

# Cheshire West and Chester Climate Emergency Response Plan

## Foreword:

From the Climate Emergency Taskforce & Chairman Matt Bryan

We face a climate emergency that will have an impact on all aspects of our lives, and while it is undeniably a global challenge, it can only be solved through concerted action at a local level. As one of the highest emitting areas in the UK, we feel a heightened sense of responsibility to act now, and to act at scale.

In our Council Plan, Play Your Part to Thrive, we set out that every part of our community would have a role in creating a cleaner, greener, fairer and more prosperous area. There is no stronger case for collective action than climate change, as everyone, from our largest industrial producers, to individuals, can take positive action and make a real difference.

The measures set out in this plan will contribute to radically reshaping how we live in Cheshire West and Chester over the next three decades. But we do not currently have the powers and resources we need to go as far enough, so we will work with Government to seek to devolve these competencies to a more local level.

As a Climate Emergency Taskforce, we unanimously believe that climate change is not a party political issue; it is an existential crisis that we must work together to solve. Therefore this Plan has been designed from the outset as a cross-party initiative, that is based on the best available evidence and data, to enable us to do more than our fair share to tackle this issue.

Half measures and partial efforts are no longer enough, nor were they for the past two decades. This Plan is designed with the principle of maximisation in mind. We must go as far as we can in all areas to tackle this issue. This will involve sacrifices and changes to our way of life. But we will be a better place for it, and all that contribute will be able to feel proud about their role in pulling together to beat climate change.

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## 1. Executive Summary:

In 2019 Cheshire West and Chester Council voted unanimously to declare a climate emergency. This declaration represented a major statement of intent by the Council and, as set out in the Council Plan, climate change is an organisational priority.

Cheshire West and Chester is, in many ways, a microcosm of the UK. Few places can claim to have such a variety of key emitters and sectors located in one area. As a result of the concentration of industry in the north of the borough, the borough is the fourth highest emitting of all local authorities in the UK. This at once a challenge, a responsibility, and an opportunity.

In declaring a climate emergency, the Council directed the Chief Executive to “produce a report to Council within six months to determine the earliest date before 2045 that CW&C and the borough as a whole can be carbon neutral, and revise its targets to meet that date (ideally 2030 to demonstrate leadership in the borough).”

This report was produced and presented to Council in 2020. It set out the scale of the challenge in achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 and the type of interventions that would be required.

This plan sets out the actions that the Council will take to respond to the climate emergency, alongside evidence on the borough’s current carbon footprint, and its potential trajectory over the period 2020-2045. It describes a range of actions to reach carbon neutrality within this period; including actions under the direct control of the Council, as well as those the Council could advocate for the borough as a whole, and at national and international level. Actions generally can be categorised as those which are primarily mitigation-based – those that reduce carbon emissions, those that are adaptation-based – that reduce the detrimental effects of climate change, and those that we will ask of our residents to effect change in their own lives.

### **What is Carbon Neutrality?**

Carbon Neutrality is a term that is interchangeable with the term ‘net zero carbon’. It refers to carbon dioxide emissions being balanced with carbon reduction (offsetting) measures such as tree planting and carbon capture and storage. It is essential that we minimise the need for carbon reduction measures by reducing our emissions as fully as possible. Typically, it is much more expensive to off-set emissions than it is to reduce them, so our efforts are primarily focused on carbon reduction. Throughout this report, the term is also used as a proxy for the

intent to achieve the area's carbon budget, while recognising that this is highly challenging given the current technological, regulatory and funding environment.

In order to determine its approach, the Council adopted three principles;

- That any plan should be democratically led;
- That the plan should be underpinned by the best available evidence and data.
- That the plan should be co-produced with communities to ensure it harnessed the skills and efforts of our residents.

