REPORT OF	**Sustainability & Climate Officer**		
To:	**Community & Resources Committee**		
Subject:	**TDC Carbon Footprint**		
Date:	**22 January 2024**	**Reference:**	**N/A**

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

1. Inform Council's carbon footprint review and associated context.
2. Outline the considerations and actions relative to how the Council moves towards carbon neutrality and its Net Zero 2030 target.

1. INTRODUCTION

Context

The Council's adopted Carbon, Environment and Biodiversity Plan has a commitment to review and update the Council's carbon footprint to provide a sound basis to plotting a route to carbon neutrality by 2030. The content within this paper and Appendix 1 provides the baseline for this purpose.

It is worth noting that the baseline referred to below is 2020/21, and activity in this financial year is distorted by three Covid-19 lockdowns that significantly reduced emissions. As such subsequent years, with more normal life activities and working practices, are expected to shift the Council to a more reliable base for onward comparison.

Implications for the Council and its Road Map to Net Zero 2030

Many local government organisations acknowledge the challenge of achieving carbon efficiency by 2030, noting a changing socio-economic backdrop and resources required. Likewise, any penalty for not achieving a carbon efficiency is unclear.

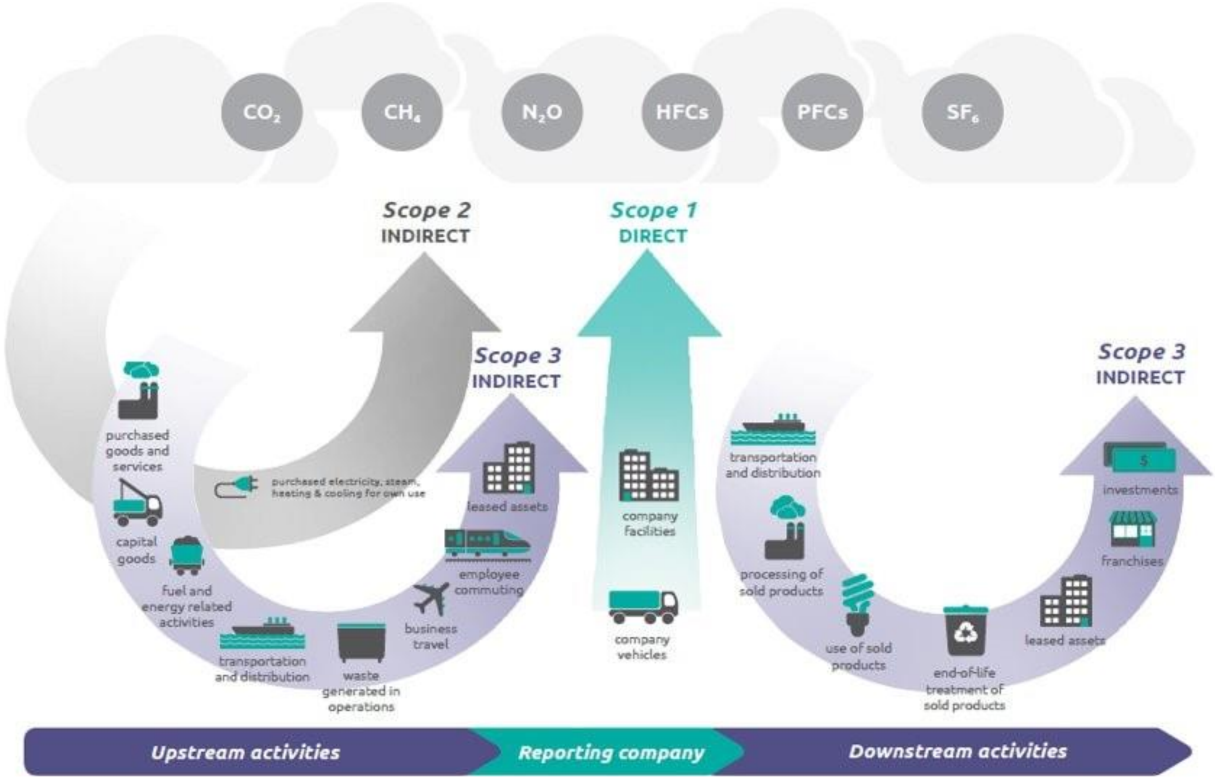
However, it us undoubted that decarbonisation can be targeted through low-cost operational efficiencies, lifecycle replacement activities (e.g., M&E) and in some cases through financial 'invest to save' interventions (e.g., further solar PV installation). The position clearly giving regard to the fiscal considerations and the decarbonisation target. As such this is the approach that is being assumed in assessing the Council's Roadmap to Net Zero 2030.

