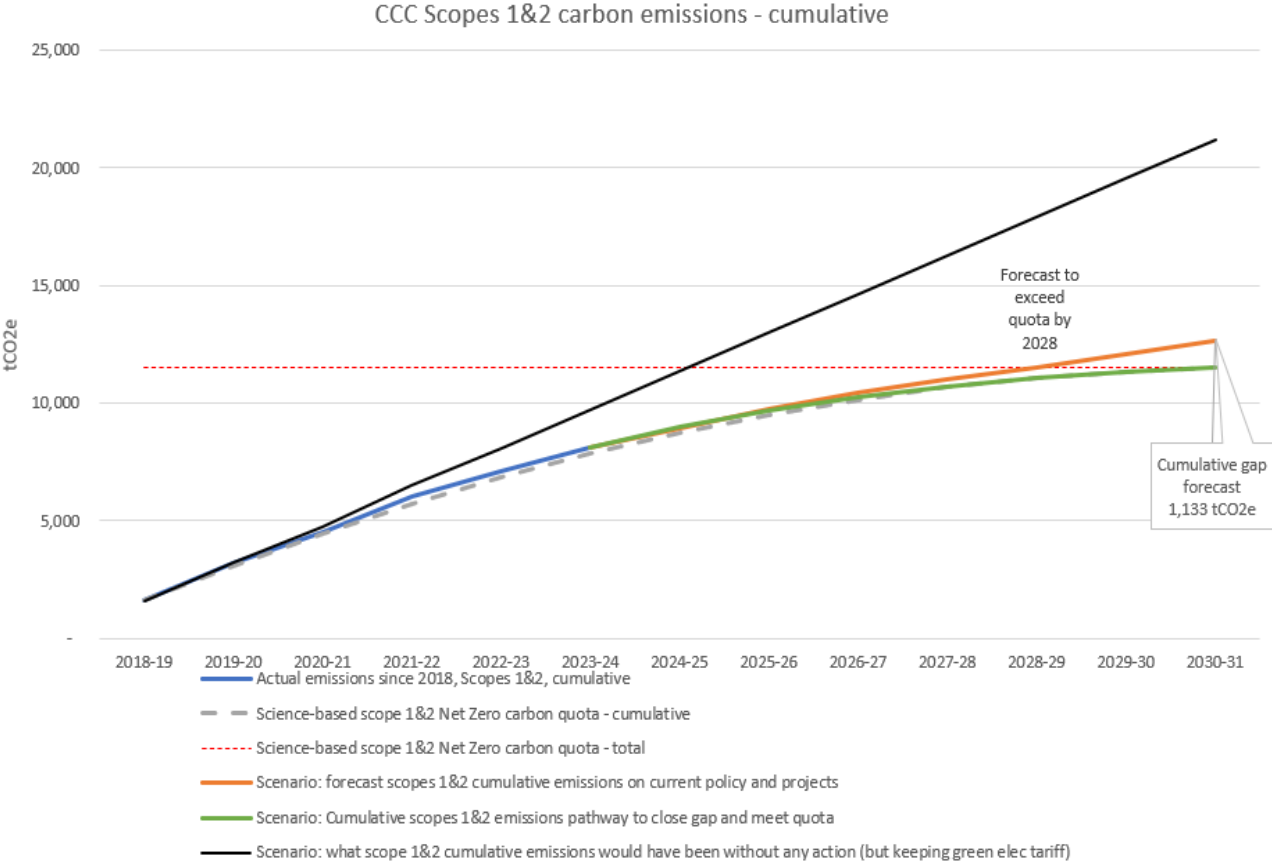


Figure 2 Scopes 1 and 2 cumulative carbon emissions

4.13 When considering the reduction across all three scopes, Figure 3 demonstrates the reductions against the 2018/19 baseline. However, keeping construction emissions low is a challenge due to the cyclical nature of growth and infrastructure investment and delivery.

