

Sheffield  
City Council



# Contents

<b>Our commitment to addressing climate change</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>How climate change relates to our committees</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Policy Committee Statements</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Transport Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee</i>	
<b>Strategy and Resources Policy Committee</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Finance Committee</i>	
<i>Housing Policy Committee</i>	
<i>Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee</i>	
<i>Communities, Parks, and Leisure Policy Committee</i>	
<i>Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee</i>	
<i>Education, Children and Families Policy Committee</i>	
<i>Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee</i>	

# Our Commitment to Addressing Climate Change

On 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee approved the first Annual Climate Progress Report since Sheffield City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and set an ambitious target to be a net zero city by 2030.

This report highlighted that progress has been made, however it is not at the pace and scale needed to meet our 2030 target:

- 12.03% reduction in Sheffield City CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions between 2017 and 2021
- 3% reduction in Sheffield City Council CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions between 2019 and 2022
- Sheffield is expected to exceed its recommended carbon budget for 2018-2022

The climate emergency is one of the biggest challenges we will face as a city, region, country, and global community. Following the announcement from Government in September 2023 to delay key climate change related legislation, we face a period of uncertainty around the policy levers that will be available in the coming years to support us to deliver our climate action at pace and at scale. Further to this, significant additional resources from central government and private sector will be required to help us to meet our ambitions and realise the opportunities that climate action brings. We will continue to work with government and the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to influence this.

We, as elected Members, wish to restate our support and commitment to the targets that Sheffield has set around addressing climate change. We remain committed to tackling challenges that can be addressed by this council, using the opportunities and levers that are available to us. We also commit to developing climate adaptation plans within each of our service areas. By working together with Sheffield's communities, businesses, institutions and partner organisations to reduce our carbon emissions and adapt to our changing climate, we can minimise the impact of change, realise the widespread benefits of investing in homes and new technologies, and address issues around social justice.

## How Climate Change Relates to Our Committees

It is stated in the Sheffield City Council Constitution under the council functions of each committee that 'when devising policy, evaluating service delivery and taking decisions the committee must consider...climate and biodiversity'. In relation to climate change, each of our committees' work is impacted and affected by other

committees' decisions, and we will only succeed if we take a cross-committee approach to climate action.

The following pages set out how climate change relates to the nine policy committees and highlights key activity on the current work plans and service plans that support net zero and address climate change.

# Policy Committee Statements

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## Strategy and Resources Policy Committee

The Zero Carbon Mitigation Pathways report<sup>1</sup> on governance recommended that climate change needs to be a central council priority, structuring action around outcomes, and that embedding climate action into the structure of the organisation will be essential to deliver our climate objectives. As the committee with overall responsibility for the development of cross-cutting policy and providing strategic direction to operation of the council, the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee is in a key position to enable this to happen.

The impacts of climate change are many and varied and are predicted to include higher energy and food bills to extreme weather, increased risk of flooding and negative impacts on our health. Our more vulnerable communities are expected to be more negatively affected by these changes, which is why it is essential that as an organisation we act now to both reduce our impact on the climate, as well as preparing for the changes that are predicted to occur.

This committee will contribute to the council's net zero ambitions and to adapting to climate change, by taking decisions which:

- support the development and integration of climate action as a cross-cutting issue, embedding climate responsibility across the organisation,
- ensure that the strategic direction of the council is taking climate into account, in a dynamic and evolving way, recognising rapid changes in various factors such as cost,
- take a longer-term approach, particularly where funding requirements for future years may not be covered within the council's medium term financial plan, as many climate decisions, and funding to support delivery will require a longer-term approach,
- along with the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee, take a proactive approach to climate leadership as an issue of significant strategic importance,
- take a pro-active approach to the management and mitigation of climate adaptation as a significant financial and wider risk to the council,
- give consideration of every opportunity for investing in renewable energy projects on council land and buildings to generate energy and income,
- support and align with the Council Plan 2024-28 and City Goals which sets out a clear mission for the Council and three interlinked policy drivers - People / Prosperity / Planet.

The benefits of taking this approach will help to enable the council to accelerate the pace and increase the scale of the decarbonisation and climate mitigation activities we are directly delivering or where we are supporting and enabling others in the city to take action and invest their own resources. It will support greater ownership

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<sup>1</sup> [City Level Decarbonisation Pathways for Sheffield](#)

across the organisation and help to embed climate action, which will not only benefit climate change goals but also support wider strategic objectives.

### Key Actions to mainstream climate across the Council.

1. City Goals	The delivery of the City Goals has brought together views on our future from across the city, so everyone, no matter who they are or where they come from, can live well and be part of Sheffield's story on terms that make sense to them. The goals will help drive our response to the changing and challenging world we live and includes a goal specifically on a green and resilient Sheffield, which recognises the need for us all to act faster on the climate and environmental crisis.
2. Council Plan	Sheffield has the opportunity to lead the transition to a low carbon world. Building on our ingenuity, industry and talented workforce, we can use the path to net zero to propel the city's prosperity, creating opportunities for businesses to start-up, grow and create more good jobs; enabling more people to use their skills and talents in our economy and have more money in their pockets; and improve health by tackling air pollution and using decarbonisation as a driver to tackle cold, damp homes. The Council Plan 2024-28 sets out a clear mission for the Council and three interlinked policy drivers - People / Prosperity / Planet - which will be part of everything we do and ensure that we are focused on the positive contribution that the Council can make to the city's future.
3. Continuous development of our system of democratic committee governance	The committee has the opportunity to ensure that as it develops our democratic committee governance, climate action continues to be integrated across all committee structures, as well as considering how our committees work together to co-ordinate activities.
4. Budget delivery and Medium-Term Financial Strategy	The council has committed to ensure that its budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy will take account of climate impact and consider appropriate mitigation measures. The committee should scrutinise this and ensure that decisions consider climate implications and adequately resource climate action. (Shared with Finance Committee)
5. Cost of living crisis	Everyone is affected by the cost-of-living crisis in some way, and the council is providing support through a number of programmes. This includes home energy efficiency advice through Warm Homes Sheffield. A future discussion could consider other ways we can support people to reduce their energy costs.

6. Exploring Alternative Funding and Investment Models that could Support Climate Programmes	In responding to a Council motion in February 2024 (five years since declaring a Climate Emergency) the S&R Committee has agreed to explore the practicalities of issuing green bonds and a report setting out initial findings will be discussed at the Committee in the autumn.
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