

Didcot Town Council



Carbon Monitoring Policy

Reviewed by Properties and Facilities Committee 24/05/2023
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Introduction & Background

The Didcot Town Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 with the promise to reach Carbon Neutrality by 2030. and specified that all Council activities should be carried out in a way that considers the impact on the environment and should improve the Council's environmental positions.

The building blocks to focus on are:

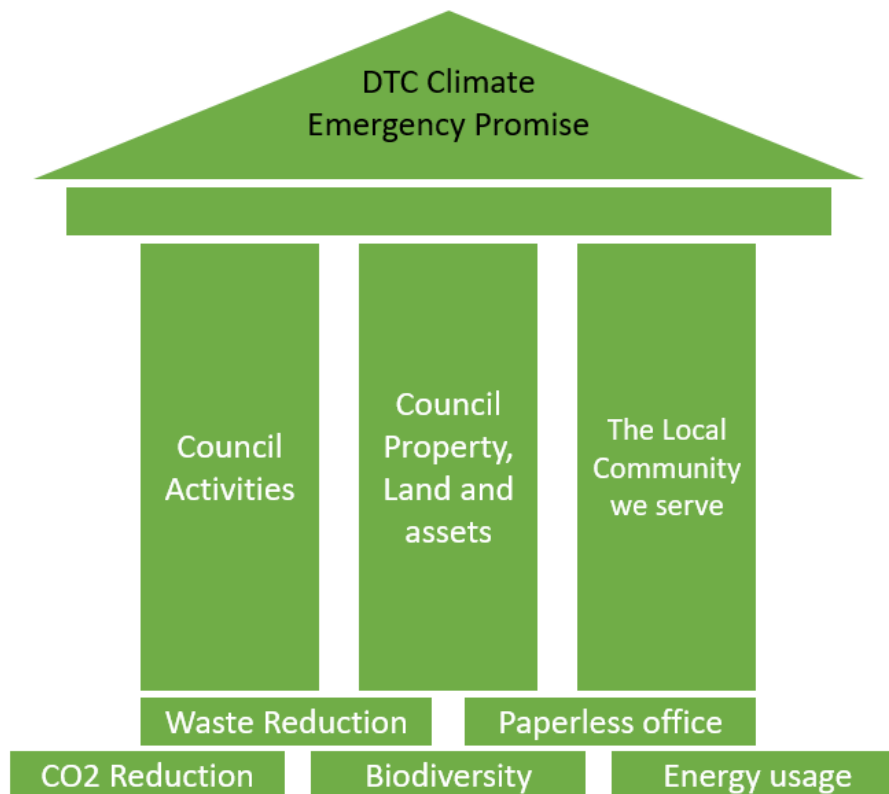
- Biodiversity
- Energy Usage Reduction
- CO2 Reduction / Capture
- Waste Reduction (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle)
- Paperless office

Many of these are interrelated and actions in one building block can support another.

These five building blocks will support the pillars of the Council in achieving the councils Climate Based Objectives.

These are

- Council Activities
- Council Land, Property and Assets
- The Community.



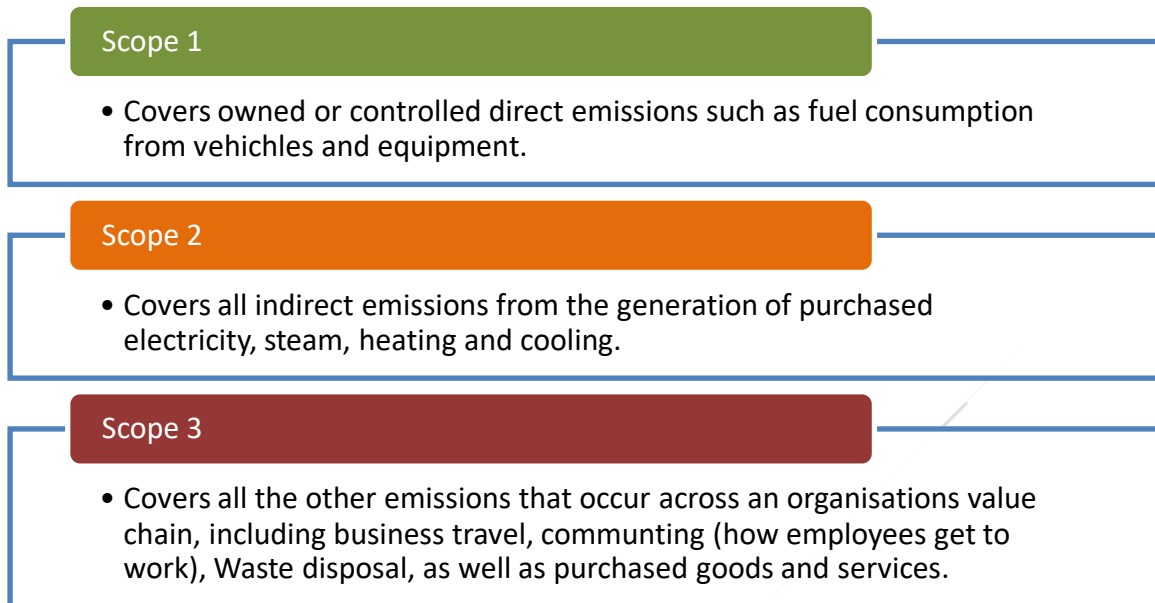
This Document sets out the strategic goals of the Council.