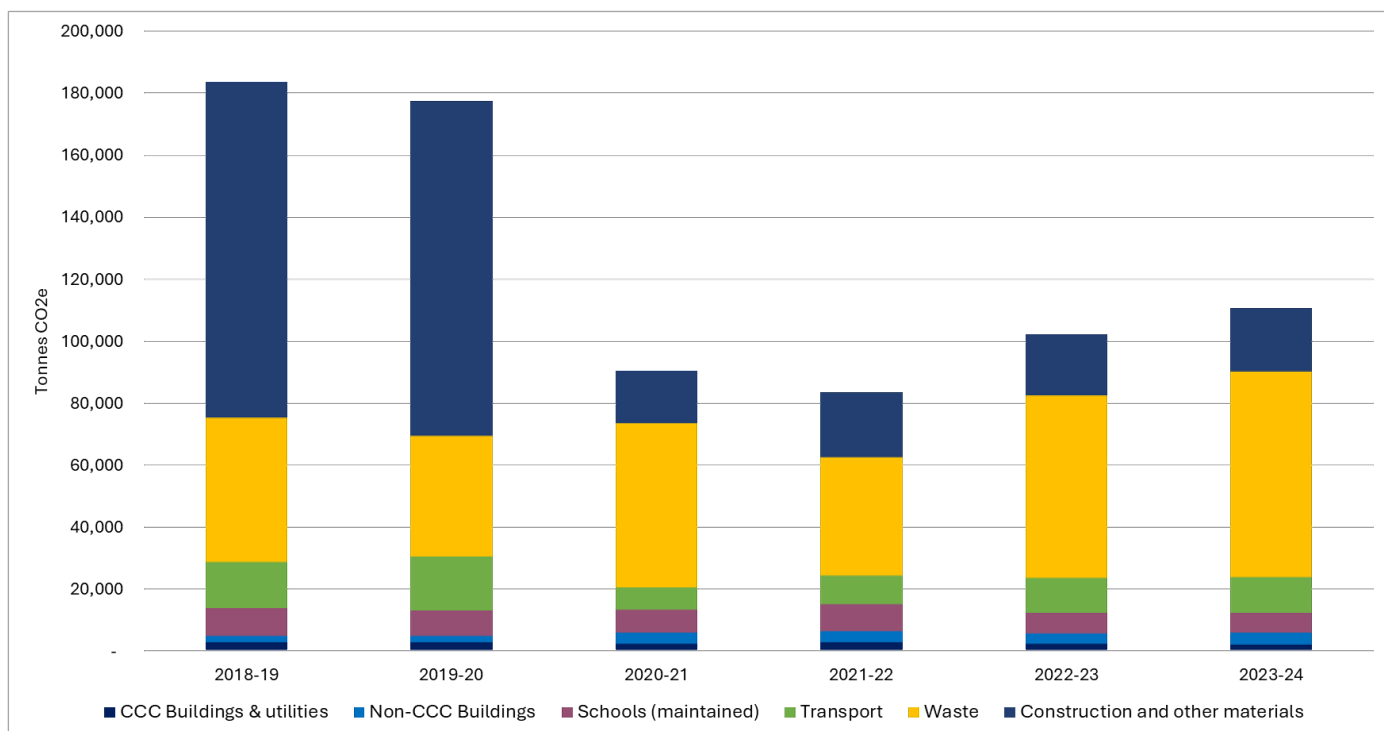


Figure 3 CCC annual GHG emissions, by source sector (all 3 scopes)

4.14 **Cambridgeshire-wide Emissions:** The carbon footprint of the geographical area of Cambridgeshire comprises greenhouse gas emissions from commercial and industrial sources, domestic homes, transport, agriculture, waste, and land use. The vast majority of this is outside of the control of the Council. This has been informed by [data published by the UK Government Department for Energy Security and Net Zero \(DESNZ\) on GHG emissions by local authority area](#) to identify the carbon footprint of the geographical area of Cambridgeshire.

4.15 In 2022, the most recent year of available data, the total greenhouse gas emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O) for the geographical area of Cambridgeshire were 6.45 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e. This is a 3% fall from 2021. Transport remains the highest emitting sector in the county, accounting for 27% of emissions, followed by land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF), at 23%, agriculture (15%) and domestic energy use (13%). Further details are available in the accompanying annual carbon footprint report (Appendix 1).

## 5 Annual Risk Report on the Delivery of the Climate Change and Environment Strategy (23/24)

5.1 The annual risk report looks at progress towards achieving the Council's seven targets (set out in paragraph 2.3 above). It provides assurance that targets are on track for delivery. The methodology treats the action plan as risk mitigations to manage the risk of the council not meeting its targets. Where actions are insufficient to deliver ambitions, they are amended, improved or new actions added to ensure delivery can bring us back on track. The residual risk reported is the risk of not achieving the target(s). The first progress report using this approach was approved at [October 2023's Environment and Green Investment Committee](#)

(item 5).

