

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee
<b>DATE</b>	12 November 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Climate Change Report 2023-24
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CR&E/24/282
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Gale Beattie
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	David Dunne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Bishnu Bhattarai
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	2

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the statutory Climate Change Report (CCR) covering the period 2023/24. The report is required to be submitted to the Scottish Government, to ensure compliance with the requirements of Part 4 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 2.1 approve the Climate Change Report 2023/24, as detailed in Appendix 1 and, instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to submit the report to Scottish Government prior to the reporting deadline of 30 November 2024;
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to publish the Climate Change Report on the Council's website; and
- 2.3 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to align the reporting periods and reporting date for both the annual Climate Change and Natural Environment Reports and to explore the potential to combine these into a single report.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### About the Climate Change Report

- 3.1 The Council along with other public sector organisations, have a statutory duty to report annually on progress against Public Bodies Duties under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. These duties are to act:
- In the best way calculated to contribute to the Act's emission reduction targets, these are Net Zero emissions by 2045;
  - In the best way calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programme;
  - In a way that it considers is most sustainable.

- 3.2 Reports must be produced on a set excel template and follow a standardised reporting methodology to allow for consistency and accuracy in data collection and be submitted by 30 November annually.
- 3.3 The CCR consists of two sections, “Required” and “Recommended” reporting.
- Required reporting (*Appendix 1*) requires evidence of:
    - Profile of the reporting body.
    - Governance, management and strategy relating to climate change.
    - Council emissions: including those from street lighting, energy and water from council buildings, fleet, internal waste, business travel.
    - Targets and projects: focusing upon efforts to reduce emissions at a corporate level.
    - Adaptation: assessment and management of climate related risks.
    - Procurement; policies and activities relevant to climate change duties.
    - Validation and declaration.
  - The “Recommended” section (*Appendix 2*) reflects the scope of influence the Council has in supporting city wide climate change mitigation and adaptation. It includes information on:
    - Area-wide and per capita emissions.
    - Targets.
    - Strategies, plans or policies outlining ambition to influence emissions beyond corporate boundaries.
    - Policies and actions to reduce emissions.
    - Partnership working, communications and capacity building.
- 3.4 The CCR must be made publicly available and provide information in a transparent and accountable manner, in line with the relevant guidance.
- 3.5 Reports cannot be submitted unless sign-off is evident in section 6 of the Required Report.

### Council emissions

- 3.6 The Council’s emissions data is collated for the Required Reporting section of the CCR and reported as tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e).
- 3.7 Emissions are calculated based on consumption data e.g., km travelled and converted using emission factors released annually by the UK Government, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. They are categorised into groups of scope 1, 2 and 3:
- Scope 1 - direct emissions, from fossil fuel use (energy in buildings and fleet).
  - Scope 2 – indirect emissions (energy), from the consumption of purchased electricity and heat and steam.
  - Scope 3 – other indirect emissions

All relevant Scope 1 and 2 emissions must be reported, in addition the Council also reports Scope 3 emissions from a number of sources including: internal

waste, water use, staff business travel, homeworking, and transmission and distribution losses associated with grid electricity.

### Council Climate Change Plan

- 3.8 Council approved the Council Climate Change Plan on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 (report COM/21/047). This set a net zero emission reduction target year of 2045; as well as emission reduction and climate resilience measures for Council assets and operations, with the Council “baseline” year for reporting as 2015/16.
- 3.9 A summary of progress from the third year of implementation of the Council Climate Change Plan (1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024) is included in Appendix 3. This sets out activity under key themes of buildings; mobility; other operations; leadership and governance; and awareness and behaviour change. Actions included: lighting upgrades, extended district heating connections, installation of low carbon energy in Council buildings and homes. Gold standard house building. Further conversions to hydrogen/diesel vehicles. Electric vehicle chargepoint installation and further conversions of fleet vehicles. Tree and wildflower planting. Staff climate training, staff climate and nature survey and awareness actions.

