

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE FULL COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING: 23/07/2019

SUBJECT OF REPORT: CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY MOTION UPDATE

TOWN OR PARISH: YES

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: CLLR BRIDGET PETTY, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

KEY DECISION: NO

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That council notes the work undertaken since the Climate Change Emergency Motion was passed.
- That council notes the achievements that North Somerset Council has made in tackling climate change and efforts towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions within the area.
- The council requests the Executive Member for Climate Emergency and the Environment and the Director of Development and Environment to continue this work including establishing a working group with which to develop a Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report updates council on the work to date following the passing of the motion on Climate Change Emergency and gives recommendations on next steps.

2. POLICY

In February 2019 North Somerset Council passed a motion declaring a climate change emergency. It resolved that the council:

1. recognises the serious global climate emergency
2. asks officers to prepare a report on the actions North Somerset Council could take with the aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 with an idea of costings and;
3. asks the Chief Executive to write to the Government minister on our achievements and asks for resources when we know what the detailed proposals might be.

3. DETAILS

Following the passing of the motion a project group was formed with officers from across the organisation representing services such as Economy, Development, Housing, Planning Policy, Public Health, Strategic and Sustainable Transport, and Recycling and Waste.

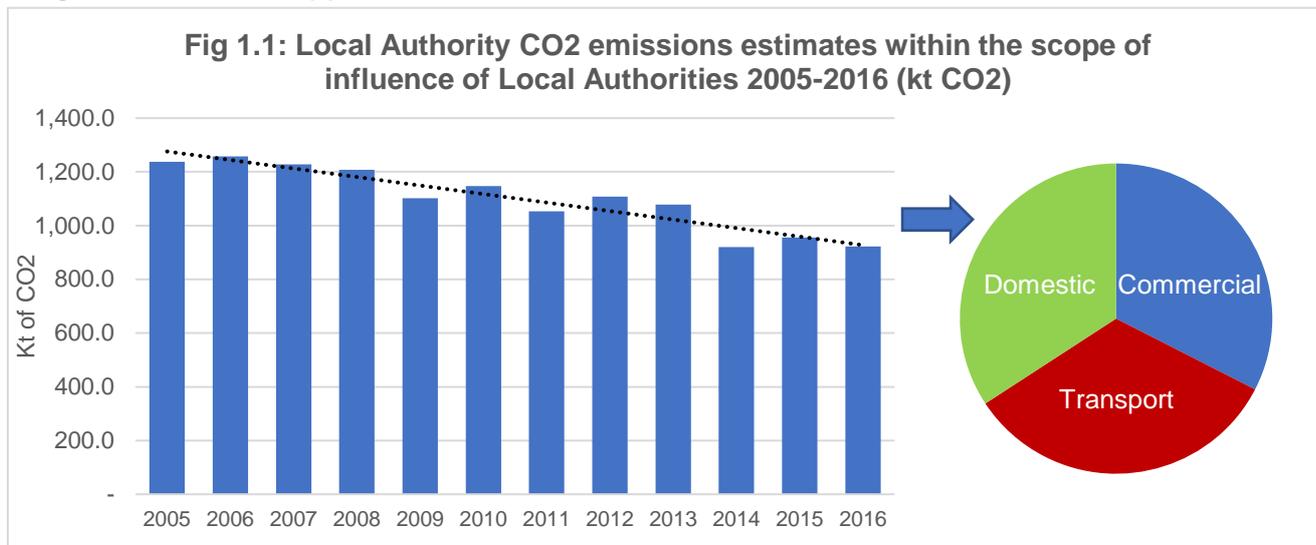
The group has been tasked with understanding North Somerset 'as is', and where we would like it 'to be' in responding to the motion of the climate change emergency, including what we would need to do to bridge the gap between those. A requirement for costings forms part of this work and is ongoing, taking into account a new approach of engagement in decision making.

North Somerset 'as is'

gap analysis

North Somerset 'to be'

Recent data shows that carbon dioxide (CO₂) accounts for over 80% of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) in North Somerset, with data released by the Office of National Statistics showing an overall downward trend in emissions (25% reduction between 2005 and 2016, fig 1.1). It must be noted that some of the early reductions were easier to achieve than those still to make. Emissions not included within these figures are emissions from the airport and the M5 Motorway, these are not within our control but as a council we should recognise our role in opportunities to influence others.