5.2 A summary of the risk change is highlighted below (Table 1, Figure 4). The residual risk in October 2024 has decreased since the last report in 2023. The risk of non-delivery of the Council's targets is now 16 which is a positive shift. Whilst this decrease reflects the substantial action that has been implemented in the last year, there remains a significant risk. However, with 6 years to go to achieve the Net Zero organisational targets as an example, and the impacts of enabling works still to take effect, the main take away is to keep delivering actions in the strategy and strengthening their impact across the organisation.

Table 1 Overall Climate Change & Environment Strategy delivery risk.

Pre-CCES Status	October 2023 Status			New Average Programme Status Oct 2024		
Risk	Severity	Likelihood of Delay Factor	Risk	Severity	Likelihood of Delay Factor	Residual Risk
25	5	4	20	4	4	16

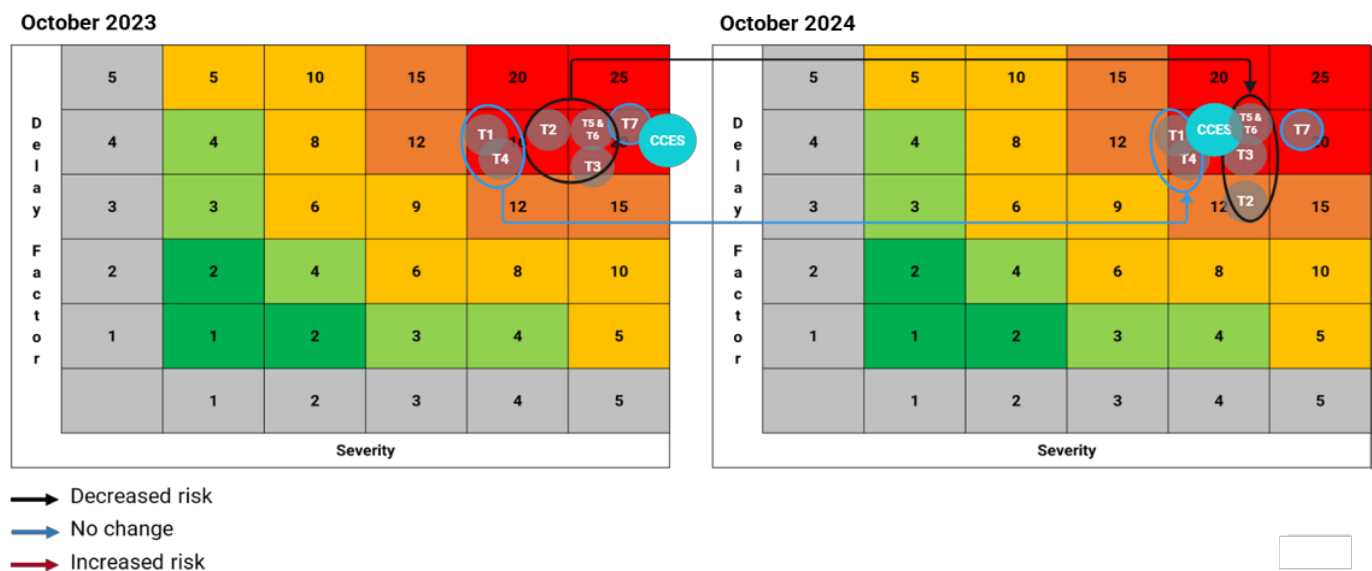


Figure 4 Comparison of residual risk between October 2023 and October 2024

5.3 The change demonstrates continued progress towards delivery of the Council's targets, with the risk of non-delivery decreasing for four of the seven targets since the previous year. The remaining three targets are holding steady.

5.4 Delivery of the reduced overall risk has been driven by significant cross-organisational action, underpinned by the Climate Change and Environment Programme as set out in section 3.

5.5 The full Annual Risk Report for 2023-2024 is available in Appendix 2 providing further detail on target delivery and next steps.

### PATHWAYS TO GREEN

5.6 The strategy includes a range of actions tailored to each target. The continued delivery of these actions over the short to medium term will build the Council's pathway to achieving

green and target delivery. Work to define the required steps is ongoing, particularly for the biodiversity related targets, however there is greater clarity for carbon reductions and adaptation as set out below.