The overall objective is: To achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2030.

CO2 Reduction - Overview

The highest profile Global, National and Local environmental target is to reduce CO2 production. The Council has committed to the **Climate Emergency Declaration** target of being **Carbon Neutral by 2030** and **Carbon Negative by 2050**.

There are three groups of emissions that an organisation should focus on as defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. These are:



It is important to reduce the carbon footprint of all these areas simultaneously. The list below is split in to ease and speed at which actions can be implemented to increase the rate of decarbonisation. This list is not exhaustive as new technology and ideas will come along that should be utilised if appropriate.

Quick Wins

- Set up and Promote cycle to work schemes
- Institute Flexible Working practices.
- Set temperature points lower for heating and higher for Aircon.
- Utilise natural ventilation (windows and doors)
- Switch to a renewable (green) utilities contracts

Medium Term

- Replace equipment with electric alternatives.
- Replace vehicles with Electric alternatives.
- Specify all new builds to have Airsource Heatpumps
- Specify all new Buildings to be Breeam Excellent as a minimum.
- provide suitable facilities for those using alternative means of transport
- Policy of Replacement of boilers to air source were possible

Long Term

- Introduction of Carbon Capture systems (Living Walls (See Biodiversity) or Technology.
- Retrofit PV to existing building
- Replace boiler and hot water systems to Heatpumps and Solar thermal systems.
- Install EV chargers to support customers and staff to reduce their CO2 footprint
- 20Mph zones in town areas.

Reduction Targets

To allow a route map to Carbon Neutrality we need to look at the targets to reach as we go along.

The targets should be a percentage of the initially carbon figure for the organisation

Suggested targets

- 2025 40% Reduction of 2022/23 Figures
- 2028 80% Reduction of 2022/23 Figures
- 2029 95% Reduction of 2022/23 Figures
- 2030 Carbon Neutrality

- 2040 Carbon Negative

Action:

- Agree the proposed targets.

Monitoring

To allow the organisation to understand where it is at, when it meets its target and the impact of actions we need to monitor all three types of Carbon Dioxide.

The monitoring should be done annually to allow progress to be recorded. The council should appoint a single contractor to help it through the process and for a consistent approach to measuring Carbon.

The process of measuring

The organisation will use a range of methods to establish the current carbon levels.

This will include utilisation of utility bills, organisation surveys and staff and councillor surveys. To support this process a combined consultant and software package should be appointed.

The initial process will be to assess the carbon footprint for the financial year of 2022-23

The reporting will have to be repeated each year so that process can be monitored, and the success of the implementation of various policies and improvement activities evaluated.

Actions

The following actions needed are:

- Agreement to carry out monitoring
- Carry out appraisal of providers
- Appoint organisation on multi-year contract.
- Carry out staff and councillor Survey
- Carry out assessment
- Share results.

Actions

Appoint a Contractor to support with the Carbon Monitoring Process.

The actions required to reduce our Carbon Footprint will be influenced by the Carbon Monitoring process and the outcomes identified. The details below are the initial actions that can be implemented.

Quick Wins

These are actions which can be completed in a timely matter with limited or no financial cost / outlay to the council. This is a combination of simple changes and policies that are not contentious. Many of these are already in place but need formalising and communicating.



The quick wins are easy to achieve and some have already been implemented

Cycle to Work Scheme.

Already in place and utilised by two members of staff with others looking to participate. This will help to reduce our Scope 3 carbon.

To improve uptake and utilisation of the scheme we need to do the following:

- Better engagement with employees
- Improve bike storage facilities (Security and Weather protection)
- Ensure changing facilities are available.
- Allow payments to be spread across 2 years
- Offer a mileage payment for use, similar to the 50p a mile for car drivers. To encourage people to ride for work were possible.

The council needs to support the adoption of cycling by it's employees to move around town for the purposes of work as well as commuting.