### Analysis for 2023/24

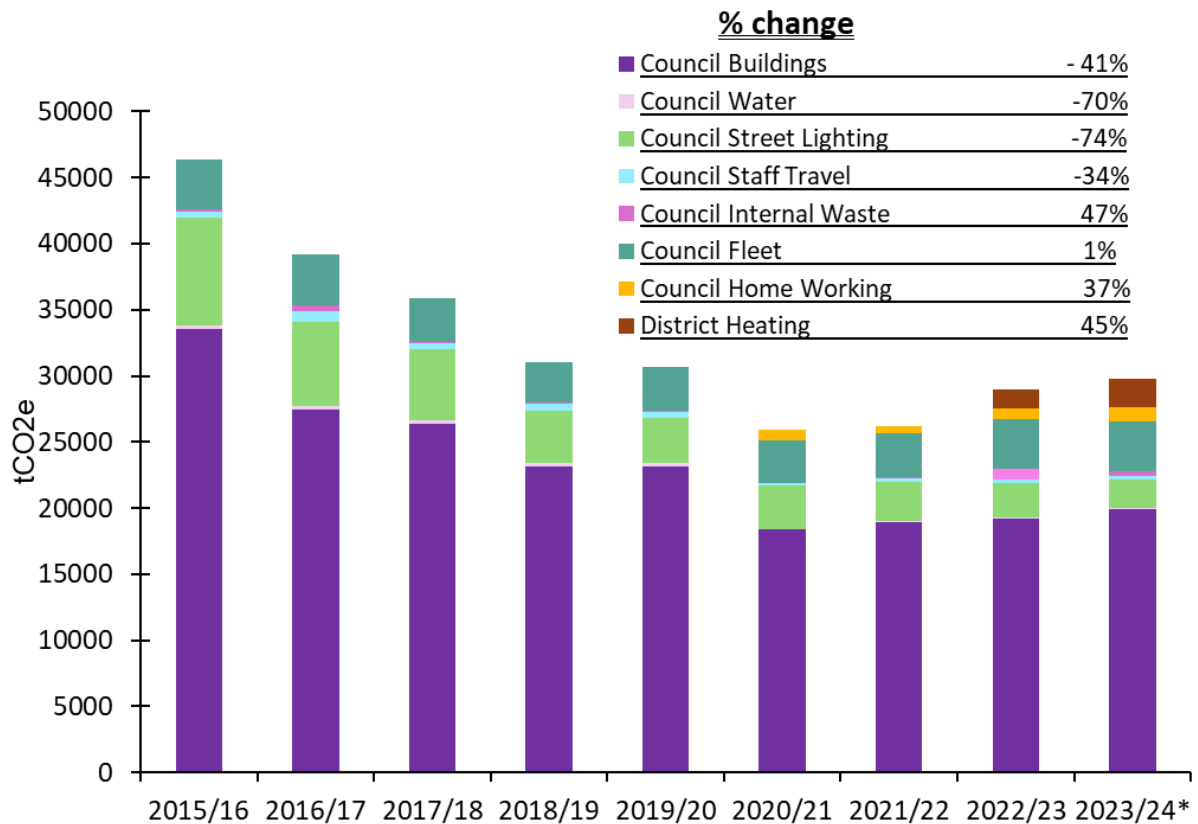
- 3.10 Overall annual emissions data is set out in Table 1, with a breakdown of emissions in Figure 2. This indicates:
- total emissions for 2023/24 reported through CCR were 27,634 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, a 40% reduction since 2015/16, a slight increase of 130 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, (less than 1%) compared to 2022/23.
- 3.11 However, since 2022/23, following improvements in data availability, consistency and monitoring CCR data has included the addition of scope 2 district heating data for Council buildings. An additional 2,172 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2023/24. District heating data<sup>1</sup> was not included in the emissions inventory for the Council Climate Change Plan, as such:
- total emissions for 2023/24 reported against the Council Climate Change Plan were 25,462 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, a 45% reduction against the 2015/16 baseline data.