5.7 Target 2: The Council will reduce emissions from our buildings and fleet transport to net zero by 2030 (scopes 1&2)

Figure 5 illustrates the key actions completed and those that are needed in the future to deliver Target 2. It is important to note that it requires both new actions and the continued delivery of existing actions – e.g. the continued purchased of green tariff electricity. In particular, there will need to be a focus on expanding the transition of council buildings onto Low Carbon Heating and electrification of Fleet and the ongoing challenge will be to secure the funding and resources to facilitate these.

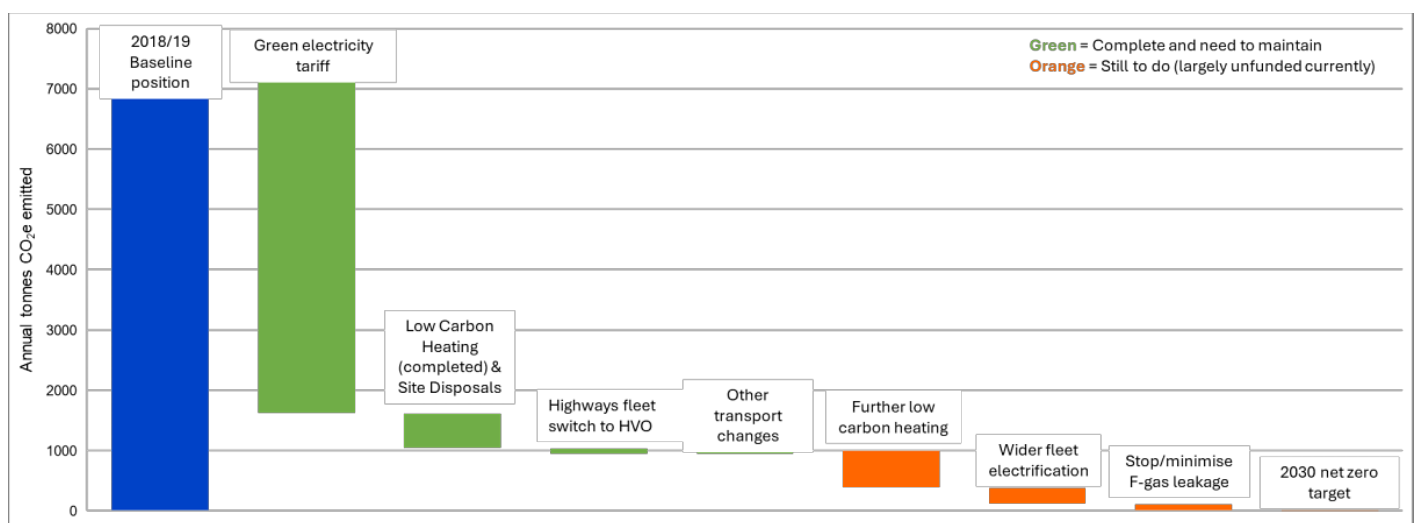


Figure 5 Waterfall diagram – how to achieve net zero by 2030 for scopes 1 and 2

5.8 Target 3: The County Council will reduce its supply chain emissions (all scope 3) by 50.4% by 2030

Figure 6 illustrates the key actions to achieve Target 3. There is greater uncertainty for this target, as the pathway is very dependent on maintaining reduced levels of construction (mainly across education and highways). Construction is usually a cyclical activity, with requirements fluctuating according to demand and growth. The Council will need to consider its forward capital programmes for schools and infrastructure projects to understand the impact these will have on carbon emissions and incorporate this into pathway planning and annual carbon milestone setting.