Actions:

- Creation and adoption of policy that supports Cycling Infrastructure at council sites
- Creation and adoption of a policy to support staff to use bikes around town for work, including a mileage payment.
- Communication plan for engaging employees,

Flexible Working

The council already has a flexible working policy, this was adopted in 2022. This policy is little known and needs to be communicated with staff so they understand it's contents and how it can be used to support their work life balance, the council and the environment.

The policy is not a full Hybrid / homeworking policy and there are many roles within the organisation where flexible working is not an option.

Actions:

- Ensure all staff are aware of the latest version of the policy
- Ensure reviews engage with staff to identify improvements.

Lower Heating Setpoints and Raise Aircon Setpoints and Natural Ventilation

The organisation needs to ensure that it is minimising its Scope 1 emissions through the use of its gas heating this will need to be done by reducing the amount it is used. We also need to minimise the scope 2 energy used by minimise our use of HVAC systems and Air conditioning systems.

Actions

- Create and ratify a policy that includes the following:
 - Set all bookable room setpoints to 20c max for heating for 2023/24 with the aim of reaching a Setpoint of 18c by 2026
 - Set all bookable spaces to 26c minimum for cooling for 2023/24 and 28c by 2026
 - Set the hot water boiler to be set to a max of 65c (required for Legionnaires), by 2026 have the system set to 55c with weekly sterilisation of 65c
 - Manage the timing of the systems to only work when occupied
 - Set the Office spaces to a Max temp of 20c for heating and 28c for cooling
 - Promote the use of natural ventilation.

Green Utility Contracts

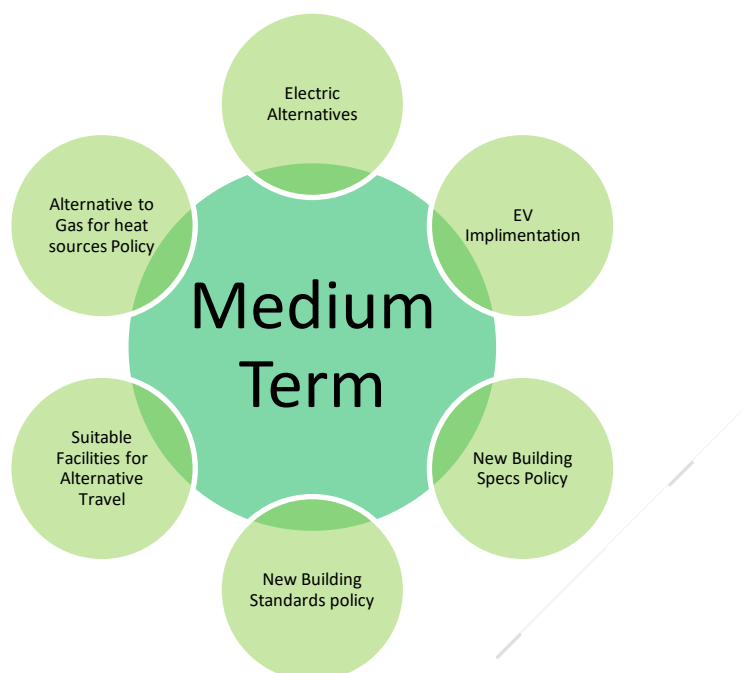
Energy use is one of the biggest carbon producers for the Council. We can easily get some quick wins by only using green (renewable) contracts. This has the potential to dramatically reduce our Carbon footprint from electricity use. There is the potential for slightly higher unit costs for this type of contract. This will reduce our Scope 2 Carbon.

Actions:

- Create and implement a Policy that only allows the use of Green Contracts

Medium Term

This are policies and actions that will take longer to implement due to approval, costs and phasing of the activity. Some are policies that will support the long term actions by ingraining the philosophy in to the future processes and actions.



Electric Alternatives

The council has a variety of equipment that uses petrol and diesel to work. These pieces of equipment not only have environmental consequences, but also have health and safety implications (Hand, Arm Vibration and Fume risks). This will reduce Scope 1 Carbon.

Actions

- Create and ratify a policy that includes:
 - Replace hand tools with battery powered alternatives, where appropriate.
 - Replace larger tools and equipment (generators etc) with Electric Alternatives.

Implementation of EV's

The council needs to progressively replace it's fleet of vehicles with Electric Vehicles. This will reduce the councils Carbon Footprint whilst modernising the fleet. It will reduce our Scope 1 Carbon.

Actions

- Create a policy that that:
 - ensures all vehicles are replaced with EV's by 2029.
 - Create a replacement plan for phasing and costing.