2. METHODOLOGY FOR & REPORTED CARBON FOOTPRINT POSITION

Methodology

Appendix 1 contains the Torridge District Council Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2022/23. In common with other UK local government organisations the quantification of emissions is per Chapter 3 of HM Government 2019.

This approach is consistent with the UN Greenhouse Gas Protocol, see image below.



Reported Position

The table below summarises the reported position for the Council up to the year 2022/23.

No. Category	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
SCOPE 1: Direct GHG emissions and removals	2243.2	2422.5	3468.7
1. Stationary combustion	*108.5*	*117.2*	*663.8*
2. Owned transport	*2134.8*	*2305.0*	*2804.9*
3. Process emissions	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
4. Fugitive emissions	*No data*	*No data*	*No data*
SCOPE 2: Energy GHG indirect emissions	314.4	232.6	317.8
5. Electricity	*314.4*	*232.6*	*317.8*
SCOPE 3: Other indirect GHG emissions	1317.4	1612.7	4228.2
6. Purchased material and fuel	*740.1*	*1185.4*	*2267.4*
7. Transport related activities	*18.6*	*25.8*	*28.8*
8. Waste disposal	*5.8*	*3.8*	*6.3*
9. Leased assets and franchising, outsourcing	*552.9*	*397.8*	*1925.8*
10. Sold Goods and Services	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
TOTAL GROSS FOOTPRINT (SCOPES 1, 2 and 3)	3875.1	4267.8	8014.8
11. Offset Emissions	*0*	*1.0*	*-3.3*
TOTAL NET FOOTPRINT (SCOPES 1, 2 and 3 and Offsets)	3875.1	4266.8	8011.5

Commentary on Reported Position

There has been a 107% increase in the Council's carbon footprint between 2020/21 and 2022/23 as a result of including our three leisure sites in the footprint for the first time and the increased spend on purchased goods and services.

3. THE COUNCIL'S PROGRESSION TO 2030

The above reporting provides a base position for assessing improvements and how the Council progresses to 2030, and beyond.

Like many UK authorities the Council has declared a 'climate emergency' and committed to achieving a 'net zero' carbon footprint by 2030. As stated here and elsewhere within the Council, an overlying objective is for the Council to seek a neutral carbon position by 2030. Below there is consideration to four main areas:

1. Property Emissions
2. Vehicle Emissions
3. Purchased Goods & Services
4. Offsetting Options

Property Emissions

The Council's carbon footprint should include data for all owned/occupied and owned/leased assets. However, the practical ability to obtain this information is challenged by the requirement and desire for third parties to supply data. This is common for landlords, though often not a reported matter.

Within the figures, we have only been able to include data for the Council's three leisure assets since TDC engaged Active Torridge to run them. The significant increase in Scope 1 and 2 emissions in 2022/2023 relating to our properties can largely be attributed to Torridge Leisure Centre, Holsworthy Pool and Torrington Pool which are high energy users and are the biggest source of emissions associated with our properties.

Top 10 Total property emissions	2022/23 tCO2e
Torridge Leisure Centre	320.1
Torrington Swimming Pool	153.7
Holsworthy Leisure Centre	94.8
Riverbank House	84.9
Appledore Fishdock A and B	57.2
Caddsdown	38.6
Westcombe Depot	18.2
Cromlech Hostel	16.9
Barton House Hostel	14.7
Windmill Lane	13.3

Below summarises the actions in hand:

- Consideration within the 'Business As Usual' estates activities and aligned with the Strategic Asset Plan:
  - Condition surveys for all our properties to inform on operational efficiencies and mindful repairs/lifecycle events that align with financial and energy efficiencies.
  - Specialist surveys that focus on the 'major energy use assets' to identify operational efficiencies, inform lifecycle decisions and assess invest to save decarbonisation options.
  - Intention to bid for Low Carbon Skills Funding Spring 2024 to develop 'shovel ready' decarbonisation projects.
  - To consider funding options available to support proportionate actions, including future Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme if this continues.
- Submission to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3c, relating to Holsworthy swimming pool for replacement of oil boiler with an air to water air source heat pump.

- Bid to Sport England for all Active Torridge sites, focussed on energy efficiency and rooftop solar PV.
- Adopting an appropriate brief for the delivery of Major Projects where carbon conscious options are considered from the outset as part of the initial scoping, feasibility and design development decision making processes. Wherever possible the approach being adopted considers carbon reduction during the design, delivery and operational phases of all projects and typically identifies where of low-carbon methodologies can also benefit the operational life-cycle use of the completed project.

Vehicle Emissions

The Council's vehicle fleet comprises a range of vehicles for a diverse range of activities. Consequently, the solution for decarbonisation of the fleet has several facets – fiscal, service provision and environmental. The principle for consideration is the same as outlined for property emissions, i.e., one which considers the operational changes, the lifecycle replacement and 'invest to save' interventions.

In the more immediate term, there are opportunities to replace smaller fossil fuel light vehicles with electric powered vehicles. This is already being adopted by the Council albeit with an isolated van and we are approaching replacement vehicle in the vein of assessing an electric option to deliver on the use / purpose.

For larger vehicles, principally those within the Waste & Recycling fleet, both fiscal and operational considerations don't offer a viable/effective replacement at this stage in the emerging vehicle development cycle. Whilst these vehicles do exist in the market (principally hydrogen) the investment cost is significantly higher than fossil fuel options, and the nature of the Torridge District cause logistic /service issues for alternative fuel vehicles – being large, hilly, and rural.

Cost comparison for a refuse collection vehicle:

Diesel	£185k
Electric	£440k
Hydrogen	£850k

The Internal Overview and Scrutiny Committee has considered the use of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) as a low carbon fuel replacement for diesel, however this was discounted on the grounds of lack of a suitable storage facility, cost, sustainable provenance, and insurer concerns.

Supporting options for staff to make use of greener travel options will be reviewed with the Council's HR team. There may be opportunities to incentivise a modal shift for staff, e.g., cycle use, public transport, and car sharing. The expanse of the Council district is likely to present some challenges for certain travel modes and likewise there are cost implications in changing to a more efficient vehicle.

Below summarises the actions in hand:

- Consideration of replacement of Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) fleet with electric vehicles at end of life, if suitable alternatives are available.
- For ICE fleet where no suitable alternatives are available, we aim to purchase the most efficient model.

Purchased Goods & Services

The significant increase in carbon emissions associated with purchased goods and services is a result of using a spend-based calculation (see below).

Whilst there are undoubted opportunities to reduce the emissions associated with our purchased good and services through the introduction of a sustainable procurement system, this will not be possible to show using a spend-based carbon footprint calculation.

Until 2011, an annual dataset was published by Defra, with a methodology for applying a carbon emissions factor to a £ value, to estimate the emissions associated with the spend against that service or goods. This dataset was used to calculate our baseline emissions for procured goods and services in 2020/2021 and has been subsequently used each year.
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As this dataset has been discontinued, organisations are encouraged to use the BEIS emissions factors in the annually published conversion factors dataset. These factors are based on weight and the challenge for TDC will be to apply a methodology to convert spend data to tonnage data, as volumes are generally not available.

Some other Local Authorities in Devon exclude procured goods and services from updates to their carbon footprint because of these issues, including Devon County Council, Dartmoor and Exmoor National Park Authorities, North Devon Council, Torbay and Plymouth.

Below summarises the actions in hand:

- The Internal Overview and Scrutiny Committee has recently agreed a Social Value Policy for Torridge and have put in place a system (the 'Social Value Engine') that will allow us to monitor and report on how social value is being delivered. A number of low carbon outputs and measures are included in this.
- Bid for funding to work with our key suppliers to help them understand and reduce their carbon emissions.

Other Options / Considerations

Offsetting can divide opinion in the context of achieving carbon neutrality. As context, not all offsetting is the same and it is widely acknowledged as part of the decarbonisation solution. It will be a requirement for Torridge to achieve a Net Zero 2030 target. For the Council, offsetting could vary widely and, if adopted, will be important to ensure any approach delivers a claimable offset.

Options for offsetting could include:

- Offsetting via Renewable Energy Generation
  Presently the Council has Photo Voltaic arrays at Riverbank and Caddsdown. We can offset some of our carbon footprint through generation of renewable energy and receive payment through the feed-in tariff for the energy we export.

	Energy kWh		Energy Generation as % of Electricity Use
	Generated	Exported	
Riverbank	17,746	8,864	9%
Caddsdown	15,990	7,994	15%

  The entire south elevation roof area available at Sully House has also been utilised for PV generation. Significant use of solar PV should be included in all Major Projects going forward, reducing our energy costs and carbon emissions.

  There may also be opportunities to invest in renewable energy generation offsite that would enable us to reduce our emissions.

- Nature-based offsetting
  We could offset emissions through traditional carbon capture - developing woodland planting or peatland restoration, this could be on our own Estate or through land purchased for that use. These offsets are unlikely to be certified by 2030.

  The North Devon Biosphere is also developing a tool which will enable investors such as the Council to match with providers of such green or blue offset schemes in the northern Devon area. This scheme is still under development, but we have been informed that indicative costs could be in the region of £25 per tonne of carbon.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

Non definable at this stage, noting no defined penalty for failure to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

Financial Implications

Expectations that operational budgets and capital investments give regard to fiscal needs.

Human Resources Implications

Identified activities can presently be adopted within existing resources. Activities of size can consider this further when projects are determined to recommend progression.

Sustainability/Biodiversity Implications

None beyond those highlighted within this report.

Equality/Diversity

None identified at this stage.

Risk Management

None at identified at this stage.

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

Consistent with the Council’s strategic objective and other references within this report.

Data Protection (GDPR) Implications

None identified at this stage.

Climate Change

None beyond those highlighted within this report.

Ward Member and Lead Member Views

Date of consultation: 3/1/24

“As our Council has been rated as one of the lowest on the scale for carbon reduction compared to other UK Local Authorities it is vitally important and urgent that Members are presented with a clear route map and a properly funded set of actions to enable us to achieve our target of net zero by 2030.” Cllr Hames

5. CONCLUSIONS

The provision of updated information is a significant step to inform the overriding approach that the Council should take to achieve its stated ambition and target. It provides a consistent base for future measurement, noting previous years have been influenced by significant socio international events.

This context helps to provide gravity to the actions required to achieve these, notably acknowledging the principal activities that can be targeted to reduce the Council's carbon footprint, and its fiscal approach to this. Members and Officers will need to consider the carbon implications within their activities associated with operations, lifecycle, and intervention activities.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To enable the Council to move towards its stated objectives, decarbonisation needs to be significantly considered and supported within the Council's operation and capital activities. Efforts should be made by the Council to seek out decarbonisation options by default for its various activities, acknowledging the fiscal position and technology practicalities will also be influencing aspects.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Appendices:	1. Torridge District Council Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2022/23
Consultation:	Lead Member for Climate Change – Cllr Hames
	Lead Member for Economy & Estate – Cllr Hicks
	Lead Member for Operational Services – Cllr Leather
	Lead Member for Finance and Audit – Cllr Bushby
	Chair, Councillor Climate Change Working Group – Cllr Smith
Contact Officers:	Sustainability & Climate Officer – Donna Sibley
	Estates Manager - Jon Wynne
Background Papers:	Adopted Carbon Environment and Biodiversity Plan (not appended)