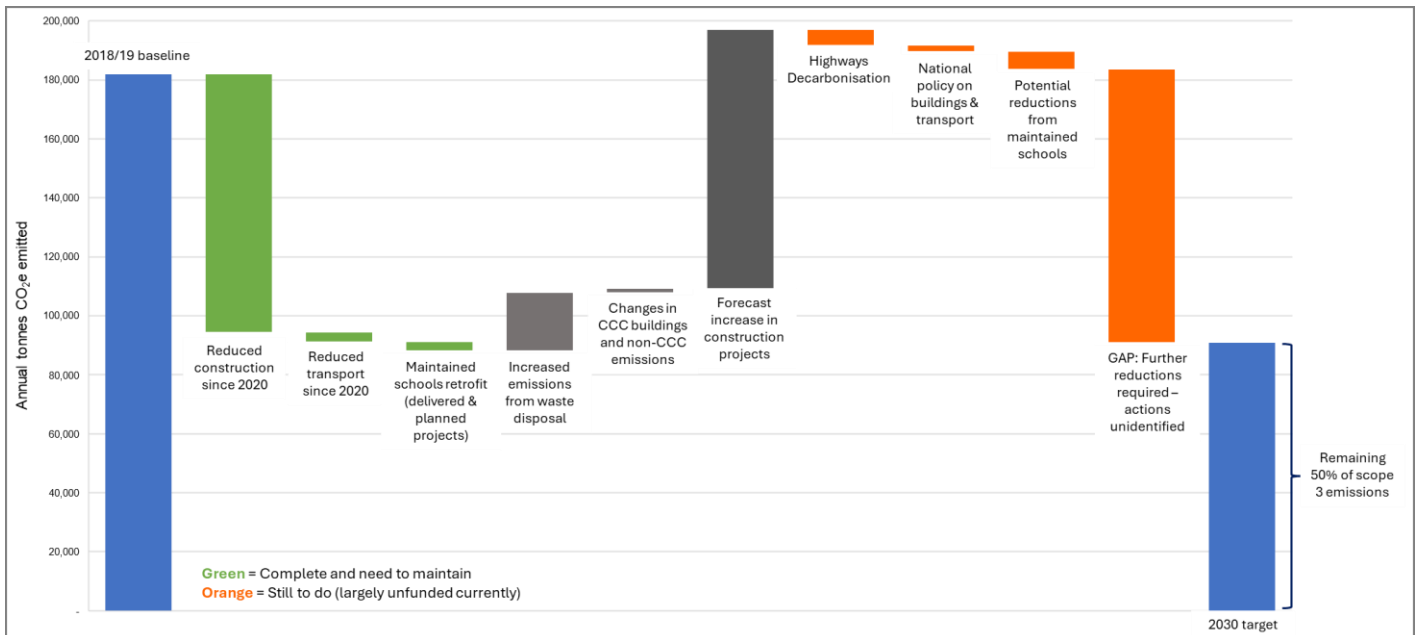


Figure 6 Waterfall diagram – how to achieve a 50% reduction in scope 3 emissions by 2030.

A significant challenge for scope 3 is the large segment of carbon reductions for which actions are largely not yet clear or known. Future policy could positively impact these, but the next focus is to understand this better and what it means for policy and planning. It is likely this will consist of a wide range of smaller activities rather than a single big one.

Agriculture and land use has been separated out, following the proposal set out in sections 6.7 4.9-4.11 and 7.2 and a similar diagram to figure 6 will be developed specifically for the rural estate.

5.9 Target 5: Cambridgeshire carbon emissions will be Net Zero by 2045 and Target 6: Support our communities and businesses to decarbonise by 2045

Delivery of these targets requires strategic collaborations and partnership approaches. Two key projects that the council is leading are:

- Locally Determined Contributions (LDC) – development of a shared target/carbon budget and framework for reporting and investment. This work will seek to align local action with national ambitions, provide a consistent evidence base for discussions on devolution for climate and net zero and inform the CPCA’s Climate Action Plan. The project is a partnership between Cambridgeshire local authorities, CPCA, Hughes Hall University of Cambridge and Collaborate CIC. The initial LDC design will be complete by mid-2025.
- Local Area Energy Planning – development of a strategic geo-spatial plan identifying the key energy infrastructure required to enable delivery of low carbon energy, electrified transport and further renewables across Cambridgeshire. It involves modelling current and future energy demand, growth plans and local ambitions to produce a costed plan that can feed into local and regional energy planning. For example, it will inform UK Power Network’s five-year business plan approved by Ofgem.

#### 5.10 Target 7: All Council buildings and infrastructure to be resilient to climate change impacts by 2045

A brief and scope for development of a Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) to enable the Council to understand service and infrastructure vulnerability to climate impacts has been developed. This is a cross organisational/service approach and the timing for this work is under discussion as it will need a roots and branch approach to do well. To complement this work, data on the costs experienced by the Council and its communities resulting from flood events, drought and over-heating are being scoped to inform future discussions and risk management. The project has Just Transition Funding, and when started, will help manage and deliver this target.