This plan needs to go beyond fine words. It is resourced and subject to scrutiny, to ensure that it makes a real difference to our communities. Over the course of our Council Plan, Play Your Part to Thrive 2020-2024, we have committed £1.3m in revenue spending, alongside more than £7.5m in available capital, to ensure that we can deliver on this priority. The actions which make up the plan are clear, and there are appropriate performance measures to enable us to understand whether the actions taken are having an impact. The delivery of the plan will be kept under continual review by the Climate Emergency Taskforce, and an annual report will be presented to Council setting out performance against the identified metrics.

The evidence we have available paints a stark picture. Information assessed by the Climate Emergency Task Force, concerning the high carbon-intensity of our industrial sector, and the radical nature of policy changes that would be required to meet this target, makes even the adopted 2045 target exceptionally challenging to deliver.

More importantly, the end-point of the transition to carbon neutrality is only part of the challenge. Research from the Tyndall Centre demonstrates that unless unprecedented progress is made over the next 6 years, the limits set by the Paris Agreement will already be breached within that period.

An inconvenient truth underlies this work. Our carbon reduction plan does not and cannot go far enough while remaining deliverable by a local authority. We need radical change in the political, social and economic context, beyond anything currently envisaged by either local or national government to deliver carbon neutrality. While we have not created the current situation; we have a moral responsibility to do all we can to resolve it.

## 1.1 Introduction

This plan sets out how the Council will support the borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. It is a highly ambitious and aspirational plan, and its success will be dependent on the hard work and good will of all of our stakeholders. Collectively, we cannot afford to forget the fundamental truth that Climate Change poses the most significant threat to our way of life, and that we need to dedicate an exceptional amount of effort to tackling this crisis.

Even in light of the significant efforts proposed in this report, it must be made clear that achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 is a highly challenging target. Despite these challenges, the Council will pursue this goal and make all efforts to achieve it. The Council does not have all of the levers required to independently address this issue, but we will seek to work in partnership with those that do, including national government, local industry and communities to bring about the required change. Cheshire West and Chester is not without assets; it is a borough with vibrant and engaged communities, with one of the highest recycling rates in the country, with well-developed relationships with industry and agriculture, with the unique ability to be at the heart of the UK's hydrogen infrastructure development, and with exceptional partners in all sectors who are fully committed to de-carbonisation. As an organisation central to the civic life of the borough, the Council is well-placed to bring together the coalitions needed to tackle climate change. We know this will require previously un-thinkable changes to our way of life, significant investments, and re-thinking how we interact with our environment.

This report sets out the scale of the challenge that we face to meet achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. It reflects the work that has been done to gather evidence on the current state of emissions in the borough, and the engagement and intervention planning that has been undertaken since the climate emergency was declared. It sets out the action required to achieve carbon neutrality, and how the delivery of these actions will be tracked. To inform this work we have captured evidence from a wide range of stakeholders to create the evidence base.

Climate Change is recognised as both the greatest global risk to health and the economy by the World Health Organisation and World Economic Forum respectively. As shown in the recent flood events of 2019, and ever-increasing average summer temperatures, the impacts of climate change are significant and disruptive, and they fall disproportionately on vulnerable communities.

According to data published in a recent study in the journal Nature Communications<sup>1</sup>, sea level rise as a result of carbon emissions associated with an increase in temperatures of two degrees Celsius presents a risk to a range of settlements within Cheshire West, including Ellesmere Port and its surrounds, Frodsham and Chester.

These considerations mean that in the wake of COVID-19, there is an even more significant need to create a greener, more sustainable Cheshire West and Chester to pass on to future generations.

## **2 The Principles:**

### **2.1 Democratically Led Process**

It is important that any response to the Climate Emergency Declaration is democratically led to ensure the views of residents are represented throughout. Following the declaration, the Council took two actions; convening the cross-party Climate Emergency Taskforce and expert Advisory Panel to provide leadership to the Council's response, and appointed Councillor Matt Bryan as the Leader's Champion and Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency. Since May 2019, the Climate Emergency Taskforce has met eight times to consider a range of key sectors and the contribution that the Council, partners, businesses and residents could make to tackling climate change.

