

## REPORT TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE – 21 FEBRUARY 2024

### CARBON BUDGET 2023-2024 FINAL UPDATE

#### 1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 This report presents the final update to the Sustainability Committee on the actions listed in the Carbon Budget 2023-2024 that were agreed by Aberdeenshire Council on 9 March 2023 ([Item 5](#)). The report also contains the Directorate update reports which went to the relevant Policy Committees between October 2023 - December 2023.

#### 1.2 Recommendations

**The Committee is recommended to:**

**1.2.1 Consider and comment on the Carbon Budget 2023-2024 final update as attached in Appendix 1;**

**1.2.2 Note the Directorate update reports which went to the relevant Policy Committees between October 2023 - December 2023;**

**1.2.3 Note the Carbon Budget 2024-25 Guidance document attached in Appendix 2 which was developed to support Directorates considering projects for inclusion in the Carbon Budget 2024-25 being presented to Aberdeenshire Council on 22 February 2024; and**

**1.2.4 Note the update provided by officers with information relating to the impact on the theoretical carbon emissions based on the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) if it was to be revived, mothballed, or completely removed, presented in Appendix 3.**

#### 2 Decision-Making Route

2.1 On 9 March 2023 ([Item 5](#)) a total Carbon Budget for 2023-2024 was set as 44,152 tonnes Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) by Aberdeenshire Council in line with linear progression towards a 75% reduction in Council owned emissions by 2030. A list of CO<sub>2</sub>e reduction measures was presented at this meeting to support the Council in reaching its Carbon Budget for the year. At the same meeting, it was agreed that all Directors were required to submit six-monthly updates on in-year progress in relation to these reduction measures to their relevant Policy Committees and additionally to the Sustainability Committee.

2.2 On 30 August 2023 ([Item 8](#)) the Sustainability Committee was presented with a 6-month update on the projects identified within the Carbon Budget 2023-24 and any additions and/or amendments made to them at the time. At this meeting it was highlighted that there was a risk that the target of 44,152 tCO<sub>2</sub>e set for the Carbon Budget 2023-24 was unlikely to be met. At this meeting

members also requested that the Chief Executive agree to assist officers in reducing the number of TBDs (to be determined) contained within the Carbon Budget 2023-2024.

- 2.3 At the Sustainability Committee on 15 November 2023 ([Item 4 - Action 3](#)), Members requested that officers provide Committee with the updates to the Carbon Budget 2023-24 along with formal guidance/timelines for the carbon budget process, following presentation of the budget to the policy committees, to help inform the Carbon Budget 2024-25.
- 2.4 On 30 August 2023 the Sustainability Committee Members requested a report on the theoretical carbon emissions and impact to the Carbon Budget if the Deposit Return Scheme was (1) revived, (2) mothballed, or (3) completely removed. This information has been provided in **Appendix 3**.

### **3 Discussion**

- 3.1 This report contains the final update that has been provided by officers from each Directorate in **Appendix 1**. It sets out if projects are still running to schedule, have been further delayed, or if estimates have changed. Some projects have been provided with additional qualitative updates demonstrating how projects are supporting savings even if the quantitative data is not there to assess the impact by tCO<sub>2</sub>e savings.
- 3.2 As the figures in **Appendix 1** suggest, there is still a risk that the target of 44,152tCO<sub>2</sub>e set for the Carbon Budget 2023-24 is unlikely to be met. This is mainly due to the same reasons presented at the 6-monthly update provided on 30 August 2023:
  - 1. Additional projects have not been added by Directorates since the Carbon Budget was agreed on 9 March 2023.
  - 2. The emission factor for electricity which was estimated to bring a reduction of around 500tCO<sub>2</sub>e annually actually increased for 2023.
  - 3. Challenges around supply chain delays.
- 3.3 At the 6-monthly update, the overall total of estimated emissions savings from projects had increased from an estimate of 1972tCO<sub>2</sub>e presented on 9 March 2023 to 2098tCO<sub>2</sub>e presented on 30 August 2023. However, this final update has provided some further reductions in some projects and therefore the total savings from projects is now estimated to be 1926tCO<sub>2</sub>e.
- 3.4 'TBDs' (to be determined) that were in the Carbon Budget 2023-24 report approved at Full Council on 9 March 2023 have been resolved. However, in most cases the action has been to change these to 'Unknown'. This step has been taken as these projects do not have robust enough data to make a best estimate on emissions savings. However, it is important to still include them as they should still support a reduction in the Council's overall emissions.

3.5 In year progress was provided to relevant Policy Committees by Carbon Budget leads in each Directorate between October and December 2023. Links to each of these update reports are provided below:

- Business Services Committee: 16 November 2023 [Item 11](#)
- Communities Committee: 14 December 2023 [Item 14](#)
- Education & Children’s Services Committee: 12 October 2023 [Item 9](#)
- Infrastructure Services Committee: 5 October 2023 [Item 7](#)

3.6 Following an internal audit on the Carbon Budget process new guidance was developed for the Carbon Budget 2024-25. This guidance has been provided in **Appendix 2**.

3.7 The possible impact on the Council’s Carbon Budget and wider Aberdeenshire Net Zero target on the theoretical carbon emissions based on the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) if it was to be revived, mothballed, or completely removed, has been presented in **Appendix 3**.

#### 4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 This report helps deliver the Strategic Priority “Climate Change” within the Pillar “Our Environment”.

Pillar	Priority
Our People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning for Life</li> <li>• Health &amp; Wellbeing</li> </ul>
Our Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Change</li> <li>• Resilient Communities</li> </ul>
Our Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Growth</li> <li>• Infrastructure and public assets</li> </ul>

4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			X
Staffing			X
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			X
Children and Young People’s Rights and Wellbeing			X
Climate Change and Sustainability			X
Health and Wellbeing			X
Town Centre First			X

4.3 There are no direct staffing or financial implications arising from this Carbon Budget update monitoring report.

4.4 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process has not identified the requirement for any further

detailed assessments to be undertaken. An IIA is not required as there are no direct implications of considering this update as it is a performance monitoring report. An IIA was completed for the Carbon Budget 2023-2024 which was approved by Aberdeenshire Council 9 March 2022 ([Item 5 – IIA is Appendix 5](#)).

4.5 The following Risks in the Corporate Risk Register have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level. However, it is acknowledged that working towards a 75% reduction in Council owned emissions has the potential to impact upon any number of areas across the Council risk portfolio.

- Risk ID ACORP010 as it relates to environmental challenges; and
- Risk ID ACORP006 as it relates to reputation management.

The following Risk in the Directorate Risk Registers has been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level:

- Risk ID ISSR010 as it relates to Climate Change.

4.5.1 The above risks could be mitigated against with sufficient communication and engagement on the progress Aberdeenshire Council is making with regards to climate change mitigation and adaptation beyond the Carbon Budget.

## **5 Scheme of Governance**

5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and they are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

5.2 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section R paragraphs 1.1a and 1.1c of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to reviewing and monitoring the Council's work in respect of sustainable development and climate change and, also to promote awareness of the need for sustainability within the Council.

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**Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services**

Report prepared by Claudia Cowie, Team Leader Sustainability and Climate Change  
9 February 2024

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix 1: Carbon Budget 2023 – 2024 Final Update

Appendix 2: Carbon Budget 2024-25 Guidance

Appendix 3: Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) Update