5.11 Section 8 identifies key focus areas for the coming 12 months that are the immediate action needed for delivery of the above pathways to green.

## 6 Setting Annual Carbon Milestone Reductions

6.1 In January 2024, Internal Audit concluded a review of the Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy (February 2022 version), with key recommendations to:

- Set annual carbon emissions reduction targets; and
- Demonstrate how the Climate Change and Environment Strategy actions contribute to annual carbon emissions reductions.

6.2 The Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy includes two targets directly related to the Council's own operations:

- By 2030, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from scopes 1 and 2 to be net zero.
- By 2030, to deliver a 50.4% reduction in scope 3 GHG emissions compared to a 2018/19 baseline.

6.3 Currently, progress towards these targets is measured through the retrospective annual Carbon Footprint report. As a result, there is a risk that problematic issues may not be identified in time to manage their impact on target delivery.

6.4 To actively manage progress towards our targets, the Council needs to look forward and set annual carbon milestones according to the most effective/appropriate carbon reduction pathway to 2030. This will then allow the planning and delivery of carbon reduction actions to be considered alongside business planning.

6.5 Using established methodologies (Science based Targets Initiative (SBTi)), the Council's carbon quota for the period 2018 to 2030 has been provisionally calculated (based on currently available data) as:

- 11,518 tCO<sub>2</sub>e total for scopes 1 & 2 to 2030 (Figure 2 above)
- 1,770,644 tCO<sub>2</sub>e total for scope 3 to 2030 (excluding rural estate) (Figure 7), and

- A separate target and carbon quota for scope 3 agriculture and land use emissions will be calculated over the coming months. (It is established global best practice to treat emissions from land use, land use change, and forestry and agriculture separately to other sources of GHG emissions. This is because these sources of emissions are different in nature and require different methodologies to calculate and measure.)