**Table 1:** Overall Carbon Emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e)

Reporting Period	Overall emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	District Heating (tCO <sub>2</sub> e) <sup>1</sup>
2023/24	27,634	2,172
2022/23	27,504	1,497
2021/22	26,159	-
2020/21	25,929	-
2019/20	30,563	-
2018/19	31,090	-
2017/18	35,892	-

2016/17	39,225	-
2015/16	46,371	-

**Figure 2.** Council total annual emission (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) summary since 2015/16 and percentage changes:



3.12 Guidance recommends tracking and monitoring of Scope 1 and 2 emissions separately from Scope 3. The reduction in Council emissions since 2015/16, by scope is indicated below:

	15/16	23/24	Reduced
	tCO <sub>2</sub> e	tCO <sub>2</sub> e	%
<b>Scope 1</b>	22,020	15,716	29%
<b>Scope 2</b>	21,664	9,405	57%
<b>Scope 3</b>	2,687	2,513	6%

3.13 It should be noted in 2023 that the carbon intensity of the UK electricity grid increased, reflected in an increase in the electricity emission factor of around 7% compared to 2022. In addition, 2023/24 was colder than the previous reporting year, increasing heating requirements. These external factors influenced emission reductions achievable during this reporting year. Alongside there were additions to the Council estate during the reporting period, including new schools.

3.14 The main emissions sources are Council buildings (energy), street lighting and fleet. Data indicates that in comparison with 2015/16 carbon emissions from:

- Council buildings (energy) have decreased by 41%, though emissions from gas and electricity showed a slight increase from 2022/23. Key actions

completed in the reporting year included additional connections to lower carbon district heating and the lighting replacement to LED in Marischal College.

- Streetlighting has decreased by 74%, with a 19% decrease (495 tCO<sub>2</sub>e) compared to 2022/23 due to the LED streetlighting replacement programme.
- Carbon emissions from fleet (vehicles and plant) are based on levels of fuel consumption and are primarily from diesel use. Carbon emissions from fleet are showing a 0.65% increase. Carbon reduction actions in the reporting year included further retrofitting of refuse collection vehicles to dual fuel (diesel/hydrogen).

- 3.15 The remaining emission sources (internal waste, staff business travel, water, homeworking) account for 7% of data reported in 2023/24.
- 3.16 Since the baseline year of 2015/16, emissions from staff travel have decreased by 34%. However, there was a 35 tCO<sub>2</sub>e increase in emissions compared to 2022/23, primarily driven by a rise in travel activity following the post-COVID-19 period.
- 3.17 Internal waste emissions have increased compared to 2015/16, though have fluctuated during this time. Since the Energy from Waste plant became fully operational, emissions have decreased by 63% (542 tCO<sub>2</sub>e) compared to 2022/23.
- 3.18 Water has reduced by 70% compared to 2015/16, though showed a slight increase of 3 tCO<sub>2</sub>e from 2022/23 due to increased water consumption.
- 3.19 Homeworking emissions increased by 37% since first reported in 2021/22. This reflects hybrid working arrangements and methodology changes for calculating home/hybrid working required since 2022/23.

### Emerging implications

- 3.20 A number of external implications are emerging, these will be subject to further consultation and policy change and the full impacts have yet to be determined. However, these have the potential to influence future emissions data reporting requirements; and will be relevant to target and carbon budget setting, as well as future revisions to the Council Climate Change Plan and the area wide climate change documents (Net Zero Aberdeen and Aberdeen Adapts).

These include:

- The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill which proposes to replace annual and interim emission targets for Scotland with a 5 yearly cycle of carbon budgeting.
- Publication of Statutory Guidance for Public Bodies (Climate Duties). This will be co-dependant on the timeline for completion of the new Bill, though consultation is anticipated in 2025.
- Indications in the Statutory Guidance of minimum expected content for Local Authorities to include in Climate Change Plans.

- Proposed introduction of mandatory reporting of Scope 3 emissions by Local Authorities. This is subject to an Amendment Order under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. While the Council already reports a number of Scope 3 emissions, further work will be required, in line with emerging legislation and guidance, to determine additional data reporting requirements and the feasibility of incorporating these into the reporting boundary.

3.21 The Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard indicates where there are changes to data and boundary of the emissions inventory, organisations should determine if data changes are significant to require a recalculation of the baseline year and data. This is to allow a “like for like” comparison.

Further work will be required in setting the next Council Climate Change Plan to determine the threshold for re-baselining, alongside any changes to the emissions reporting boundary as a result of legislation and guidance.