### **2.2 An Evidence Based Process**

To provide appropriate evidence to support the development of the Climate Emergency Response Plan, the Council commissioned Anthesis, a sustainability consultancy. Anthesis have worked closely with the Department for Business, Enterprise and Industrial Strategy and the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change research in recent years to develop a methodology to manage and monitor local-authority level emissions. Locally, this work had several objectives:

1. The establishment of a baseline in Cheshire West and Chester that is compatible with carbon reporting standards such as the Carbon Disclosure Project;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-019-12808-z>. It should be noted that this mapping solely represents the effects of sea level rise and does not account for the impact of coastal defences.

2. The provision of a scientifically informed carbon budget for the Cheshire West and Chester area via the 'grandfathering' of UK's national emissions budget under the Paris Agreement to the Cheshire West area;
3. Analysis using the Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emission Reduction (SCATTER) tool to review the impact of forty interventions at four ambition levels on the area's emissions, in order to determine the scale of change necessary;
4. Given the borough's significant agricultural economy and heritage, a review was completed of the emissions attributable to the agricultural sector's activities in the borough.
5. Finally, in light of the need for the Council to demonstrate both leadership and accountability for tackling the Climate Emergency, the Council requested additional information about its organisational emissions.

The outputs of this work are set out in full detail in Anthesis' report<sup>2</sup>. The document sets out the Cheshire West and Chester emissions baseline via SCATTER. This refers solely to the borough's energy systems and excludes forestry, agriculture and land use, which are covered separately.

Cheshire West and Chester emits approximately 4 million tons<sup>3</sup> of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions per year, and that the primary contributor to emissions within the borough's boundary is Industrial and Institutional Buildings, at 53 per cent of emissions, followed by on-road transport at 19 per cent, residential buildings at 14 per cent, commercial buildings and facilities at 11 per cent, with 1 per cent or less from rail, waterborne navigation, solid waste disposal, and wastewater.

The Council's work has also been informed by a report from by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change, produced for all UK local authorities, available in the background documents section, which supported the delivery of the second objective, the setting of a scientifically informed carbon budget for the Cheshire West and Chester area. The key recommendations of the report were that, to make its 'fair' contribution towards the Paris Climate Change Agreement, Cheshire West and Chester should:

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<sup>2</sup> Available at: [https://info.anthesisgroup.com/hubfs/CW&C\\_per\\_cent20Final\\_per\\_cent20Report.pdf?hsLang=en](https://info.anthesisgroup.com/hubfs/CW&C_per_cent20Final_per_cent20Report.pdf?hsLang=en)

<sup>3</sup> As of 2017 data, SCATTER data set out that 4,006 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e was emitted in Cheshire West and Chester, while BEIS Local Authority Emissions data represented 4,100 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e. Differences in methodologies are set out on Page 8 of Anthesis' report. As of 2018 BEIS Local Authority Emissions data, emissions within Cheshire West and Chester stood at 3,620 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e, a decrease of 11.7 per cent. This is significantly in excess of the national decline from 2017 to 2018 of 2.1 per cent. The primary reason for the local reduction in emissions is a 461.5 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e reduction in industrial emissions observed in 2018.