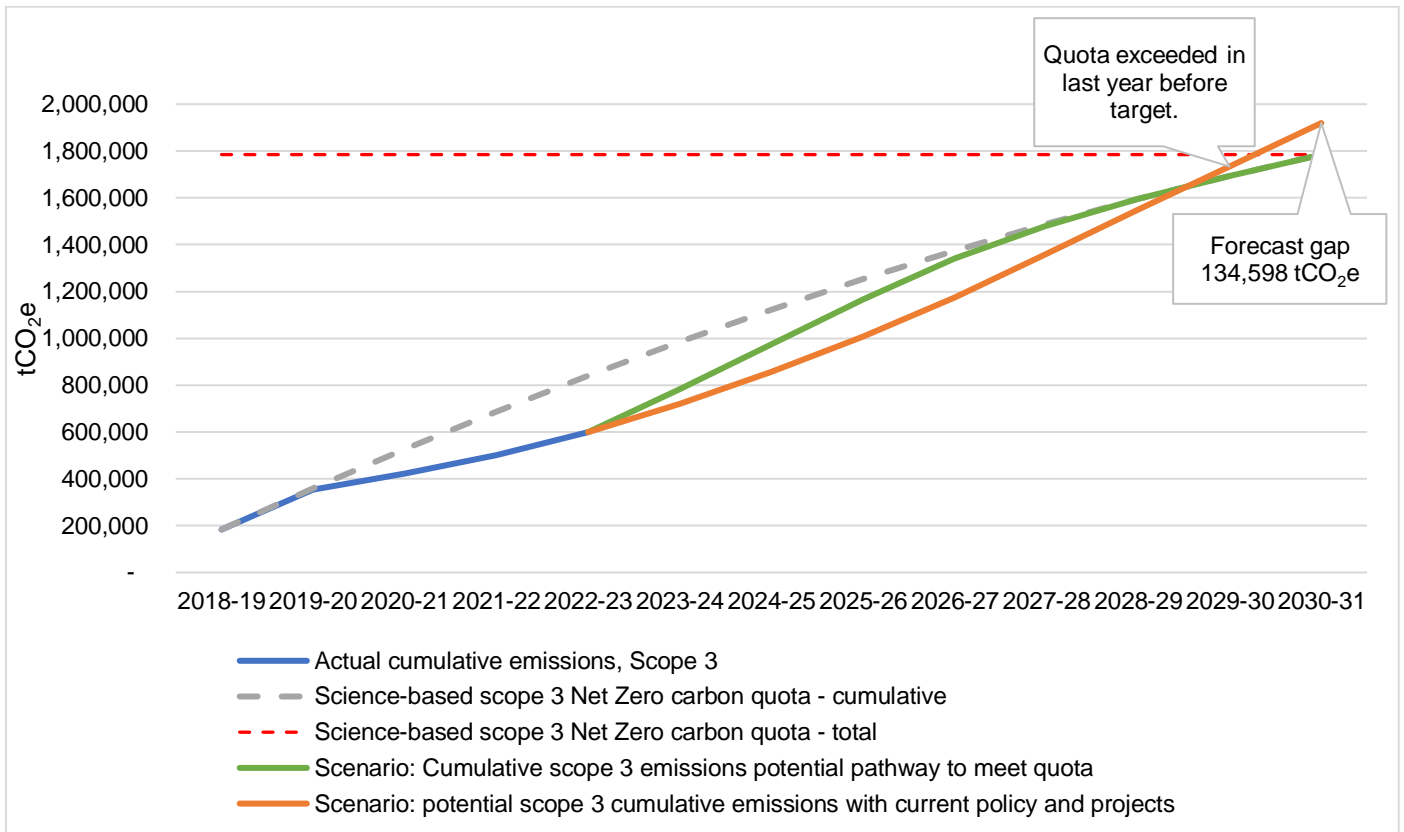


Figure 7- Scope 3 carbon quota - cumulative emissions

6.6 The carbon quota is used to determine annual carbon reduction milestones. These milestones are adjusted annually according to performance. For example, if the Council cannot invest financially in a year due to budget pressures and as a result emissions do not fall to meet the milestones, the future annual milestones change to reflect the remaining carbon quota.

6.7 Cambridgeshire wide Carbon Budget: This will be delivered through the collaboration on the locally determined contribution project discussed at 5.9.

## 7 Proposed updates to the Climate Change and Environment Strategy Targets and Action Plan

7.1 To ensure delivery of the strategy, an Action Plan was approved as a “live” document to which amendments and new actions could be added as greater knowledge and further evidence come forward. It was also acknowledged that the targets may require amending for

the same reasons. In light of the progress made to date, key recommendations from the Council’s Internal Audit and new emerging approaches a range of updates are proposed as outlined below.

7.2 Proposed amendments to the targets are:

EXISTING	PROPOSED CHANGE	NEW TARGET
<p>Target 3: The County Council will reduce its supply chain emissions (all scope 3) by 50.4% by 2030.</p>	<p>It is proposed to separate the rural estate carbon emissions from the other scope 3 emissions due to their significance and complexity to address.</p> <p>It is proposed to develop a separate target for the rural estate that focusses on the decarbonisation challenges for this sector, building on national, regional and local collaborations and partners. See section 4.9. Work will progress to develop and test a new target for the rural estate which will be brought back for endorsement in due course.</p>	<p>The County Council will reduce its indirect emissions (scope 3) by 50.4% by 2030. Excluded from this target are emissions relating to agriculture and land use.</p>
<p>Target 6: By 2045, support our communities and businesses to decarbonise</p>	<p>This target is a subset of target 5 (Cambridgeshire carbon emissions will be net-Zero by 2045).</p> <p>Following advice from Internal Audit, it is proposed to remove this target as its duplication with Target 5 makes reporting challenging. The two targets currently reported together within this report.</p> <p>Simplifying into the one target will provide greater clarity on progress.</p>	<p>n/a- is considered delivered via target 5; Cambridgeshire carbon emissions will be net-Zero by 2045.</p>

7.3 Interim Milestone for area-wide emissions: In addition to the proposals outlined above, an interim milestone is proposed to support monitoring of progress towards the Cambridgeshire-wide 2045 net zero target. While the Locally Determined Contributions project outlined at 6.7 will provide a long-term strategic ambition and carbon reduction pathways for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, establishing an interim milestone for now will support reporting progress to third parties e.g. the Carbon Disclosure Project and Climate Emergency UK, given the long-term nature of the 2045 net zero target. The proposed milestone for the Cambridgeshire geographical areas based on SBTi is:

*“Cambridgeshire area carbon emissions to reduce by 71.4% by 2035, compared to a 2018 baseline, excluding emissions from Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) and agriculture”.*

7.4 A number of changes have been made to the action plan to reflect progress. The full action plan with proposed changes is available in Appendix 3. Key changes include:

- The majority of actions related to developing strategies, policies and/or guidance to support the Council to better consider climate change have been completed and closed. Actions related to delivery of these strategies have been introduced;



- Introduction of a new action related to council catering for internal events;
- Evolving the current internal support offer to also support partners on climate related matters; and
- Facilitating climate related funding mechanisms to enable Cambridgeshire communities and businesses to decarbonise.

