

Divisions Affected - ALL

CABINET 20 DECEMBER 2022

ANNUAL COUNCIL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REPORT & CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME BIENNIAL UPDATE

Report by Corporate Director for Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**
 - a) Approve the annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions report for 2021/2022 for publication on the County Council website, set out in Appendix 1.
 - b) Note the biennial update on the delivery of the Climate Action Programme agreed by Cabinet in May (Appendix 2).
 - c) Note the success of the Carbon Literacy Training programme and ambition to achieve bronze accreditation by March 2023 and develop a business case to move to silver accreditation.

Executive Summary

2. The Greenhouse Gas Emissions 2021/2022 report is an annual report on the council's own operational greenhouse gas emissions and progress towards the target of net zero by 2030 for the council's own operations.
3. This report covers the financial year 2021/2022. Emissions within the scope of our operational target to be net zero by 2030 have reduced by 3.6% compared to the previous year.
4. Although there was only a 3.6% decrease in 2021/22 as compared to the previous year, there was an overall reduction of 21% since 2019/20.
5. The COVID lockdown in March 2020/21 resulted in a significant reduction in emissions due to building closures and other reductions in activities. In 2021/22 the emissions have increased as buildings and activities return to near normal operation. Emissions from staff mileage remain lower than the 2019/20 pre-COVID levels due to our continued agile strategy and the usage of virtual meetings.

6. In response to the council's declaration of a climate emergency, a Climate Action Framework was developed to mobilise a cross-organizational Climate Action Programme. This report updates Cabinet on the delivery of the 22/23 Climate Action Programme delivery plan as approved at Cabinet in June 2022.
7. The Council continues to prioritise Climate Action as an organisation and has increased its commitments to the natural environment as evidenced by the environment principles adopted at Cabinet on 15 November 2022.
8. The financial position for the council and the overall economic landscape looks increasingly challenging. We will need to continue to proactively seek out funding opportunities at a national, regional and local level to support delivery that matches our ambitions.

Oxfordshire County Council's Operational Greenhouse Gas Report 2020/21

9. The Council's operational Greenhouse Gas report for 2020/2021 is included at Appendix 1. The report presents data associated with the council's scope 1 and 2 emissions (emissions from the council's own electricity and fuel use). The report also captures some Scope 3 emissions (staff business mileage and some limited supply chain emissions). The council is working to increase the range of supply chain emissions captured in future reporting rounds.
10. Headline figures for 2020/2021 are set out below:
 - a) All carbon emissions covered by the report (which include those from maintained schools, the councils outsourced data centre and Milestone fleet fuel (highways maintenance contractor) increased 1.5% to 17,276 tCO₂e. This is as anticipated, largely reflecting resuming of activities following the covid lockdown. There is an overall reduction of 11% since 2019/20 (Pre covid).
 - b) Emissions within the scope of our carbon neutrality target footprint, decreased 3.6% to 10,652 tCO₂e. Figure 1 identifies the scope of emissions included within our carbon neutrality target of net zero by 2030.
 - c) Figure 2 shows the emissions reduction trend between 2010/2011 and 2021/2022.
 - d) The reduction in emissions was due to a mix of streetlight LED conversion, a number of energy efficiency projects, the councils agile working strategy

maintaining a reduction in staff business travel compared to 2019, and grid decarbonisation.

- e) Electricity usage in corporate buildings dropped by around 12%. Gas usage did not change owing, in part, to the need for additional air handling in our buildings.
- f) During 2021/22 as part of our continuing improvement commitment to data reporting four additional sources were added to our data:
 - Agency staff business miles and daily hire car miles
 - Wallingford and Cherwell Depots – minibus fuel
 - Fuel that OCC fleet obtain from depots managed by OCC’s Highways maintenance contractor Milestone, has been moved from Scope 3 reporting to Scope 1 (and inside the scope of our carbon neutrality target).

To allow a direct comparison, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 figures now include the new fuels.

