

Aberdeen City Council Carbon Budget 2023-24

Context

Duties under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 require the Council in exercising functions, to act in the best way calculated to contribute to the delivery of emission reduction targets. Public sector bodies are required, where possible, to report the date by which they intend to achieve zero direct emissions; set targets, for the extent to which they aim to use their influence to reduce indirect emissions.

Public Sector Leadership on the Global Climate Emergency guidance states, it is vital that public bodies understand the carbon impacts of their decisions and therefore embed carbon into decision making processes.

To meet statutory requirements the Council produces an annual Climate Change Report. The most recent report was approved in November 2022 and covered emissions data for the period 2021/22.

The introduction of further accountability is anticipated, with the Audit Scotland: Auditing Climate Change Strategy (December 2022) stating auditors will *assess how public bodies are reflecting climate change in their financial statements and related reporting.*

About the carbon budget

The maturity of processes and accessibility of climate change data and related tools at national, area and local authority levels, which could support the setting and monitoring of public sector carbon budgets is a developing area. This is in comparison with other forms of budgeting that might be under-pinned by a substantive body of empirical and qualitative data, which has been tested and developed over the course of a number of years.

In February 2022, Council approved the approach to carbon budgeting for the Council Climate Change Plan and instructed the Chief Operating Officer to progress a phased roll out of the carbon budget.

The phased approach allows for development, refining of processes and building of maturity around the carbon budget in subsequent years. The Council carbon budget is informed by historic emissions and considers the reduction trajectory to reach emission targets. A Working Group progressed Phase 1 actions in 2022/23, which included:

- A deep dive of emissions data for buildings (energy), water and fleet assets to determine the availability of timely data to support monitoring.
- The introduction of provisional quarterly carbon figures to support monitoring for these emission sources.
- Calculations for the initial breakdown of the carbon budget for buildings (energy) and water to relevant Functions and Clusters (to be refined in Phase 2).
- Awareness raising with ECMT.
- Monthly updates on progress to the Council Climate Oversight Group.
- Planning around CO2 data management and monitoring.

As some data in provisional quarterly reports may be based on billing estimates; and data for oil, biomass and petrol data is not available on a quarterly basis. Actual emissions data will be completed at end of each financial year and located centrally

to support decision making.

Carbon Budget 2023-24

To keep on track with targets, the emissions “cap” for the financial year 2023/24 is 26,474 tonnes CO₂e (Table 1). This is the maximum carbon emissions that can be emitted during the year from: energy and water use Council buildings, Council fleet, street lighting, internal waste and staff travel.

Table 1: Council Carbon Budget – maximum cap on emissions

	Baseline	Carbon cap	Forecast cap	Forecast cap	Forecast cap	Forecast cap	Forecast cap	Forecast cap
	2015/16	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30*
	tCO ₂ e							
Total	46,370.9	26,474	23,992	21,510	19,028	16,546	14,064	11,582

*75% reduction against the baseline

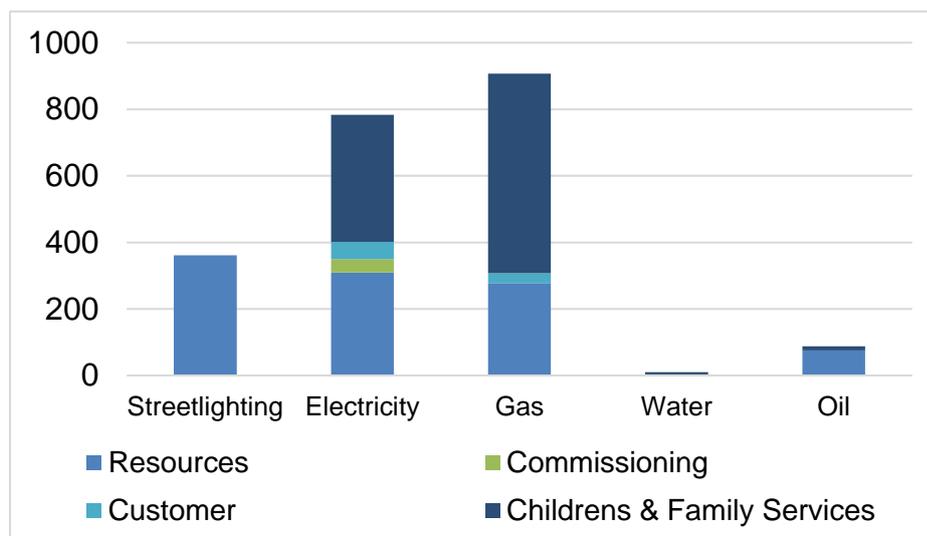
Table 2: Breakdown of the carbon budget 2023/24 by emission source

	Emissions cap	Required carbon savings
	2023/24	2023/24
	tCO ₂ e	tCO ₂ e
Fleet assets	2,516	249
Water	106	10
Buildings	19,591	1,837
Gas	8,995.2	966.4
Electricity	10,389	782.9
Oil	816.6	87.7
Street lighting	3,852	361
Staff travel	288	16
Internal waste	121	9
Total	26,474	2,482

Carbon Budget phase 2 programme 2023-24

Refining of the indicative Function and Cluster carbon saving allocations will remain under continuous review through Phase 2, in dialogue with Chief Officers. This is to ensure that, as required, adjustments based on sensitivity analysis principles, can be made to consider revised conditions such as changes to estate profiles and to service delivery.

The process of review and renew of the carbon budget over the lifespan of this and subsequent plans ensures counter-balance to changes in any single year that could be either anomalous or outwith the direct control of the Council.

Figure 1: Indicative allocations of carbon savings (tCO₂e) 2023-24 by Function

The outcomes from this phase, will help inform subsequent carbon budget setting and indicate the scale and pace of change of action required to remain on track with Council corporate net zero targets. Carbon budget exceedance or a slow rate of reduction will have a knock-on impact emission reduction in subsequent years. The carbon budget will be monitored, realigned if any areas are not on track and information aligned with our annual financial budget setting process.

Table 3: Key actions 2023-24 Phase 2 of the Carbon Budget

Year	Phase 2 proposed actions
2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of carbon and consumption data from fleet management systems, determining the breakdown to Function/ Cluster. • Engagement with Chief Officers to refine carbon allocations. • Deep dive to investigate the frequency and availability of data, for the roll out the carbon budget to further emissions sources ie staff travel, internal waste. • Further develop the centralisation of CO₂ data for monitoring and management to support decision making. • Production of quarterly provisional monitoring reports. • Improvements to scenario modelling and carbon quantification to support the Council Climate Change Plan.