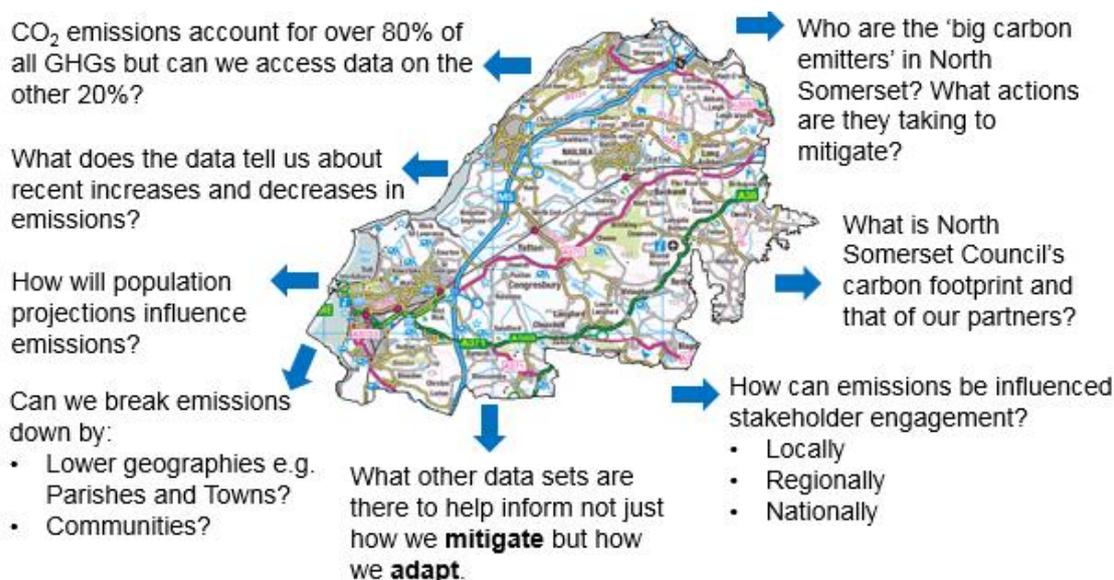


CO₂ emissions also differ by source, and within North Somerset emission reductions have also varied across those sources (table 1.1).

	Industry and commercial emissions (fuels and installations)	Domestic emissions (gas, electricity, other fuels)	Transport emissions (roads and other)
2005	454.5	471.0	312.0
2016	300.1	315.5	306.5
% change	-33.9%	-33.7%	-1.7%

A gap analysis suggests that further work needs to be done to properly understand this data and the overall carbon footprint of the district, along with what that will mean for future actions. As part of this analysis we will need to understand recent population projections which suggest that from now until 2030 the population will increase by around 12%, suggesting as many as 24,000 additional people in district, each producing an average of 4.4 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year (fig 1.2 and based on 2016 carbon per capita data).

Fig 1.2: analysis of data gaps



In 2018 the council adopted a carbon reduction target of 50% reduction in emissions by 2035 from a 2014 baseline as part of the Local Government Association '*Climate Local Commitment*'. The council's actions since are set out below, and these will be developed further and inform future initiatives through the Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan to work toward achieving the ambition of the February 2019 motion.

Planning for growth

- The council has secured over £10m from Homes England to build precision manufactured homes at Nailsea and Weston-super-Mare which will be inherently energy efficient and a manufacturing and assembly process which has low carbon emissions.
- The council will lobby government to reverse its decisions that have hampered the local planning authority to apply sustainability policy to new developments.

Improving energy efficiency

- Around 18,500 street lights across North Somerset are being upgraded to energy efficient LED units as part of a four-year arrangement which began in April 2019. The contract which is being delivered by Centregreat Ltd, will help to reduce carbon emissions and deliver financial savings.
- As part of a programme to alleviate fuel poverty the council is engaging in several activities to educate and promote energy efficiency this includes supporting residents through schemes such as winter fuel payments and the warm homes discount scheme.