New Building Specifications and Standards

The council should have a standard specification and a minimum environmental standard that it requires all new buildings to achieve. This will ensure that all future buildings are environmentally sound and consistent. With the nature of building technology these standards will need to have a regular review date. This will reduce all Scopes of Carbon and the carbon footprint.

Actions:

- Create a policy that sets the councils standards and specifications, it should include
 - The Carbon footprint of the building

- It's carbon lifecycle
- It's Breeam Rating
- Type of Heating systems
- Use of heat recover for various systems.
- Lighting Systems etc

Supporting Alternative Travel Methods

To reduce our type 1 and type 3 carbon footprint we need to look at ways to encourage the use of alternative travel methods, such as cycling, running, walking etc.

By providing the enhanced facilities for staff and the public it makes it more enticing to not use the car to travel to the councils' facilities.

The council policy should include the following:

- The standard required for Bike storage (Security, element protection, lighting, location, etc)
- Secure areas to hang or store wet or damp items to dry (jackets etc), our just to hang items whilst using the facilities.
- Access to showers and changing facilities.

Alternative Heating sources to Gas.

By removing Gas as a form of heating within council properties, the Scope 1 carbon footprint can be dramatically reduced. But carefully selection of alternative methods of heat sources needs to be carried out to ensure that this isn't just replaced with Scope 2 Carbon from electricity.

There are potential cost savings through the reduction in energy used and minimising the number of sources of energy. Such as savings on meter charges and multiple maintenance costs.

The selection of systems needs be paired with other technology to ensure the most effective systems are in place.

We also need to ensure that we are only replacing equipment when needed, or of significant benefit by replacing it early.

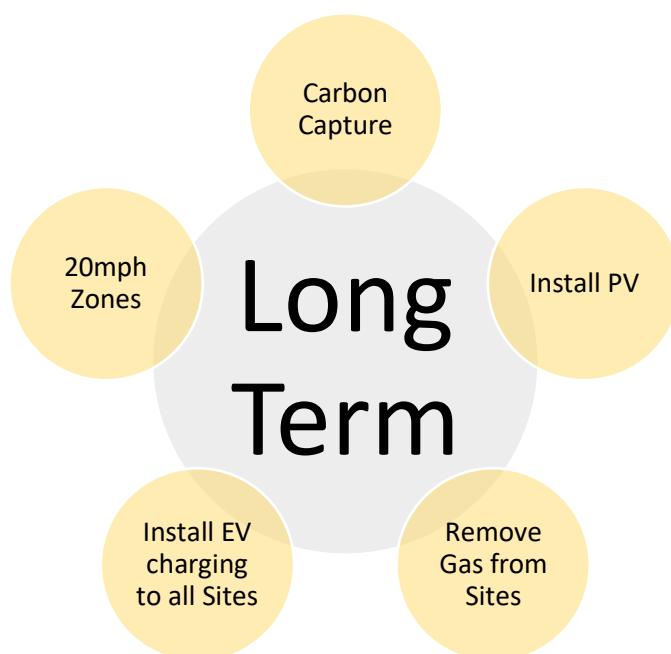
Actions:

- Create and ratify a policy with a clear strategy on equipment replacement and moving from gas.

Long Term

These are actions that have a greater cost and time element linked to them. This time element could be due to the funds needed, the policies behind replacements, level of current technology.

Many of these actions are follow on from the Quick Wins and Medium-term actions.



Carbon Capture

The council can look to offset some of its carbon by installing Carbon Capture systems, these could be mechanical systems that turn the carbon Dioxide and Monoxide into other forms of Carbon such as solid carbon or hydrocarbons (circular systems) or biological systems that utilise photosynthesis to remove the CO2 from the air.

Both systems will require time and development to become viable options for the council.

Install PV

The installation of Solar PV to provide electricity and help to move away from gas systems. We have installed Solar PV at the Civic Hall, Willowbrook Leisure Centre and the Outdoor Services Building (which also has a battery).

Remove Gas from site

To deliver the policy to move to alternative forms of electricity the council will need to remove gas from all sites.

Action:

- Identify the most cost / benefit efficient buildings and services to replace with a non-Gas system.
- Create a time frame and cost forecast for the proposed works.

Installation of EV Charging Points

With more members of public and staff using EV vehicles and the Council rolling out EV vehicles it is appropriate to install EV charging at all council sites. It will also help to reduce our Scope 3 Carbon and provide a potential additional income for the council.

Actions:

- Identify Service to use across all sites
- Identify location for sites.
- Create time and cost plan for install

20Mph Zones

This is being lead by OCC and the council has agreed in Principle. No Actions required.