

REPORT TO:		Cabinet	
DATE:		21 October 2020	
PORTFOLIO:		Cllr Miles Parkinson OBE - Leader	
REPORT AUTHORS:		Cllr Glen Harrison, Chair, Environment and Climate Change Members Working Group Anne Hourican, Snr Environmental Initiatives Officer	
TITLE OF REPORT:		Climate Emergency and Carbon Neutral Gold & International Standard Award	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	No	Not applicable	
KEY DECISION:	No	If yes, date of publication:	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To announce that the Council is nearing completion of a Carbon Footprint exercise, through which a Carbon Neutral Gold & International Standard has been awarded and that it is participating in the United Nations Carbon Neutral Now initiative. These are significant steps in the Council's Climate Emergency action planning.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet:-

- a) Welcomes the Carbon Neutral Gold & International Standard award reflecting the Council's participation in the One Carbon World Carbon Footprint and United Nations Climate Neutral Now initiatives (see paras 3.1 – 3.5)
- b) Continues to develop a progressive programme of carbon reduction measures plus a range of beneficial measures to balance any remaining impacts, with proposals being brought forward to future Cabinet meetings (see para 3.6)
- c) Recognises that significant actions have continued to be progressed, notwithstanding the additional challenges of recent months (see para 3.7)

3. Reasons for Recommendations and Background

- 3.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency in September 2019 and also completed a Green Review in the same year, together identifying a range of actions with a headline target to achieve net-zero carbon in Council activities by 2030 and to produce a measured baseline.

- 3.2 A Carbon Footprint report was commissioned to identify the baseline figure of CO₂e¹ emissions through independent analysis of Council data for the year 2018/19 (April 2018 to March 2019). Prepared by One Carbon World, this is part of the Carbon Neutral Gold & International Standards and UN Climate Neutral Now initiatives².
- 3.3 The Council is the 1st in the UK to participate in both initiatives.
- 3.4 Using carbon management principles of Measure, Reduce, Offset, the UN Climate Neutral Now initiative invites organisations, governments and citizens to work towards global climate neutrality by addressing their climate footprint through a 3-step method:
- Measure their greenhouse gas emissions. also called the carbon footprint;
 - Reduce them as much as possible through their own actions; and
 - Offset (compensate) those which cannot be currently avoided by using UN certified emission reductions
- 3.5 The Carbon Footprint report follows a robust methodology to analyse carbon emissions impact of different fuels, energy sources and activities. Detailed results will be discussed at a future Cabinet meeting covering the operations of the Council together with the sports facilities operated by the Leisure Trust, measuring emissions arising from energy, fuel, business travel & waste.
- 3.6 Reducing the net carbon footprint will require priority to be given to the areas of highest emissions as part of a comprehensive Climate Emergency action plan, including:-
- Detailed energy audits of key buildings and review of options to reduce energy use, natural gas in particular, such as more efficient insulation methods, improved heating and lighting systems, and exploration of alternative/renewable energy sources for heating such as air source heat pumps (ASHPs) ground source heat pumps (GSHPs), solar thermal, Solar PV and others.
 - A Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund has recently been announced which could be an opportunity to source technical expertise as well as capital grants for appropriate installations. Discussions have been initiated with APSE Energy, an advisory service dedicated to the public sector.
 - Reviewing opportunities to reduce the carbon impacts from the Council's vehicle fleet, including external assistance through the Energy Saving Trust
 - Developing programmes of natural environment measures to balance emissions as well as deliver opportunities for high quality environments and local involvement.

¹ CO₂e (equivalent) is a universal unit of measurement to indicate the global warming potential of seven main Green House Gases (GHGs) which contribute to climate change

² Climate Neutral Now is an initiative launched by United Nations Climate Change in 2015, to encourage and support all levels of society to take climate action to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century, as enshrined in the Paris Agreement adopted the same year.

3.7 The Council has continued to progress several key actions towards the goal of net zero carbon, such as these actions in recent months:-

- electricity for a portfolio of key buildings is now sourced from 100% green energy
- zero carbon emission electric lifters on refuse vehicles
- working with environmental organisations on a Lancashire Woodland campaign, woodland creation and other habitat enhancement locally
- supporting the greening of the taxi fleet

4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 In-house preparation of a carbon footprint. Data was assembled in-house by staff from several services, but the Council does not currently have staff capacity to analyse and report on the CO₂e emissions implications. Also an externally produced carbon footprint offers independence and transparency and scope for monitoring progress ongoing.

5. Consultations

5.1 The data analysed for the Carbon Footprint was produced by several services in the Council, in particular, Corporate Property, Waste, Finance, Human Resources, Planning and Parks.

5.2 Several Local Authorities in Lancashire have also completed a Carbon Footprint through One Carbon World and comparative benchmarks are now being discussed.

6. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	None arising from this report. Future costs could be balanced by energy management measures to reduce ongoing revenue costs.
Legal and human rights implications	The Climate Change Act 2008 set a legally binding target for the UK to bring GHG emissions to net zero by 2050. The Council has made a Climate Emergency Declaration to achieve net zero carbon emissions from Council activities by 2030. Tackling Climate Change has human rights implications, locally through issues like flooding, housing conditions and access to higher quality environments and globally through our shared responsibility to reduce the impacts for people living in the worst affected areas.

<p>Assessment of risk</p>	<p>The pace and scale of delivery on the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration will relate to available staff capacity. Options for additional capacity and expertise, including from external assistance, will need to be explored.</p>
<p>Equality and diversity implications <i>A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i></p>	<p>All Services and all staff will have a role to play and an opportunity to contribute to the widely shared recognition of the urgent need to tackle Climate Change.</p>

**7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:
List of Background Papers**

7.1 None

8. Freedom of Information

8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.