## 8 Areas of focus for 2024/25 onwards

8.1 There are several emerging areas that require strategic focus in the coming year(s) to ensure delivery of the targets and carbon reductions continue. These include:

- Sustaining the strong leadership and commitment from senior management and politicians into delivery of the Council’s targets and action plan. For organisational targets such as scopes 1, 2 and 3, this will be particularly relevant as the Climate and Environment Programme shifts further to embedding change across the organisation and towards a new “business as usual”, while needing to avoid loss of momentum in delivery of climate ambitions;
- Continued resourcing and funding, particularly for projects such as the Low Carbon Heating Programme and fleet electrification to address scope 1&2 emissions that will contribute to delivery of the council’s near-term targets;
- Continued work on the capital programmes to design out construction emissions, and implement better forecasting of capital programme emissions into future years;
- Support for strategies and innovative approaches to dealing with the Council’s “tougher to treat” scope 3 emissions, such as the waste strategy and rural estate and continue to embed carbon reductions into existing programmes;
- Continued support for the Locally Determined Contributions project, a cross-partner collaboration to align Local Authorities’ geographical climate ambitions with those of our businesses and communities;
- Increased focus on new financing models for climate and nature solutions to attract inward investment, particularly from the private and community sectors;
- Continued focus on ensuring a Just Transition in Cambridgeshire - e.g. equity of opportunity and access to low carbon approaches; and
- Accelerating current work to understand how climate change will impact council services to manage demand and cost risks.

## 9 Alternative Options Considered

9.1 No other options considered – this report is substantively reporting progress following established and previously approved processes. However, changes are being proposed to target and actions to reflect current position and keep delivery on track.

## 10 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

10.1 Good progress is underway delivering the Council's scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions. Paragraph 9.1 sets out the key areas of focus moving forward, and Section 7 proposes changes to existing targets and actions as well as the inclusion of an interim milestone for the Cambridgeshire 2045 Net Zero target. The recommendations are set out at the front of the report.

## 11 Significant Implications

### 11.1 Finance Implications

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations within this report. However, future delivery of actions will be subject to separate finance and funding decisions and will be considered alongside the Council's other ambitions, service obligations and pressures, as well as keeping within the Council's overall financial limits. Some climate actions can reduce costs (such as those that lead to reduced energy use, reduced use of material resources and reduced waste, and/or mitigate the risk of other future costs), and other actions will not result in a financial pay back.

### 11.2 Legal Implications

There are no implications under this category.

### 11.3 Risk Implications

There are no direct risk implications resulting from the recommendations within this report, however progress on the strategy feeds into the overall position for the Risk 12 on the Council's corporate risk register. Progress towards these carbon targets is a key mechanism of monitoring and assuring management of Risk 12.

### 11.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no implications under this category.

### 11.5 Climate Change and Environment Implications

This report outlines progress towards the Council's climate change and environment ambitions. Through setting out progress to date, this report highlights where further attention is required to assure delivery, supporting the Council's strategic response.

### 11.6 Procurement implications

There are no implications under this category.

### 11.7 Resource implications

There are no direct resourcing implications resulting from the recommendations within this report. Through setting out progress to date, this report highlights where further attention is required to assure delivery, however future resourcing will be subject to separate decisions.

## 12 Source Documents

### 12.1 CCES Progress Report October 2023 (item 5)

[https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccc\\_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/2100/Committee/67/Default.aspx](https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccc_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/2100/Committee/67/Default.aspx)

### 12.2 Previous Annual Carbon Footprint Reports

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/climate-change-energy-and-environment/carbon-footprinting-how-big-is-the-problem>

### 12.3 Other Reports

[FINAL CLIMATE REPORT LOW \(002\).pdf \(hubspotusercontent40.net\)](#)

## 13 Appendices

### 13.1 Appendix 1 Annual Carbon Footprint Report 23/24

### 13.2 Appendix 2 Annual Risk Report: Climate Change and Environment Targets

### 13.3 Appendix 3 CCES Updated Action Plan