### Future Challenges

3.22 Figure 2 above illustrates that since 2020/21, the Council’s emissions have largely plateaued, with a slight increase in certain areas, particularly buildings. In the current reporting year (2023/24), Council buildings account for 67% of total emissions, far surpassing those from street lighting, staff travel, and internal waste. Emissions from the Council fleet and district heating each contribute 7%, highlighting opportunities for cleaner technologies and efficiency improvements. Prioritising efforts in buildings, fleet, and street lighting offers the greatest potential for significant emissions reductions.

3.23 Achieving the Council’s 2045 net-zero target will require substantial ongoing work. Initiatives such as the Gold Standard housing project, the green hydrogen programme, the expansion of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, district heating networks, energy-from-waste (EfW) project, and photovoltaic (PV) installations will play critical roles in meeting this goal. However, the addition of new buildings, especially schools, poses a challenge due to their large footprint and high energy consumption. While upgrading the school estate through energy efficiency measures, transitioning energy sources, or retrofitting will yield positive impacts, the size and operational demands of these buildings mean further efforts are required. Additional collaboration with staff and students to reduce energy demand in schools is essential. An “October Switch Off” awareness initiative has already been implemented in schools to lower energy consumption.

The Council’s vehicle fleet also presents challenges, but several work streams are in progress to transition the fleet towards more sustainable fuel sources.

To address these challenges, the formation of an Energy Board is intended to enhance focus on energy generation, use, and management. The recent introduction of an Environmental Impacts section to the Council’s Integrated Impact Assessment template will further support informed decision-making. Assigning carbon budgeting responsibilities to relevant clusters and teams is expected to promote greater accountability and ownership across departments. Additionally, the introduction of a climate data platform will support future planning and monitoring.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The report simply illustrates a point in time as to how the Council is performing.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Failing to report would put the Council in breach of a legal duty under part four of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Climate risks and opportunities not being recorded and regularly monitored.	Climate risks reported through risk registers. Includes risk on compliance with climate duties. Project Register and dashboard in place. Introduction of a data platform to support climate planning taking place.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Non-compliance of the Public Bodies Duties under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009	CCR is completed, published, submitted within the mandatory timeframe.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Risk that reporting does not meet the required format. Risk that systems to collate data are inefficient. Risk	Reporting guidance is followed. Information and data is entered on the standard reporting templates. Set scope of data is collated annually for	L	Yes

	that incorrect emission factors are used.	consistency. Up to date emission factors used. Improvements to data collation, introduction of a data platform taking place.		
<b>Financial</b>	No financial implication as a result of this report.	Annual CCR is achieved through existing budgets.	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 set targets for emission reduction of net zero by 2045 and requirements on public sector bodies on setting net zero targets.	Internal governance established for the Council Climate Change Plan. Refresh cycle established for the plan.	M	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Failure to meet emission reduction target year.	Continue monitoring, reporting corporate emissions. Establish re-baseline threshold.	M	Yes

## 8. OUTCOMES

<a href="#"><b>Council Delivery Plan 2024</b></a>	
<b>Impact of Report</b>	
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b> <a href="#"><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></a>	The report contributes to providing CO2 emission statements and supports the reduction of the carbon footprint of the council's building estate and vehicle fleet.
<a href="#"><u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></a>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals in this report support the delivery of stretch outcome 10 - Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026. Actions to reduce carbon emissions; protect and improve the environment can have a positive impact on health and wellbeing.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The proposals in this report support the delivery of stretch outcome 13. Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.



	<p>14. Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking; 5% of people cycling and wheeling as main mode of travel and a 5% reduction in car miles by 2026.</p> <p>15. 26% of Aberdeen's area will be protected and/or managed for nature and 60% of people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for by 2026.</p>
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	The CCR highlights the climate targets and objectives in a range of regional and city strategies including: Regional and Local Transport Strategies, Strategic and Local Development Plans, Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Aberdeen Adapts, Local Housing Strategy and Net Zero Routemap for the City.

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Assessment</b> <b>Impact</b>	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	N/A

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 COM/23/329 - Climate Change Report 2022/23
- 10.2 COM/21/047 - Council Climate Change Plan 2021-2025

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Climate Change Report 23/24: Required Reporting
- 11.2 Appendix 2 – Climate Change Report 23/24: Recommended Reporting
- 11.3 Appendix 3 – Summary of Climate Change Report 23/24 and 3rd Year Progress of the Council Climate Change Plan 21-25

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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