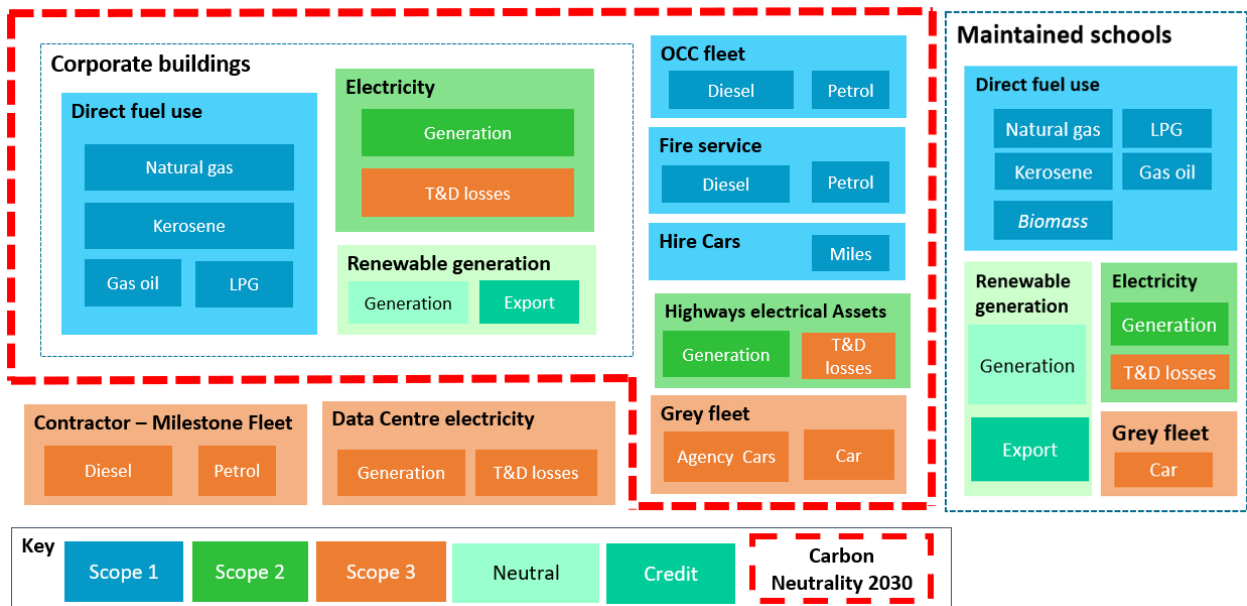


Figure 1 – Scope of Greenhouse Gas Report highlighting the emissions included in OCC’s carbon neutrality target (red line)

