

Sheffield City Council
**Our Statement of Climate
Commitments**

December 2023



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Our Commitment to Addressing Climate Change

On 11th 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 CO₂e emissions between 2017 and 2021
- 3% reduction in Sheffield City Council CO₂e 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 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 council-wide 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 Statement

Finance Committee

Our Zero Carbon Mitigation Pathways report on governance recommended that the council considers structuring budgets and funding priorities around outcomes to support delivery, including placing climate as a central decision-making factor. Following this, our 10 Point Plan for Climate Action, adopted in 2022 gave a commitment that the organisation will be proactive in finding ways to resource the action that is needed.

The significant costs associated with decarbonisation require flexibility in our investment strategies, recognising that it is not the council's duty or responsibility for its entirety– we will need others to invest, fund or contribute, for example the Government or private sector. However, the report also acknowledged that the council understood that it needs to increase financial resources significantly to deliver zero carbon. To do this, we will need to identify additional resources to support our climate activities.

The impacts of climate change are many and varied and are predicted to include higher energy and food bills, extreme weather, including an 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 through the following actions:

- we have developed and implemented a Climate Impact Assessment Tool (CIAT) in response to this, and there are further opportunities that should be exploited to ensure that climate is a dominant factor in financial decision-making
- ensuring that monthly monitoring of the council's budget considers climate implications, primarily through application of the Climate Impact Assessment tool
- our budget-setting process and Medium-term Financial Strategy will take account of climate impact and consider appropriate mitigation measures
- explore the commissioning of a carbon budget to assess and report overall carbon emissions created directly or indirectly as a result of activities it contains
- our investment strategy will help us to prioritise and to identify funding and investment routes for our decarbonisation programme
- we will identify funding, invest in feasibility studies and develop outline business cases so that we are ready to respond to funding opportunities. We will develop a pipeline of investment opportunities and continue to work with partners to explore funding and investment routes

- give consideration of every opportunity for investing in renewable energy projects on council land and buildings to generate energy and income.

The benefits of taking this approach will enable us 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 to take action and invest their own resources. It will also help to ensure that we have a pipeline of deployable projects and are ready to take advantage of other external investment and funding, from a range of sources including public (Government) or private sources.

Key Actions

1. Budget monitoring and budget implementation plan delivery	The council faces many budget challenges but will use its Climate Impact Assessment Tool as required to ensure environmental impacts are considered.
2. Medium-Term Financial Strategy	We have committed to ensure that our 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 are consider climate implications (shared with Strategy and Resources Committee)
3. Capital scheme approvals	We will require capital projects to complete a Climate Impact Assessment as part of the approval process.
4. Review financial regulations with a view to climate impact	The annual review of financial regulations provides an opportunity to consider climate impacts, and to share this with the committee as part of the sign-off process.