



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

14 JUNE 2021

UPDATE REPORT ON THE CARBON FOOTPRINT PROJECT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ESTATES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET'S CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPION (COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS) AND THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES.

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group with regards to the work underway on the project to develop an understanding of the Carbon Footprint of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council activities and how it relates to the wider RCT Council Net Zero and Carbon Reduction commitments.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet Steering Group;

- 2.1 Note the contents of this Carbon Footprint project update report as part of the ongoing work of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group.
- 2.2 Receive a further report in 2021 providing a further update on progress for phases 2 and 3.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The contents of this report provides background information and an update on the current situation with regards to the progress and future plans for the Carbon Footprint project.

4. BACKGROUND AND UPDATE

- 4.1 In early 2021 Rhondda Cynon Taf Council engaged with the Carbon Trust to calculate a Carbon Footprint profile for RCT Council for the Financial Year 2019-2020, covering the impact of direct operational activities and also outlining certain steps that need to be taken to help us progress to our Net Zero goals.
- 4.2 The project has required input from many different departments across the Authority, and the first Phase of the Project was completed at the end of April with the receipt of the RCT Carbon Footprint 'Emissions' report from Carbon Trust which is provided as Appendix A to this report.
- 4.3 The full report contains a comprehensive analysis of the RCT Carbon Footprint for 2019-20 and all its component parts and the Key Findings are that;

*The total footprint for Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) during the Financial Year (FY) 2019/20 has been estimated at **105,257tCO₂e**. These emissions can be broken down into three separate scopes, according to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol:*

*•**Scope 1:** Direct emissions associated with the use of natural gas in buildings, fleet fuel consumption, other fuels and refrigerants (**17,888 tCO₂e**)*

*•**Scope 2:** Indirect emissions associated with purchased electricity in buildings (**6,360 tCO₂e**)*

*•**Scope 3:** Indirect emissions associated with the embodied emissions from procured goods and services, capital goods, employee commuting, business travel, upstream emissions from scope 1 and 2 activities, leased buildings and water consumption in FY 19/20 (**81,009 tCO₂e**).*

- 4.4 *The overall Net Emissions for RCT total **98,757 tCO₂e**. The GHG protocol and UK Environmental Reporting Guidelines encourage dual reporting to allow for reflection of positive carbon activity which cannot be captured within a formal, reportable Carbon Footprint. Net Emissions go beyond the scope of the anticipated Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon Reporting Guide to include the avoided emissions from exported renewables and electricity purchased through REGO certified contracts.*

- 4.5 Following receipt of the Phase 1 Emissions report we have recently commenced Phase 2 of the Carbon Footprint project which is focusing primarily (but not exclusively) on the 63% of Emissions that are related to Procured Goods/Services and Capital Assets. Phase 2 will culminate in July with second report from the Carbon Trust on 'Insights and Recommendations' for improvement.
- 4.6 Overall, the Carbon Footprint process is giving us a substantially greater insight into the current position as we develop the plans for RCT to be a Carbon Neutral Council by 2030 and as part of continuing this process it has been now been agreed to conduct a further Phase 3 of the Project to establish the RCT Carbon Footprint for Financial Year 20-21. This Phase 3 will be a revised version of the Data Collection phase taking into account the outcomes and lessons learnt from the 2019-20 exercise as well as other factors such as the new Welsh Government Carbon guidelines which have been received very recently.
- 4.7 The new Welsh Government's 'Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon Reporting Guide' has finally been published following a number of delays since 2020. The document is very substantial and together with the accompanying data input calculator and process for formal reporting will have considerable implications for RCT Council's future Carbon reporting obligations and also for certain aspects of the Carbon Footprint project, both for the current Phase 2 'Insights and Recommendations' for 2019-20 and for the Phase 3 exercise to establish the RCT Carbon Footprint for 2020-21. These various implications are currently being clarified so that the relevant actions and adjustments can be made to the current processes and future plans.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required with regard to this report.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no immediate Welsh Language requirements with regards to this report. The document in Appendix A entitled Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council Carbon Footprint 2019/20 is an externally commissioned report produced by the Carbon Trust.

7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

7.1 There are no consultation requirements at present with regards to this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 The cost associated with the Carbon Footprint, including those related to the engagement of the Carbon Trust are all currently funded through the relevant cost centres and an existing enabling budget so there are no further financial implications aligned to this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report

10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

10.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update report relating to the progress of the Carbon Footprint project as it relates to the work of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group.
The future actions that arise as a result of the future recommendations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group report will be considered by the Council's Cabinet and it will take full regard to the seven national wellbeing goals.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 This report provides an update to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group with regards to the work underway on the project to develop an understanding of the Carbon Footprint of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council activities and how it relates to the wider RCT Council Net Zero and Carbon Reduction commitments.

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Appendix A

**Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council Carbon Footprint 2019/20
– as produced by the Carbon Trust**