



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE

21st DECEMBER 2023

**UPDATE REPORT ON THE CARBON PROJECT &
WELSH PUBLIC SECTOR NET ZERO CARBON REPORT FOR
2022/23**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ESTATES IN DISCUSSION WITH
THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE & CORPORATE SERVICES
COUNCILLOR C. LEYSHON**

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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 Sub-Committee with regards to the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Reporting Scheme and Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's submission under that regime for the Financial Year 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report as part of the ongoing work under the remit of the Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee.
- 2.2 Agree to publish the data on the Council's Carbon Footprint Dashboard.
- 2.3 Receive further reports providing additional updates on progress as / when deemed appropriate.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 This report provides background information and an update on the current situation regarding the Carbon Footprint of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and its related activities, whilst noting ongoing development in the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon (NZC) reporting process.



4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In 2017, the Welsh Government (WG) set the ambition of achieving a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. Subsequently in March 2019, the Welsh Government published 'Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales' which includes Policy 20: Support the public sector to baseline, monitor and report progress towards carbon neutrality. This mirrors Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's own commitment to be organisationally Carbon Neutral by 2030.
- 4.2 In May 2021, the Welsh Government introduced the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon (NZC) reporting scheme. This scheme encompasses over 60 public sector organisations including all Welsh Unitary Authorities, Health Boards and Trusts, National Park Authorities, Welsh Universities, Fire and Rescue Authorities and various other public sector bodies.
- 4.3 Although launched in May 2021, RCT had already calculated its carbon emissions data for 2019/20. As discussions with WG unfolded, WG requested data for both the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years and for subsequent years going forward and we were in a good position to respond to their requests.
- 4.4 The Carbon Reporting process and the adoption of the Council's Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan provides a clear path with defined timescales to achieving the Council's carbon reduction targets by 2030.

5. RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CARBON EMISSIONS 2022/23

- 5.1 The Council's Carbon Emissions for 2022/23 were submitted to the Welsh Government by the 6th of September 2023 deadline. The NZC Carbon Emissions for 2022/23 were 96,639.83 tonnes CO_{2e}.
- 5.2 From the 2022/23 year onward, the Welsh Government has introduced two additional carbon emission reporting requirements namely:
 - Refrigerant Gases
 - Anaesthetic Gases

The reporting requirement for Anaesthetic Gas Emissions was introduced primarily for the Health Care Sector and is not applicable to our Authority.

The Refrigerant Gas Emissions requirement does apply to our Authority as the Council provides air conditioning plant and cooling equipment to many of its buildings. The requirement also applies to all the Council's Fleet vehicles which are equipped with air conditioning.

- 5.3 The Refrigerant gas emissions relate to refrigerant being lost to the atmosphere because of equipment failure. It should be noted that the refrigerant gas in old redundant equipment is collected as part of the decommissioning process and does not have to be included within our submission to Welsh Government.
- 5.4 Since the submission of the carbon emission data for the 2021/22 year in September 2022, Welsh Government have advised that errors were identified in the Waste emission element of their Reporting Spreadsheet. Consequently, the Total Waste emissions have been reduced by 1,327.81 tCO_{2e}. As a result, the Council's total reportable emissions for 2021/22, were 118,974.66 tCO_{2e}.
- 5.5 A comparison of the carbon emissions for the Baseline Year 2019/20, 2021/22 and the current 2022/23 submission are set out in Table 1 below:

Emission Category	Tonnes CO_{2e} 2019/20 (Baseline Year)	Tonnes CO_{2e} 2021/22	Tonnes CO_{2e} 2022/23	% Change from Baseline Year	% Change from previous Year 2021/22
Supply Chain	86,728.59	81,676.97	62,733.60	-27.67%	-23.19%
Natural Gas	13,590.39	14,346.60	13,240.13	-2.58%	-7.11%
Electricity	7,775.94	8,271.97	6,544.31	-5.53%	-11.76%
Waste	4,444.99	4,842.35	1,822.27	-59.62%	-37.37%
Street Lighting	848.62	855.38	741.39	-12.64%	-13.33%
Fleet & Equipment	3,750.39	6,007.51	5,866.66	56.43%	-2.34%
Water	243.51	112.01	128.24	-47.34%	14.49%
Other Fuels (LPG)	9.38	87.68	103.6	1004.44%	18.15%
Staff Travel & Home Working	N/A	5,562.37	5,454.05	N/A	-1.95%
Refrigerant Gases	N/A	N/A	5.58	N/A	N/A
Total	116,543.20	118,974.66	96,639.83	-17.10%	-18.77%