Transport

- North Somerset has secured funding for several cross-regional public transport programmes including Metrobus and MetroWest. The MetroWest scheme, which will include the reopening of the Portishead Rail branch line will help to take thousands of cars off the road every year.
- The council continues to expand and improve North Somerset's strategic cycle infrastructure to make commuting and leisure by bike more attractive. This infrastructure includes Brean Down Way connecting Weston-super-Mare to Brean Down in Somerset.
- The council is delivering a Rapid Charging Hub for ten electric vehicles in Portishead, while almost 50% of the council's vehicles will soon be electric.
- With our partners, the council continues to offer support to businesses, community organisations and schools to encourage sustainable transport through schemes such as business grants, and bike loans.

Our green infrastructure

- The council continues to safeguard, improve and enhance our green infrastructure. New contracts for ground and tree maintenance will seek to take advantage of opportunities to re-wild North Somerset where possible, and to make use of land and forestry practices that make our green spaces less vulnerable to climate change.

Recycling and waste

- North Somerset achieved a recycling rate of 57.1% in 2018/19, ranking the council at 26 out of 345 local authorities.
- We have a recycling carbon index score of 105 kg carbon saving per person, ranking the council 8th and categorised as a 'high flyer'
- Despite an increase in housing numbers the total amount of household residual waste in North Somerset declined between 2017/18 and 2018/19, with the average household producing 430.64 kg of residual waste, which is 17.7 kg less than the year before.
- The council is now working to improve this further, under the new residual waste disposal contracts, an ambitious target for zero tonnes of waste to landfill from kerbside collections has been agreed. This will be achieved by an increase in energy produced from waste plus greater recycling recovered from residual waste from our three recycling centres. This is alongside continued support to community projects such as the Repair Café.

So that the climate emergency implications of the council's business can be considered across the organisation, decision papers will now be required to include a section on the climate emergency implications of proposed policies and projects.

The council will continue to keep residents updated on these actions through North Somerset Life, through social media and through various engagement campaigns. A recent campaign on Facebook (fig 1.3) to raise awareness of our plastics recycling process reached over 4,000 people and will feature in North Somerset life reaching over 100,000 households.



There is an opportunity to enhance this work both traditional and digital channels, and through a process of engagement with our partners and groups across North Somerset and beyond.

Since the passing of the motion, officers have already received a number of emails from interested individuals and groups. These have been well received and have formed part of the work of the officer group. The progress of the officer group has also been discussed at Directorate and Corporate Management teams and at Executive member briefings.

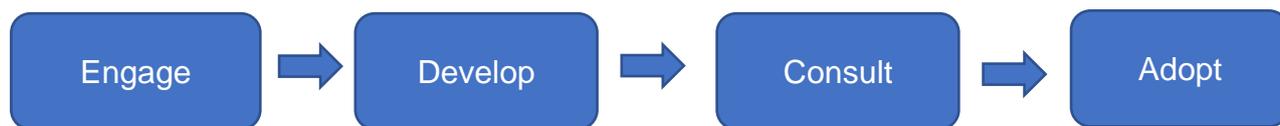
Next steps

Work undertaken collaboratively across the organisation and with our partners will lead to the development of a Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. The strategy will seek to bridge the gap in a structured way between North Somerset 'as is' and North Somerset 'to be'.

As part of the work in developing the Strategy and Action Plan we will seek to engage with Town and Parish councils, partners within North Somerset such as health, police, schools, and Weston College, our partners regionally (i.e. other local authorities, WECA), and those nationally. We will also engage with parties and groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, sustainability and environmental groups, renewable energy groups/businesses, and those working in green technology/innovation, and wider industry. We will also seek to engage with our residents and community groups.

Following engagement, development and consultation, the Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan will be adopted.

It will be supported by an ongoing strategic approach to communication, consultation and engagement with communities, business and households across North Somerset.



4. CONSULTATION

Directors, senior officers and Executive members have been fully consulted over the contents of this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None at this time but there are likely to be financial implications within the Strategy and Action Plan once further work is done on various costings for actions.

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

None at this time but there are likely to be implications within the Strategy and Action Plan.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Strategy and Action Plan will include analysis around risk management.

8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

The Strategy and Action Plan will include an Equality Impact Assessment.

9. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

None at this time but there are likely to be corporate implications within the Strategy and Action Plan once further work is done.

10. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

N/A

AUTHORS

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Draft Joint Local Transport Plan: <https://travelwest.info/projects/joint-local-transport-plan>
- Joint Spatial Plan: <https://www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk/consult.ti>
- UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-2016>
- ONS sub-national population projections: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections>