

Isle of Anglesey County Council	
Report to:	Executive Committee
Date:	9 March, 2022
Subject:	Establishing the Isle of Anglesey County Council Towards Net Zero Plan 2022 – 2025
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Dafydd Rhys Thomas (Climate Change Champion)
Head of Service / Director:	Dylan Williams, Deputy Chief Executive
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Local Members:	All elected Members

A –Recommendation/s and reason/s

That the Net Zero Plan is endorsed by the Executive Committee and approved for adoption by Full Council on 10th March, 2022.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Isle of Anglesey County Council announced a climate emergency in September 2020 and committed the Council to becoming a Carbon Neutral organisation by 2030.
- 1.2. In addition, a report was presented to the Executive on March 22nd, 2021. The report highlighted the need to respond to climate change whilst co-ordinating and programming its efforts as an organisation to achieve our aim in 2030.
- 1.3. The Executive approved the recommendation to develop a corporate Climate Change Programme, recruit a Climate Change Manager and appoint a member of the Executive as a ‘Climate Change Champion’.
- 1.4. The public sector in Wales has a target of achieving net zero carbon by 2030 i.e. to ensure that all greenhouse gas emissions are minimised as far as possible. The remaining emissions will be offset by actions to remove carbon from the atmosphere.
- 1.5. The Council is committed to providing local leadership on the Island and to act on a corporate level to deliver tangible changes in order to transition effectively into a net zero organisation. Although some decisions and actions are within the authority’s control, others will require support from Welsh Government and the UK Government as well as additional resources to co-ordinate, develop and deliver them.

A –Recommendation/s and reason/s

1.6. To achieve the objective, it is essential to have a clear plan, corporate approach, comprehensive baseline, robust monitoring arrangements and defined responsibilities to maximise and strengthen current work to transition to net zero carbon by 2030.

2. Success to date

2.1. As noted in the Towards Net Zero Plan (appendix A), the Council has recently succeeded in delivering a number of elements and making positive changes:

- The Energy Efficiency Strategy 2017-22 has achieved an 18% reduction in the Council's energy use
- The ReFit Scheme has seen the Council's largest investment (£2.4M) to reduce energy use by installing solar panels, LED lighting and upgrading heating systems in our assets
- The Council has started to convert its fleet to electrical vehicles
- Converting and adapting street lighting to use LED lamps and reducing energy use across the Island's road network
- A member of the Executive has been appointed Climate Change Champion
- Climate Change Manager appointed

3. Towards Net Zero Plan

3.1. The proposed Plan represents the first step on the Council's journey to transition into a net zero carbon organisation. As well as building on recent successes and co-ordinating schemes already in place, the Plan will implement new projects that will lead to a reduction in our carbon emissions.

3.2. The Plan's projects and interventions have been divided into 5 main programmes of action.

- Reducing Energy Consumption and Energy Efficiency – Reducing energy consumption and improving energy efficiency across our portfolio of assets
- Transport – Reducing the Council's emissions by developing low carbon transport options across Anglesey
- Land Use and Biodiversity – Reducing carbon emissions through positive carbon projects
- Organisational Adaptations – Reducing the Council's carbon emissions by adapting and changing the way it works
- Governance, Data, Monitoring and Reporting – Ensure that governance, management and data collection and accountability arrangements are in place to support the scheme's success.

3.3. To deliver the plan, an annual delivery plan, targets and a monitoring and reporting framework will be adopted. The next step will be to establish a full and detailed baseline, with data management systems.

3.4. The requirements in terms of finance and personnel to deliver the changes will be considerable over the period ahead. The Council will have to take advantage of any funding opportunities (grants and loans) available to progress schemes and programmes in future years.

B – What other options did you consider and why did you reject them and/or opt for this option?

Do Nothing - impossible to reach the objective of being a net zero carbon Council without establishing a plan to coordinate and drive the agenda forward.

Operating within existing procedures and capacity - unlikely to have the necessary impact and influence to achieve the net zero carbon objective by 2030.

C – Why is this a decision for the Executive?

The plan sets the strategic and operational direction for the Council to respond to climate change for the next 3 years and provides a foundation for action up to 2030.

Executive Committee approval is key before the proposed Plan is adopted by Full Council.

Ch – Is this decision consistent with policy approved by the full Council?

The Plan aligns with the Council's Strategic Plan (2017 - 2022), a climate change emergency announcement (September 2020) and a commitment to become a carbon neutral Council by 2030.

D – Is this decision within the budget approved by the Council?

No provision has been made to fund the cost in existing budgets and the Executive will need to agree to release the funding from general or other surplus funds which are no longer required.

Dd – Assessing the potential impact (if relevant):		
1	How does this decision impact on our long term needs as an Island?	Ensures there is corporate recognition and response to the challenges of climate change (starting a journey).
2	Is this a decision which it is envisaged will prevent future costs / dependencies on the Authority? If so, how?	Reducing greenhouse gas emissions (carbon emissions) is likely to require additional investment in a number of areas but will also bring additional benefits and cost savings in the long run.
3	Have we been working collaboratively with other organisations to come to this decision? If so, please advise whom.	In preparing the proposed Plan, we have engaged with other Councils, as well as the Welsh Local Government Association and the Ambition Board.
4	Have Anglesey citizens played a part in drafting this way forward, including those directly affected by the decision? Please explain how.	The citizens of Anglesey have not been involved in drafting the content of this Plan. There will be an opportunity for the public to contribute through the engagement / consultation process of the priorities of the next Council Plan.
5	Note any potential impact that this decision would have on the groups protected under the Equality Act 2010.	No effects have been identified at this time.
6	If this is a strategic decision, note any potential impact that the decision would have on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.	No predicted effects. Implementing the scheme could lead to employment / training opportunities for those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.
7	Note any potential impact that this decision would have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.	There is no element of the proposed scheme that would have an impact on opportunities for people to use Welsh or treat Welsh less favourably than English

E – Who did you consult?		What did they say?
1	Chief Executive / Senior Leadership Team (SLT) (mandatory)	Supportive
2	Finance / Section 151 (mandatory)	Comments noted within the proposed Net Zero Plan (page 22).
3	Legal / Monitoring Officer (mandatory)	
4	Human Resources (HR)	Any staffing issues arising from the recommendations should be dealt with

E – Who did you consult?		What did they say?
		in accordance with recognized consultation and other human resources processes.
5	Property	Supportive and have been a part of the process in establishing the document.
6	Information Communication Technology (ICT)	
7	Procurement	
8	Scrutiny	Supportive
9	Local Members	

F - Appendices:

Appendix A – Anglesey County Council - Towards Net Sero Plan 2022-25

Ff - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):

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Isle of Anglesey County Council
Towards Net Zero Plan
2022 – 2025

Foreword

Climate change affects us all and the actions we take now will define the lives of future generations.

In September 2020, the Isle of Anglesey County Council declared a climate emergency, and committed to becoming a net zero carbon organisation over the next decade.

Achieving net zero carbon status by 2030 will certainly be a challenge. However, we can be achieve this target by working effectively with residents, staff, elected members and visitors to our Island.

We are already working pro-actively to meet our climate change commitment. Positive steps taken to date have included:

- Changing the way Council buildings are used and reduce carbon emissions across the whole organisation
- Upgrading our fleet to include more electric vehicles
- Ensuring that Council housing stock is as energy efficient as possible
- Taking carbon positive steps to plant trees and protect bio-diversity

This ambitious plan outlines the County Council's aims, programme areas and the actions required to become a net zero carbon organisation by 2030.

We will continue to work in partnership with Welsh Government and other partners across local communities to deliver this plan.



**Councillor Llinos Medi
Council Leader**



**Councillor Dafydd Rhys Thomas
Corporate Business Portfolio Holder
& Climate Change Champion**

Why do we need the Towards Net Zero Plan?

Climate change is the globally defining challenge of our time and for future generations. This includes Anglesey, its residents, visitors and communities.

Climate change affects us all – It goes beyond political differences and social boundaries. Its effects can already be seen amongst the most vulnerable members in communities across Wales and the world.

Carbon emissions released into the atmosphere have already led to an increase in global temperatures. Without a reduction in carbon emissions the Earth's temperature will continue to increase significantly. This will result in changes to weather climates across the world – including here on Anglesey (e.g. flooding and catastrophic storms).

To respond to the Climate Change challenge, the Isle of Anglesey County Council ('the Council') unanimously declared a climate emergency on the 8th of September 2020.

This saw the authority commit to become carbon neutral by 2030. As a result, tough decisions, choices, and compromises will need to be made to ensure this is achieved.

This Towards Net Zero Plan 2022 – 2025 will outline what immediate actions the Council will take as it continues the transition towards Net Zero.

This will require the Council to undergo significant modernisation and transformational change for example;

- how we work
- how we decide which goods and services we buy
- how we use our land, buildings, assets and technology
- how we use our transport,
- how services are delivered to our residents.

The Net Zero Plan will align with the Council Plan and other Council strategies.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the Plan is to:

“Modernise and adapt to become a Net Zero Council by 2030”

This aim will be achieved by delivering the following objectives:

- 1. Reduce and decarbonise the energy use of the Council’s buildings and assets**
- 2. Continue to deliver Council services while reducing carbon emissions from our vehicles and working practices**
- 3. Enhance biodiversity and tree cover on the Council’s land and assets**
- 4. Facilitate the development of new low carbon energy generation**
- 5. Adapt the policies, processes, culture, values and behaviours (of Council staff and elected members)**
- 6. Understand the Council’s total carbon footprint, establish effective, efficient monitoring and reporting arrangements**

This Plan focuses on reducing the Council’s emissions. The Council also recognises it’s important local leadership role, collaborating with other organisations, businesses, the community and residents across the Island. As national, regional and local policies and laws are updated to respond to the climate emergency, the Council will consider and further adapt its approach. This can be by making necessary changes to the land use planning process, transport provision, education and care provision, recycling collections or other service areas.

Context

The Welsh Government is committed to make Wales carbon neutral by 2050 and the public sector (including local authorities) by 2030.

Together the;

- UK Climate Change Act (2008)
- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Planning (Wales) Act 2015
- Environment Act (Wales) 2016

will provide the legal framework for action on climate change and sustainable management of Wales’ natural resources, with each underpinned by strategies and frameworks.

In July 2021, the Welsh Government published ‘Net zero carbon status by 2030 - a route map to decarbonise the Welsh public sector’.

Its vision identifies that ‘by 2030, choosing zero carbon will be routine, culturally embedded and self-regulating across the Welsh Public Sector’. This will influence and inform the Council’s approach, prioritisation, and transition journey.

In addition, the Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2 (2021-2025) identified a number of key local authority commitments for buildings, procurement, land use, mobility and transport. These include :

- ✓ All Council’s have live decarbonisation action plans in place, which will be reviewed regularly with lessons and best practice shared through the WLGA support programme, the first review by end of 2021.
- ✓ From 2021 onwards emissions will be monitored annually, using baseline data.
- ✓ Annual reviews will report progress and drive improvements

One of the Council’s main priorities (recognised in the Council Plan 2017-2022) is to “*Work in partnership with our communities to ensure that they can cope effectively with change and developments whilst protecting our natural environment*”.

This has been progressed by “*becoming more energy efficient and decrease our carbon emissions by concentrating on Leisure Centres, Schools and street lighting*”.

Despite the significant progress made to date, the Council is committed to adopting an ambitious corporate approach during the 2022-2027 Council period, which will be influenced and informed by the carbon footprint baseline.

A new Council Plan will be adopted in autumn 2022 (post the local government elections in May 2022).



As the 2017-22 Plan draws to a close, a Transitional Plan 2022-2023 has been adopted. This will provide the Council with immediate direction as we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Figure 1 outlines the Council’s strategic and financial planning framework. This Plan sits in the ‘Strategic Plans’ section which influences and informs all other decisions and activities.

Figure 1 - The Strategic and Financial Planning Framework

The Transition Journey

Taking the lead from the Welsh Government roadmap 'Journey to net zero' - carbon neutral status will be achieved by delivering 3 plans as outlined below in Figure 2.

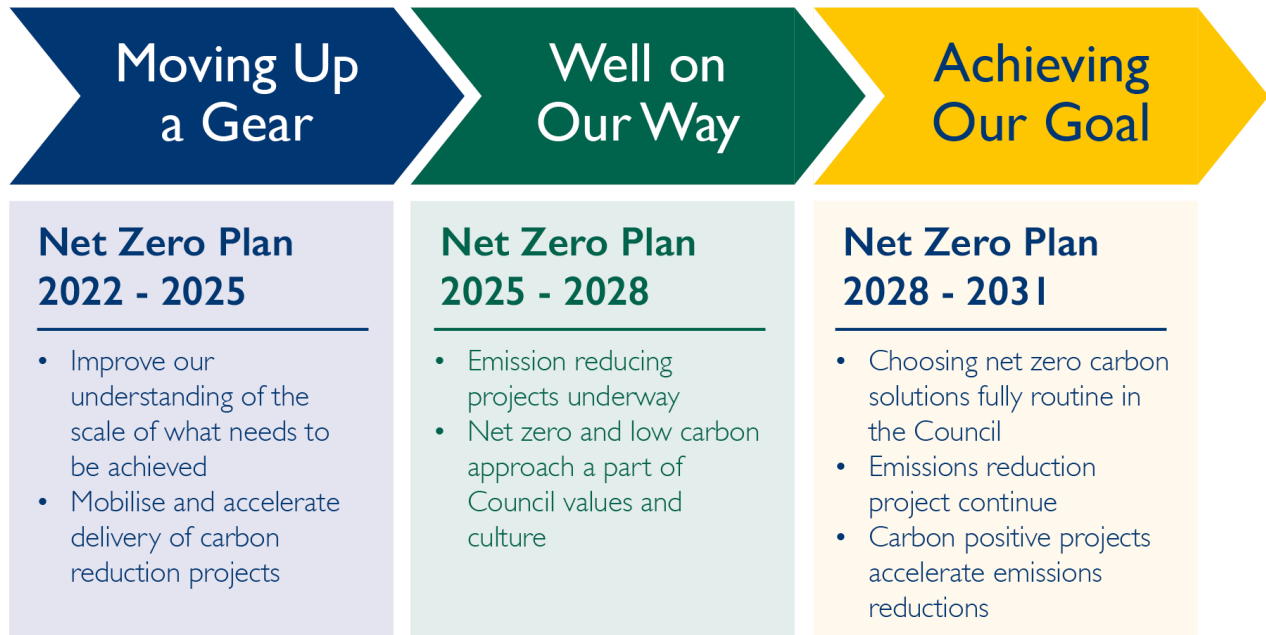


Figure 2 - Our net zero journey

By 2030, the Council will have achieved its aim of reaching net zero carbon status. This will mean all the green house gasses emitted will have been reduced to the lowest possible level, leaving only residual 'unavoidable' emissions. Any residual emissions released will be cancelled out by the carbon removed from the environment

In practical terms, the Council will need to:

- i. Make achieving Net Zero a routine part of day-to-day work within its workforce and elected members
- ii. Continue to improve and modernise Services whilst delivering low/no carbon emissions
- iii. Embed climate thinking into the Council's decisions and everyday activity
- iv. Minimise the carbon impact of the goods and services procured by the Council
- v. Ensure new houses and buildings built by the Council will (as a minimum) reach a carbon neutral standard
- vi. Reduce the size of the existing asset portfolio, modernising to improve performance and reduce its carbon impact
- vii. Upgrade the vehicle fleet and create a network of electric vehicle charging points
- viii. Utilise hybrid working (working from home and the office) and new technologies to reduce overall travel
- ix. Ensure offices and work locations are as energy efficient as possible and are powered by on site generation or supplied with green and sustainable energy sources.

- x. Continue to invest in the energy efficiency of Council houses and tenanted properties
- xi. Offset unavoidable emissions through a range of carbon capture measures
- xii. Utilise unused land to maximise biodiversity, increase tree cover, and capture carbon with the view to become carbon positive.
- xiii. Endeavour to ensure that wider strategic energy investments will generate local employment, as well as economic and community benefits

Carbon Reduction Achievements to date

The Plan will build on the success of existing Strategies and projects which have already contributed towards reducing the Council's carbon footprint - for example:

Energy Efficiency Strategy 2017 – 2022

- The Strategy aimed to reduce the Council's energy consumption 15% by 2022.
- It succeeded in reducing the Council's energy consumption by 18%. This was achieved through a combination of energy efficiency measures installed, improved building construction, effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and overall assets reduction.

Re: Fit Scheme

- This was the largest investment made by the Council to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.
- Invested over £2.4m on projects such as; installing new solar panels, LED lighting and upgrading/replacing heating and ventilations in our leisure centres.
- The scheme is expected to reduce energy consumption by 3,875,107kWh and carbon emissions by 958.18tco2e. (Note: This reduction is expected to be achieved by the end of 2022).

Other:

- New Schools and Social Housing with better energy performance
- Road lighting across Anglesey has been modified to use energy efficient LED lighting. Having achieved almost complete conversion to LEDs, the carbon emissions across the road lighting network on Anglesey have reduced by 81% from 2014/15 to 2020/21.
- The transition of Council vehicles to electric vehicles.

Delivery of these projects have led to an overall reduction in the Councils emissions of 2,180 tCO₂e between 2017 and 2021

Measuring our Carbon Emissions

Understanding the Council's carbon footprint is critical. A comprehensive baseline will ensure our journey to be net-zero is driven by evidence and informs how we prioritise our actions.

Once there is an established baseline, an effective corporate monitoring framework, dashboard and full understanding of where our emissions come from, targets can then be set with an agreed plan to deliver on carbon reductions.

The Council's emissions baseline will be calculated according to the World Resources Institute (WRI) Green House Gas Protocol (GHG) which categorises emissions sources into 3 scopes.

Scope 1 – Direct GHG emissions from the consumption of fuel within the Council operations e.g. our buildings and operated fleet

Scope 2 – Indirect GHS from consuming purchased heat, electricity or steam

Scope 3 – Indirect emissions such as the goods and services we buy, transportation, investments, leased assets and other.

Figure 3 below from WRI outlining the GHG scopes and what may be included.

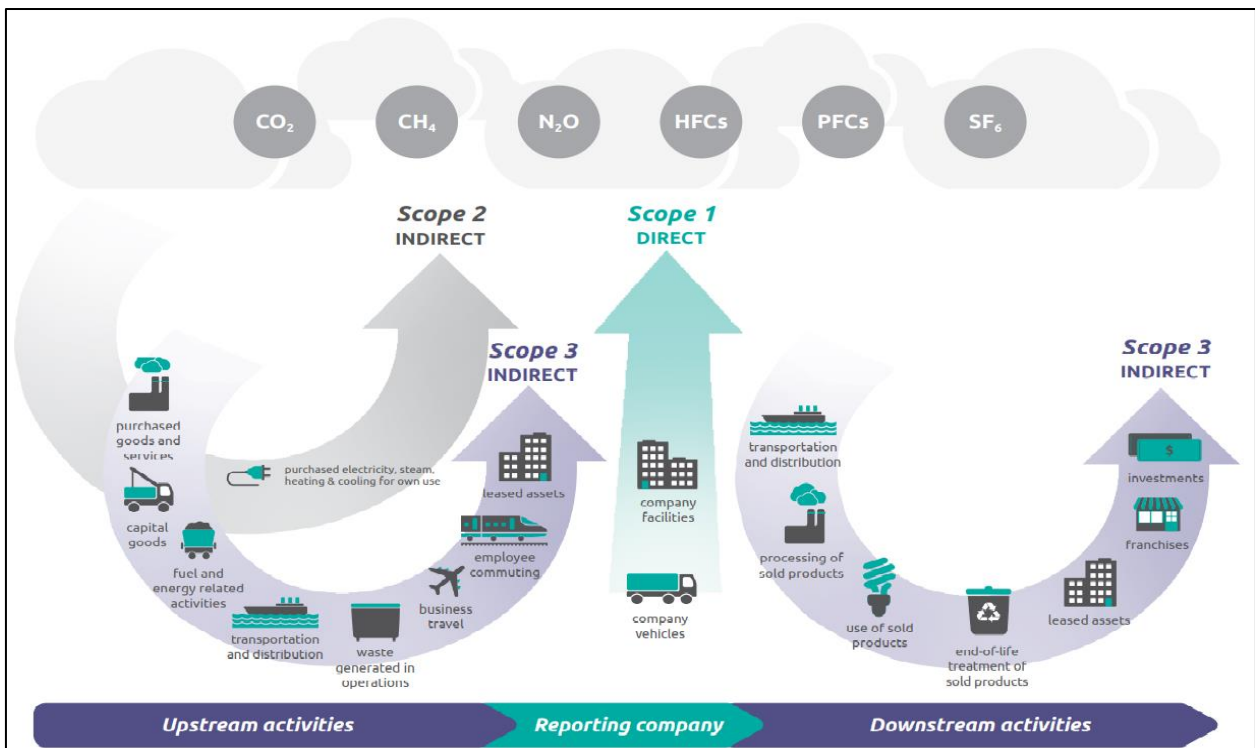


Figure 3 - World Resource Institute - Green House Gases Baseline Breakdown

The data management programme area will lead on work to develop improved analysis and data collection across the Authority. It will assist decision making within services and show the impact that reducing carbon emissions has on the County Council's baseline.

Welsh Government have begun to collect baseline data from all Council's in Wales. Progress will be monitored over time to ensure the Council remains on track to achieve the net zero target by 2030.

The Council already collects data that provides energy usage across its assets portfolio. This allows the Council to monitor usage and where necessary, measure the effectiveness of energy reduction projects. Data from building, energy and fleet usage data shall be used to calculate the emissions for Scope 1 and 2 of the Council's baseline.

Scope 3 emissions come from a range of sources outlined in Figure 3 e.g. social housing stock condition data, employee commuting, business travel, goods and services procured. Where necessary the Council shall use Welsh Government 'Net Zero Carbon Reporting Guide' to use a spend based approach to estimate supply chain emissions.

Energy Island Programme

In addition to the Council's net zero commitment as an organisation, the Energy Island Programme (EIP) will also make a considerable impact locally and beyond. The EIP is a collaborative approach to put Anglesey at the forefront of low carbon energy research, development and generation.

The vision is to:

"be an exemplar in the transition to a prosperous and resilient low carbon economy, providing high quality jobs, education and supply chain opportunities, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural environment and enabling the Welsh Language and culture to thrive in vibrant communities."

The Council aims to ensure maximum benefit is delivered from all proposed energy generation projects across the Island to:

- 1: 'Encourage growth in new technology, research and development, and innovation'**
- 2: 'Create local jobs, building skills, thriving businesses'**
- 3: 'Support resilient and cohesive communities'**
- 4: 'Ensure responsible, pioneering, and timely climate action'**
- 5: 'Ensure a balanced environment'**

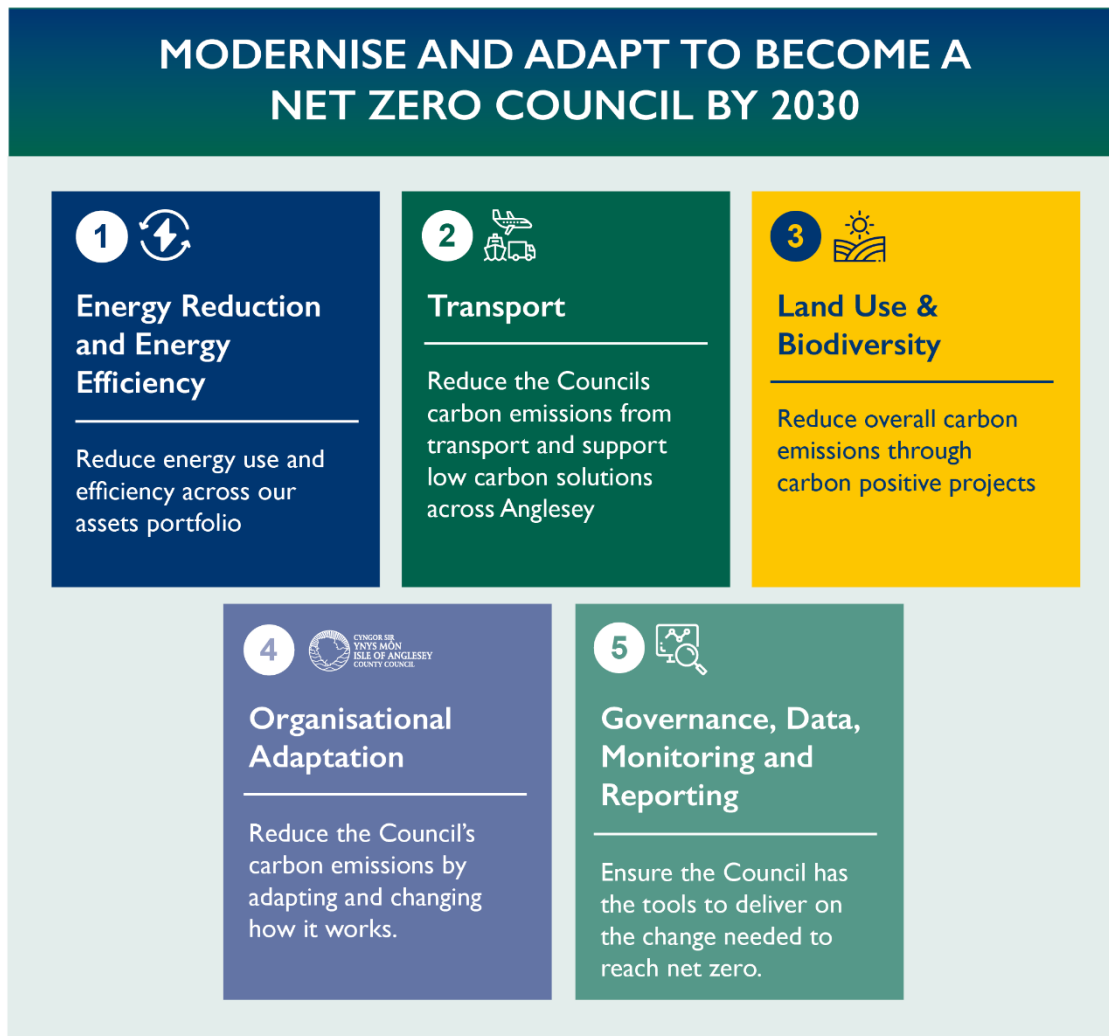
By supporting the low carbon energy transition across the Island, to maximise local jobs, benefits and supply chain opportunities, the Programme shall

- ❖ Influence the scale and location of potential energy developments.
- ❖ Enable the Council to undertake its statutory consenting responsibilities effectively.
- ❖ Demonstrate that Anglesey is at the forefront of low carbon development.
- ❖ Facilitate knowledge sharing between business, academics and other key partners.
- ❖ Projects to pioneer new energy technologies to address the energy 'trilemma'.
- ❖ Ensure the development, construction and operation of energy projects contribute to the well-being of the Island and its communities.

The delivery of the Energy Island Programme may not directly have an impact on the Council's carbon emissions, but its outcomes should support the Council's efforts in transitioning to a net zero organisation.

Programme Areas

This Towards Net Zero Plan will be divided into specific programme areas to deliver on projects and interventions:



Becoming a Net Zero Council by 2030 will be dependent on:

- decisive leadership
- prioritisation
- tough decision making
- capability and resources (e.g. finance, officer time and organisational capacity)

By using established programme and project management practices we will ensure that the actions identified within this plan are delivered.

There are already considerable external funding (grants and loans) opportunities to implement and deliver actions which responds to climate change and enables decarbonisation.

The Council must be ambitious, resourceful, and proactive at both corporate and service level to take full advantage of the opportunities available to secure additional resources.

Energy Reduction and Energy Efficiency

Why is this important

The County Council has a broad and diverse portfolio of buildings and assets which include;

- offices
- depots
- schools
- leisure centres
- business units
- social housing across the Island.

The portfolio ranges from new and energy efficient buildings to old and inefficient ones with considerable carbon emissions associated with their operation, particularly through heating.

Energy is one of the Council's largest controllable emissions with numerous opportunities to make savings. Reducing energy consumption and improving efficiency of its use can decrease carbon emissions (scope 1 & 2) resulting in financial savings and sustainable delivery of services.

This programme area will deliver further improvements to the energy performance (reduction and efficiency) of the Council's buildings and assets to ensure energy usage is reduced and decarbonised.

The Council face a challenge of addressing the energy efficiency of its social housing stock counted as Scope 3 – leased assets emissions.

As the landlord, the Council does not have control over how energy and heating is used by tenants. However, we do have obligation to ensure our housing are as energy efficient as possible.

Retrofitting our social housing stock to improve energy efficiency will lead to a reduction in carbon emissions as well as improved financial, health and wellbeing outcomes for our tenants.

In addition to addressing the energy efficiency of current assets, all new developments will be built to at least carbon neutral standards.

What we are going to do

- ❖ Ensure the climate impact of the Council's asset portfolio is fully understood
- ❖ Develop plans to decarbonise the built estate to become carbon neutral.
- ❖ Ensure (as a minimum) that all new buildings built by the Council reach carbon neutral standards
- ❖ Develop a comprehensive baseline position for the Council's housing stock, ensuring comprehensive detail of emissions to inform future decision making
- ❖ Deliver retrofitting schemes to improve the energy efficiency and decarbonise the housing stock.

What will be the impact on our carbon emissions?

By reducing energy consumption and improving energy efficiency across our asset portfolio carbon emissions will be further reduced.

Linking with the established baseline, actions identified within this programme area will impact on the Council's overall emissions quantified and included within the monitoring framework that supports the Net Zero Plan.

Transport

Why is this important

The Council has 190 fleet vehicles, ranging from small cars to large vans and minibuses - Most of which run on fossil fuels such as diesel and LPG (with the exception of 13 electrical vehicles).

The Welsh Government has stated, where practically possible, that all new cars and light goods vehicles in the public sector need to be carbon neutral from 2025 and all heavy goods vehicles from 2030.

Emissions from vehicles are classified as scope 1, thus making it a priority to significantly reduce overall emissions. This will be achieved by investing to further transition the fleet from fossil fuel to ultra-low carbon vehicles (e.g. hydrogen or electric).

As electric vehicles become more frequently used by the Council and the general public, investment in the charging infrastructure will be key to ensure that the use of these vehicles are sustainable.

Carbon emissions from transport also comes from staff commuting and community transport (counted within scope 3) can be challenging to reduce. Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic has shown that alternative working arrangements such as working from home or hybrid working can be utilised to help reduce carbon emissions.

Development of active travel solutions and investment to promote them within our town centres and communities will be key in developing sustainable travel across Anglesey.

As an adopter of new technologies to reduce its carbon emissions, the Council also has a role as a leader within the community to show how its services can change to deliver low/no carbon.

What are we going to do

- ❖ Reduce the overall need to travel by embracing a virtual and hybrid working model (where possible)
- ❖ Support the development of alternative and innovative ways of working and travel (e.g. develop and improve accessibility of public transport and community EV solutions.
- ❖ Promote greater use of active travel across the Islands communities to reduce emissions from commuting and travelling
- ❖ Invest in town centres to facilitate all modes of sustainable travel to remove emissions from commuting and travelling.
- ❖ Carry out plans to further transition our fleet from fossil fuel to low / no carbon alternatives
- ❖ Support transition to electric vehicles by developing new car charging infrastructure across Anglesey

What will be the impact on our carbon emissions?

Reducing overall travel and the emissions from Council vehicles will lead to a reduction in our scope 1 emissions (this will be a one of the Council's main priorities to deliver).

Linking with the established baseline, actions identified within this programme area will impact on Council's overall emissions included within the monitoring framework that supports the Net Zero Plan.

Land Use & Biodiversity

Why is this important

The Council holds a varied portfolio of land including:

- agricultural holdings
- refuse tips
- grazing land
- small areas of land (around offices, buildings, and schools).

How the land is used will determine whether it contributes to decarbonisation or increases our emissions.

Developing our land use, management plan and policies for increasing carbon capture will be key to support the goal of reaching carbon neutral status.

The Plan will seek to support the Council's Biodiversity Plan to ensure all possible actions are taken to enhance biodiversity and the natural environment across Anglesey. It will also mitigate the effects of climate change over the long term.

Additionally, the Plan will seek to extend tree coverage across Anglesey to enhance the carbon sink potential. It will be important to ensure sustainable delivery of tree planting and woodlands schemes to ensure they're suitable for the local habitat.

This programme area will remove emissions from the atmosphere by locking up carbon through carbon capture methods.

Furthermore, the Council will support communities across the Island to respond to the climate emergency (e.g via the place shaping agenda and green infrastructure).

Where necessary, the Council will work to deliver targeted projects to mitigate the effects of climate change by improving flood defence measures across Anglesey

What are we going to do

- ❖ Enhance variety of biodiversity on Council land
- ❖ Develop and deliver a plan to enhance and increase tree cover on Council land
- ❖ Adopt and implement a new Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty management plan which is aligned within the Council's net zero aim and objectives
- ❖ Adopt and implement a new Destination Management Plan that aligns the behaviours and infrastructure outlined in the Council's net zero aim and objectives
- ❖ Support the development of new green public infrastructure in town centres and popular coastal locations
- ❖ Encourage our communities to respond to the climate emergency through the Place Shaping agenda.
- ❖ Develop and implement projects to improve flood defence measures

What will be the impact on our carbon emissions

The delivery of the land use and biodiversity programme will lead to a reduction in our overall carbon emissions through carbon positive projects (e.g. enhancing biodiversity and increasing tree cover).

Organisation Adaptation

Why is this important

Working to reduce the Council's carbon emissions from its buildings and fleet alone will not be enough to achieve net zero carbon status.

The Council will need to adapt and change how it works to achieve the maximum reduction in our carbon emissions. This must be achieved without negatively effecting its activities or services.

The Council must see modernisation and change as an opportunity while working collaboratively across the Council, local communities, regional partners, Welsh Local Government Association and Welsh Government.

Organisation Adaptation will focus on changing the culture, values and working practices. It will be a long term process that will require leadership, commitment and effort.

Some changes may be delivered quickly, for example;

- embedding low carbon priorities within the procurement process
- engaging with suppliers and partners to begin their transition to net zero.

Responding and adapting rapidly to the Covid-19 pandemic has shown that change is possible. The Towards Net Zero Plan will seek to use the lessons learned from that response to assist in facilitating the change needed within the organisation.

What are we going to do

- ❖ Deliver a communications plan to influence and raise awareness within the Council of why and how small changes lead to big impacts.
- ❖ Undertake a carbon literacy and associated training programme.
- ❖ Engage with schools to facilitate climate change education, awareness and encourage action where possible
- ❖ Enabling virtual and hybrid working to be effectively embedded into the organisational culture.
- ❖ Promote, celebrate, and recognise progress, achievements, and good practice.
- ❖ Collaborate and learn from partners and stakeholders.
- ❖ Review and update formal internal policies, processes and practices to ensure changes and decisions at all levels consider the impact it has on the Council's aim to be net zero.
- ❖ Review and update procurement policies and processes (including monitoring and reporting arrangements).

What will be the impact on our carbon emissions?

Organisational adaptation will contribute both directly and indirectly towards reducing overall carbon emissions. Some actions will have an indirect impact on emissions by facilitating or encouraging action on climate change (e.g. communications, raising awareness, policy and integrating Net Zero into day to day activities).

Other actions can have a positive effect in reducing both direct and our supply chain emissions – for example;

- carbon literacy training
- development of hybrid working
- developing an understanding on how we procure goods and services can have a positive effect

The impact of the actions within this programme area will be measured against the Council's overall emissions and included within the monitoring framework supporting the Net Zero Plan.

Governance, Data, Monitoring and Reporting

Why is this important

Successful delivery of the Towards Net Zero Plan will require the combined effort of officers across all the Council and its elected members.

Effective programme and project management arrangements will be essential to facilitate the delivery of the Plan. They will ensure the interventions identified within each programme area are delivered within the agreed milestones and resources available.

Reaching the overall aim of becoming a net zero council by 2030 will also depend on:

- effective and efficient data management
- data monitoring and reporting (to demonstrate progress and identify areas for further development)

Ensuring we have a robust and effective data management system in place will enable the Council to identify which emissions need to be prioritised and where resources need to be deployed to have the greatest impact.

Developing data management systems will improve the accuracy and resolution of the Council's carbon emissions baseline and will assist to monitor emission reductions delivered by this plan.

Welsh Government have begun to request baseline data from all Council's in Wales with the view building an annual baseline of the public sector. Current data collected for Welsh Government includes emissions for 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Scope 1 and 2 emissions will be counted as operational and land use data with scope 3 from Supply chain emissions. Therefore it's critical that progress in data management systems is made.

Additionally, robust arrangements will be required to report on progress made in programme areas, to ensure risks are managed and opportunities for added value are identified and utilised.

Each programme area will be led by a senior responsible owner; the projects and interventions in each work stream will contribute towards our overall aim of becoming a net zero Council.

A Programme Board will be established to provide strategic support and oversight of the Towards Net Zero plan as detailed below.

What are we going to do

- ❖ Ensure the plan is embedded into existing corporate and service delivery, management, performance and reporting arrangements
- ❖ Establish a Programme Board
- ❖ Integrate actions into respective Service Delivery Plans
- ❖ Ensure officers and elected members have access to real time data on progress and change.
- ❖ Create a robust and comprehensive carbon baseline that is updated quarterly.
- ❖ Develop data management systems to enable monitoring and reporting.
- ❖ Establish annual targets with automated reporting systems and data dashboards.

- ❖ Develop a comprehensive baseline of carbon emissions for leased assets (e.g. social housing and small holding stock).
- ❖ Ensure every Council Service is aware of their carbon emission position and consider how to improve as part of regular management processes.

What will be the impact on our carbon emissions?

Improving Data Management will not have a direct effect on the carbon emissions baseline. However, it will lead to improving our understanding of the Council's overall emissions to enable effective prioritisation and decision making, whilst enabling regular reporting and monitoring of progress.

Financial Aspect of Climate Change

Implementing the climate change strategy will impact both on the Council's revenue budget and capital budget.

Currently the revenue budget includes provision to meet the cost of employing the Climate Change Manager and includes a sum of £50k to cover other revenue costs in respect of implementing the strategy. It is unlikely that, as the strategy is implemented £50k will be sufficient and further revenue resources will be required.

However, the main expenditure will be capital projects. Currently the capital funding received from Welsh Government through the Local Government settlement provides £3.6m in 2022/23, which is not sufficient to meet the investment required to maintain the Council's existing assets, let alone invest in implementing the Towards Net Zero Plan. There is some scope to undertake external borrowing to fund projects but this has to be done in accordance of the requirements of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, which requires the Council to ensure that funding borrowing is affordable and does not place an unreasonable funding strain in future years. Projects that can generate revenue cost savings or allow the Council to avoid future costs could be funded from external borrowing.

In the 2022/23 capital budget, £200k has been included to undertake "green" projects in coastal areas, which is funded from an earmarked reserve. After this investment the balance of the earmarked reserve only amounts to £300k.

In order to implement capital projects on the scale required, external funding from the UK and Welsh Governments will be required and it remains to be seen whether these will be 100% grants or will require an element of match funding from the Council. Whatever the level of funding will be, the Council will need to be ready with costed and viable projects to take advantage of funding opportunities that arise. It is likely that some or all of the grant funding will be on a competitive basis, with both Governments seeking to fund projects that give the maximum return towards achieving their climate change objectives. Being in a position to have viable projects will require additional revenue funding to create the required capacity.

Decarbonising the Council's Housing stock will also play an important role in achieving the objectives of the Towards Net Zero Plan. Retro-fitting 3,800 houses to reduce their carbon footprint is estimated to cost £60M. The Council's Housing Revenue Account Business Plan will be updated to take account of this additional investment requirement and will be funded from the HRAs own resources and from external borrowing. Investment in new properties will take account of the requirements of this strategy when developments are designed, but again this will come with an additional cost which has to be funded by the HRA.