Table 1: Rhondda Cynon Taf Council – Net Zero Carbon Emissions

- 5.6 A significant reduction in Supply Chain emissions can be seen in 2022/23 which is attributable in part to changes in the calculation methodology instigated by the Welsh Government, which is explained in more detail in Section 6.
- 5.7 The production of Renewable Electricity Generation continues to increase from 1,119,617 kW during 2019/20 to 1,163,788 kW in 2021/22 and 1,389,680kW in 2022/23.
- 5.8 Unfortunately under the current Welsh Government report scheme, renewable electricity generated by the Council's photovoltaic systems cannot be used to offset the Council's carbon emissions. Equally, although the Council purchases 100% of its electricity from renewable generated certified sources, the Council cannot use this to offset our carbon emissions.

6. Analysis of the Council's Carbon Emissions.

- 6.1 Due to the unique nature of the 2020/21 Financial year (Covid – 19 Pandemic) and its effect on the Council's Carbon emissions, it was decided to use the 2019/20 Financial year as the Baseline Year against which progress towards the Council's 2030 target could be assessed.
- 6.2 The introduction of the new reporting requirements for Refrigerant gases added just 5.58 tonnes CO_{2e} to the Council's total reported emissions for 2022/23.
- 6.3 The breakdown of the 2022/23 carbon emissions per Emission Categories as a percentage of total emissions illustrates that emissions related to the purchase of Goods and Services dominates the Council's emissions:
- Supply Chain (65%)
 - Natural Gas (14%)
 - Electricity (7%)
 - Fleet & Equipment (6%)
 - Business Travel, Commuting and Home Working (5%)
 - Waste (2%)
 - Street Lighting (1%)
 - Other Fuels / Water / Refrigerants (>0%)
- 6.4 Whilst the Supply Chain emissions are still the largest proportion of the Council's CO_{2e} Emissions, the amount emitted has decreased by 23.19 % when compared to the 2021/22 year, and by 27.67% when compared with the Baseline Year (2019/20). This reduction is due in part to the way the Council's procurement of Goods and Services are categorised and reported; and also due to changes in the metrics used in the WG Reporting Spreadsheets to calculate the carbon emissions generated for each £ of spend across the various procurement categories. Previously, WG were using metrics derived in 2011, these have now been updated to metrics produced more recently in 2019.



- 6.5 Similar changes in the way the Council's Waste and Recycling data are categorised and reported, and further changes in the WG Reporting Spreadsheets, have reduced the 2022/23 carbon emission in these categories by 37.37% when compared to 2021/22 and by 59.62%, when compared to the 2019/20 Baseline year. It should be noted that the waste and recycling emissions are not just derived from the waste generated by the Council's own activities but also includes the domestic and commercial waste that is collected by the Council.
- 6.6 There have been small drops in Natural Gas and Electricity related emissions in 2022/23 when compared to previous years. This is due to the ongoing energy efficiency measures being installed across the Council's property portfolio.
- 6.7 Fleet and Equipment related emissions for 2022/23 have decreased when compared to the 2021/22 year. The Fleet rationalisation exercise has reduced the total number of vehicles operated by the Council and combined with the Fleet transition to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) including Battery Electric cars and light goods vans, this will result in further decreases in emissions over the coming years.
- 6.8 Water related carbon emissions have increased when compared to the 2021/22 year. This is due to the variable quality and timeliness of the water consumption data supplied to the Council by Dwr Cymru – Welsh Water (DC-WW). Water consumption data is supplied on an annual basis by DC-WW, but invariably it has been in need of correction. Discussions are underway with DC-WW to find a way of improving the quality and timeliness of their data.
- 6.9 Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) is only used on two Council sites within Rhondda Cynon Taf, one of which has transitioned over recent years from using outdated and unreliable biomass heating to a new more reliable LPG system during 2021/22, which has resulted in an increase in LPG related carbon emissions.
- 6.10 Emissions related to Staff travel, both commuting and business travel, and home working are down slightly when compared to previous years.
- 6.11 It is acknowledged that there is a requirement to continuously improve the data identification, collation, analysis and reporting mechanisms to take on board changes to the Council's carbon reduction activities and service adaptations to improve the quality and robustness of the data used to complete the Public Sector Net Zero carbon submissions, and equally importantly to help inform the discussions surrounding the transition to a Carbon Neutral authority by 2030.

