

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

Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee

In 2021, business and industry in Sheffield was responsible for 27% of greenhouse gas emissions generated in the city. As well as being a significant contributor to the city's emissions, the transition to a net zero economy has profound implications for Sheffield's economy. With the necessary investment from Government, there is the opportunity for significant growth and new jobs in the low carbon economy. At the same time, businesses that improve their energy efficiency can reduce costs, and finance and investment is increasingly dependent on clear commitments to becoming environmentally sustainable: businesses which do not become environmentally sustainable will risk becoming uncompetitive, reducing financing and income options.

The city needs to ensure that the workforce has the skills needed to enable a transition to net zero economy, and to harness the opportunities that the scale of activity required provides. Some skills and jobs are likely to become obsolete, and existing employees will require retraining to ensure that the transition is a fair one.

The impacts of extreme weather events are also likely to have an impact on the economy, with heat waves, extreme cold and flooding all creating significant risks for businesses and the culture sector.

This committee will contribute to our net zero ambitions and to adapting to climate change, at the same time as supporting the economy, jobs, skills and culture, by taking decisions which:

- raise awareness to support businesses and organisations to decarbonise and to adapt to climate change
- maximise the potential of local academic and business strengths in the low carbon economy to support green economic growth, including through innovation and research and development
- support indigenous and new businesses (both new start-ups and inward locations) to maximise the opportunities presented in the low carbon economy
- ensure that the future workforce is equipped with the skills to take advantage of jobs and opportunities presented by the transition to net zero and that funding drawn into the city generates local wealth by providing jobs for local people
- support the culture sector to be part of the transition, harnessing its potential to inspire and facilitate change in the city
- give consideration of every opportunity for investing in renewable energy projects on council land and buildings to generate energy and income.

Key Actions

1. Our business and industry decarbonisation Routemap	The 10 Point Plan committed the local authority to developing plans (routemaps) for the decarbonisation of seven sectors, including business and industry. This will involve engaging with businesses and their representatives and will need to consider both how businesses decarbonise their processes and operations, and how commercial landlords can be influenced and encouraged to decarbonise their buildings.
2. Low Carbon Business Support Programme	£1.292m of Shared Prosperity Fund finance will be used to support Sheffield small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to improve their energy efficiency through energy audits and grants. The committee will continue to receive reports on performance of the programme.
3. Investment Zone	Ensure that the South Yorkshire Investment Zone has net zero capabilities and maximises the business opportunities for the clean energy production and green technology sectors as well as their supply chains.
4. Sustainable Community and Cultural Assets Project	£2.3m of Shared Prosperity Fund finance will be used to support Sheffield cultural and community organisations to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings. The committee will continue to receive reports on the performance of the programme.
5. Employment and Skills Strategy	The low-carbon economy creates significant opportunities for Sheffield, as demand for sustainability professionals beyond 'traditional' green economic sectors. Green skills are integral to the drive of clean, inclusive growth in Sheffield, as products, services and processes are adapted to account for climate change and organisations respond to environmental regulations and corporate social responsibility expectations. Green skills and jobs will therefore feature prominently in the new Employment and Skills Strategy to be delivered in 2024.
6. Economic Recovery Fund	The Economic Recovery Fund will offer a range of support for beneficiary organisations. This will include providing advice and information to raise awareness of the climate emergency and empower beneficiaries to make decisions that will contribute to the city's net zero goals.