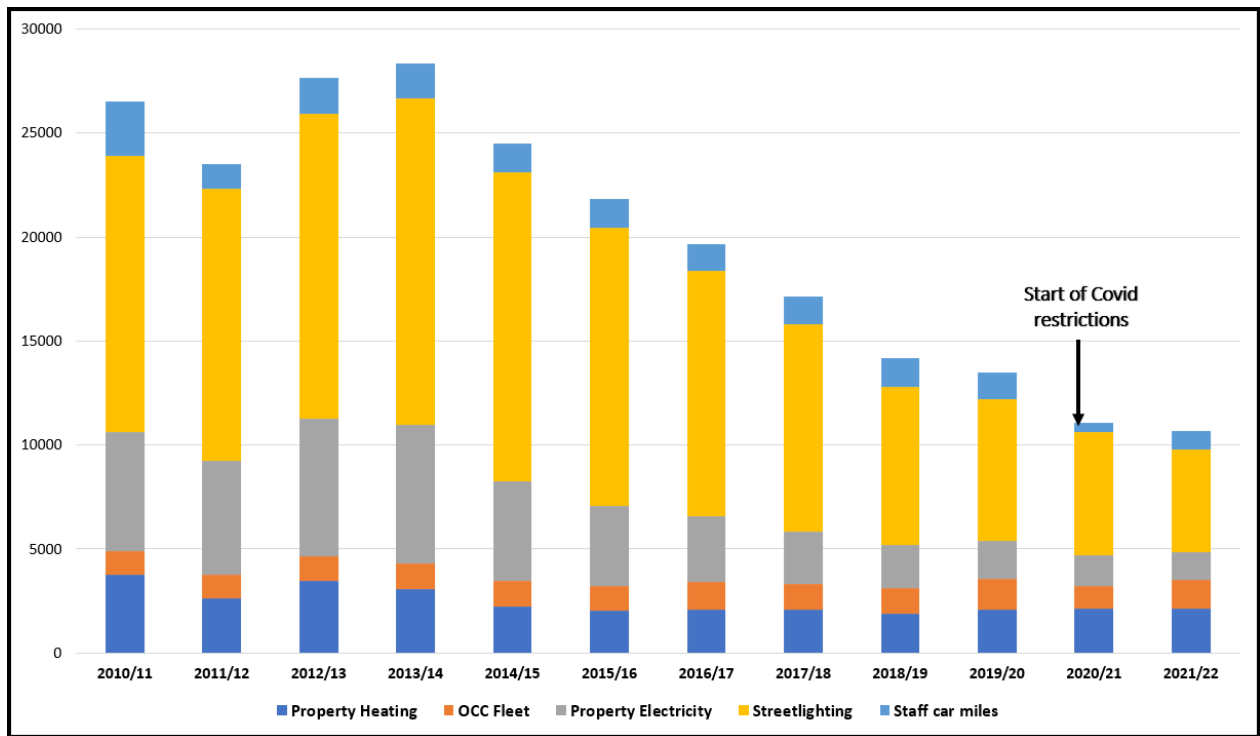


Figure 2 - OCC's carbon neutrality target emissions from 2010-11 to 2021/22

Climate Action Programme Update 22/23

Programme Overview

11. OCC's Climate Action Programme (CAP) delivery programme for 22/23 was agreed at Cabinet on 21 June 2022.
12. The 22/23 delivery plan includes OCC's priority actions across three pillars as set out in figure 3 below:

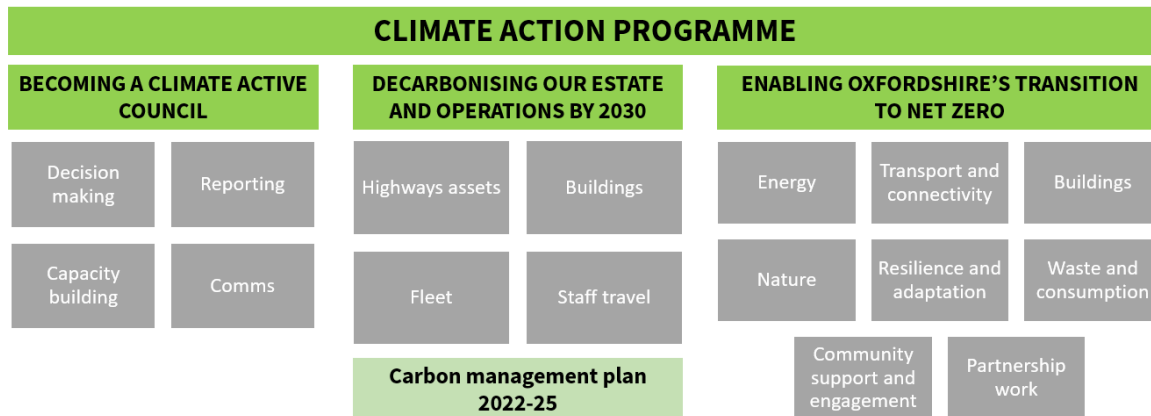


Figure 3 - Three pillars of the Climate Action Programme

Programme Delivery

13. An overview of programme delivery against the priority actions for 2022/23 is set out in Appendix 2. Overall the climate action programme remains on track against delivery plan.
14. Delays have been reported against some workstreams linked to supply chain issues. Issues and delays are being actively managed by service leads.
15. Highlights from the previous 6 months include: -
 - (a) Additional funding of £160,000 over the next two years awarded to support Community Action Groups Oxfordshire. Supporting expansion of their current work to focus on the Circular Economy, Nature recovery and community wealth building.
 - (b) Pathways to Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (PAZCO) Action Plan in development with Future Oxfordshire Partnership.
 - (c) Approximately 100 staff have completed the nationally recognised Carbon Literacy Training across the Council, and we are on track to become a Bronze Accredited 'carbon literate' organisation by March 2023.
 - (d) Launch of the Climate Action Oxfordshire website providing a countywide platform to increase awareness of the impact of climate change and inspire and signpost opportunities for action.
 - (e) Launch of Action on Carbon and Energy for Schools (ACES) support programme to maintained schools to support with reducing energy bills.
 - (f) DeveLopment of our energy futures work under Project LEO, engaging with Districts on use of the data to support their local planning process.
 - (g) Facilitating £165K of funding to support business energy audits delivered by Low Carbon Hub and Oxford Brookes through the Community Renewal

Fund resulting in £1.6m investment by businesses in energy efficiency measures.

- (h) Agreeing our Local Transport and Connectivity Plan to reduce private car use and encourage modal shift to walking, cycling, public and shared transport.

Next Steps

16. Working with Future Oxfordshire Partnership to look at partnership delivery routes for PAZCO joint workstreams
17. Work with partners to secure funding to continue the nationally leading clean energy systems work taking place under Project LEO (Local Energy Oxfordshire) and to expand our domestic retrofit programmes.
18. Continue to work closely with the corporate finance teams to ensure that we are working to put climate at the heart of everything we do.
19. Continue to proactively seek out national, regional, and local funding opportunities to support the climate action programme.
20. Seek opportunities to expand the current Carbon Literacy training programme to integrate with the Delivering the Future Together programme and to set an ambition for 15% of the workforce to be trained by December 2024 (Sliver accreditation).

Carbon Management Plan 2022-25(CMP)

21. The Carbon management Plan 2022-25 (approved in May 2022) sets out our approach to reducing the emissions from our own buildings, highway assets, fleet, and staff business travel. These are the emissions that we committed to reduce to net zero by 2030. We are on track to deliver the workplan in the CMP for 2022/23.
22. We now have dedicated new roles to support decarbonisation of property and Strategic Fleet Management. This has enabled us to develop a decarbonisation programme for our estates (in line with OCC property strategy)
23. Investment grade energy audits of 36 major buildings have been completed using £76K of grant funding awarded through Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF). A multi-year investment programme (31 buildings in Phase 1) has been developed and capital bids have been put forward into the Budget and Business Planning process to mobilise delivery of decarbonisation projects in property, fleet and grey fleet from 2023/24 onwards (including seeking grant sources such as the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme). Table 1 shows the status of funding for the programme.
24. Figure 4 below shows emissions trajectory for the first year's impact of the multiyear capital bids submitted. These trajectories will be updated in Q4 based on the outcome of the capital bids.

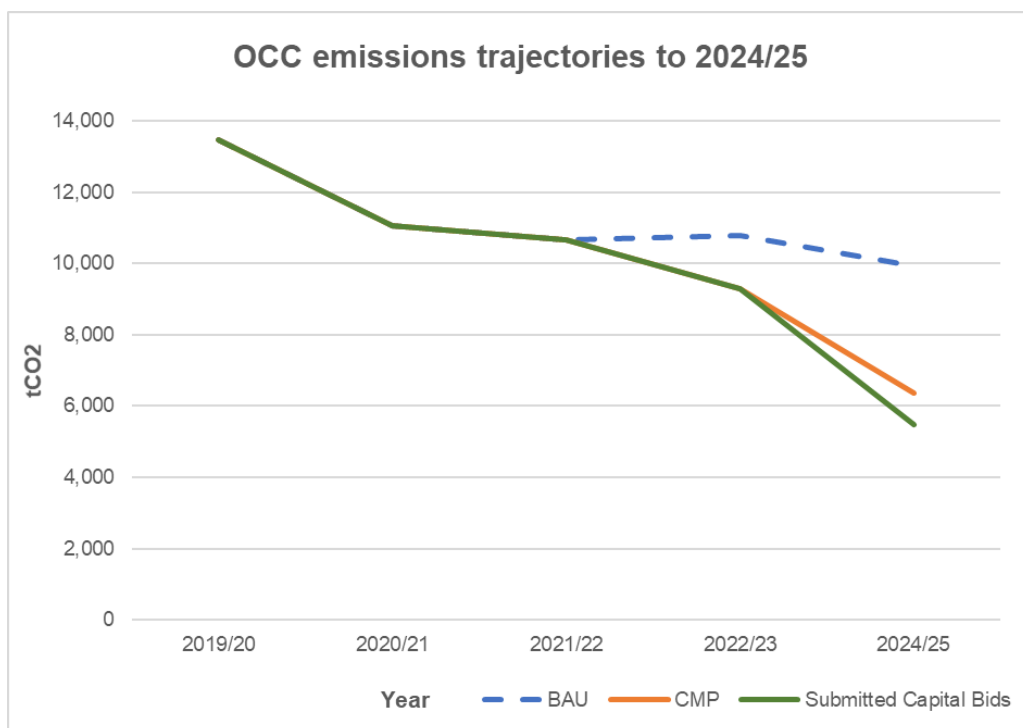


Figure 4

25. The LED streetlighting programme is being delivered as programmed, with 47,192 (78%) of streetlights now converted.
26. The council has earmarked funding of £7 million to enable zero carbon new school builds where S106 agreements are already agreed and there is a gap in funding to meet this standard. New S106 requirements seek to take this cost uplift into account.
27. A project is in development to reduce carbon and support resilience for staff that are need to do significant essential travel as part of their roles.
28. The CMP will be reviewed as planned in Q4 2022/23 to update our programme for 2023/24 onwards following decisions on capital finance.
29. Our 'net zero by 2030' target does not include emissions from our supply chain. A policy position is in development to engage with current suppliers particularly developing reporting for high value contracts.
30. Supported Transport Service (STS) is currently carrying out a review of contracted Schools transport to understand how to transition the STS fleet to ultra-low or zero emission vehicles in line with the Climate Action Framework targets and the cost implications associated with different strategies.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

31. The Climate Action Programme supports the council's commitments to tackle the climate emergency, as expressed in the Strategic Plan 2022-25 and the Climate Action Framework.

Financial Implications

32. The financial position for the council and the overall economic landscape looks increasingly challenging. This will not change any agreed projects identified for 2021/22. Officers will review funding options following the outcome of the budget setting process.
33. The council is working with local stakeholders; building on the established partnership underpinning the national energy systems demonstrator - Local Energy Oxfordshire (LEO) which completes in March, to bid for emerging strategic funding to carry on this work.
34. The streetlighting LED conversion is fully funded and in progress.

Table 1 below summarises the current estimated capital spend within the programme including bids that have been put forward for funding for 2023/24 and beyond.

TABLE 1	Investment required	Status	Carbon savings (24/25 vs BAU)	Financial savings
Street lighting LED Replacement Programme	£40.8 million	Fully funded – prudential borrowing	2,783 t CO ₂ e	£77m over 20 years
New Schools Zero Carbon Uplift	£7 million	Funding identified in current capital programme	TBD	TBD
Decarbonisation of the council's buildings - Phase 1 and Phase 2	Total £28.5 million Phase 1 & 2 (for ~70% of OCC estates) (Phase 1 – (£5m (capital pipeline + £3.7m (existing capital) = £8.7 million 2023/24 & 24/25 Phase 2 – £19 million (2025/26 to 2028/29)	Grants, recycling fund, capital and/or revenue bid This scheme is a proposed addition to capital pipeline with funding to be identified. There is £3.7m funding in the existing capital programme and external funding is being sought to contribute to the scheme cost.	663 t CO ₂ e (not fully funded) TBD for Phase 2	Phase 1- £514K (excluding any borrowing cost if applicable) Phase 2 - TBD
Fleet Replacement Programme (not including Fire Rescue Service)	£18million (6 million per year for 3 years)	High priority capital scheme to which indicative funding is proposed to be allocated	TBD	TBD
Low Carbon Business Travel Project (grey fleet)	--	Fully funded – staff time	71 tCO ₂ e ¹	Revenue savings of c.£25k pa for three years vs.

¹ The estimated carbon emissions savings for staff travel included in the tables in the 2022-25 Carbon Management Plan, assumed that all directorates would agree to the proposed carbon reduction targets. However, only the Environment & Place and CDAI directorates and one service agreed to reduction targets.

	£750K – essential car user	High priority capital scheme to which indicative funding is proposed to be allocated.	62 tCO2e	payment of mileage claims
Energy Efficiency Recycling Fund for OCC Maintained Schools	£800K (£400pa in 2023/24 & 2024/25)	High priority capital scheme to which indicative funding is proposed to be allocated.	~66 tCO2e per year bills if all schools install PV	~£85K/year savings on energy bills if all schools install PV

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

35. This report does not raise legal implications. In May 2019 the Government committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, recognising much of this reduction must happen before 2030. Local councils play a vital role in making sure the UK is prepared for the impacts of climate change at a local level are able to decide how best to address these challenges. The taking of such action is lawful under the general power of competence in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

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Staff Implications

36. Staff involvement in current programme delivery is funded by agreed resource allocation and grant funding.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

37. This paper does not raise any specific equalities implications. The Council's Climate Action Framework targets a 'just transition' in which all our communities and businesses are supported to participate, and costs and benefits are fairly shared.
38. While acting on climate change will bring benefits to all, it is most likely to have additional positive impacts on several of the protected and disadvantaged groups considered within the Council's equality framework. As an example, the work being done to increase energy efficiency in homes in fuel poverty will help reduce energy bills.