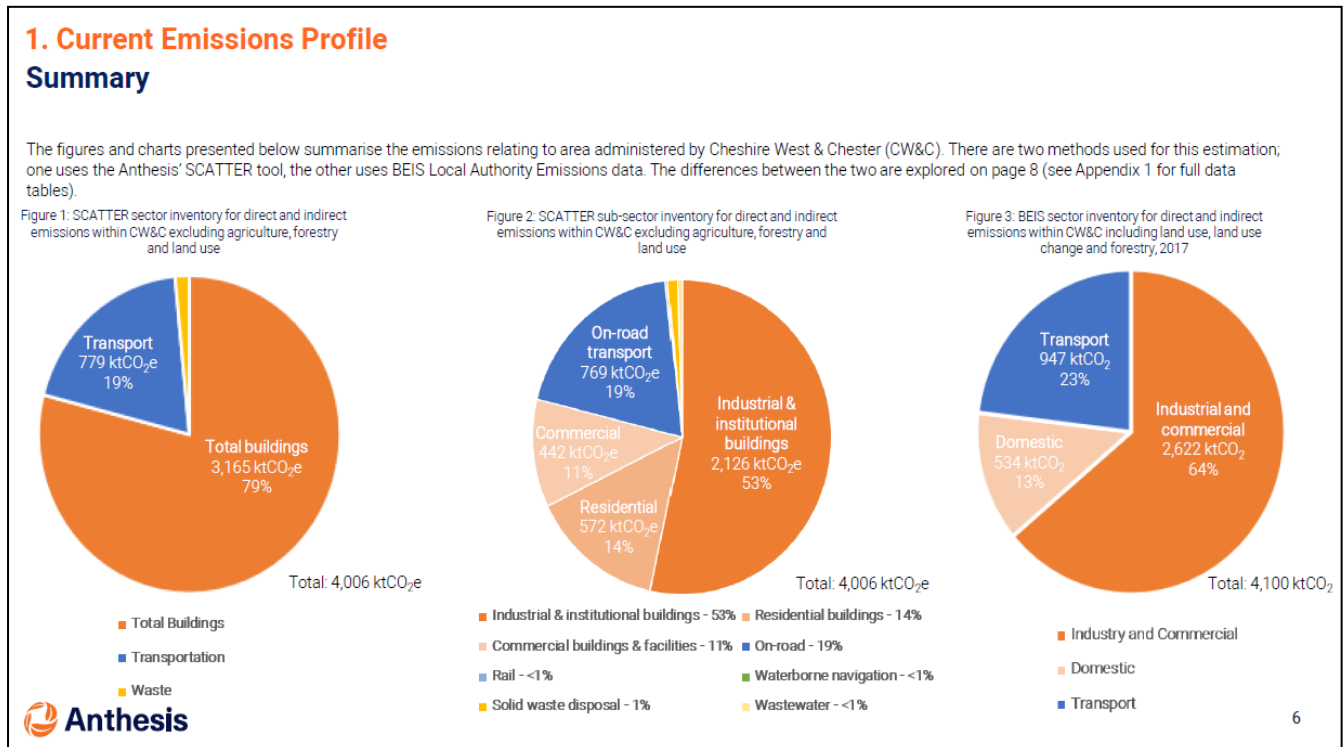
1. Stay within a maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget of 24.0 million tonnes (MtCO<sub>2</sub>) for the period of 2020 to 2100. At 2017 CO<sub>2</sub> emission levels, Cheshire West and Chester would use this entire budget within 6 years from 2020.
2. Initiate an immediate programme of CO<sub>2</sub> mitigation to deliver cuts in emissions averaging a minimum of -14.0 per cent per year to deliver a Paris aligned carbon budget. These annual reductions in emissions require national and local action, and could be part of a wider collaboration with other local authorities.
3. Reach zero or near zero carbon no later than 2040. This report provides an indicative CO<sub>2</sub> reduction pathway that stays within the recommended maximum carbon budget of 24.0 MtCO<sub>2</sub>. At 2040 5 per cent of the budget remains. This represents very low levels of residual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by this time, or the Authority may opt to forgo these residual emissions and cut emissions to zero at this point. Earlier years for reaching zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are also within the recommended budget, provided that interim budgets with lower cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are also adopted.

The third objective of the Anthesis work relates to the scale and pace of change required to achieve carbon neutrality in Cheshire West and Chester. The SCATTER model uses forty interventions which are considered across both energy supply and demand. Each intervention has a series of 'ambition levels' which are articulated as ranging from Level 1 to Level 4. Level 1 assumes minimal action beyond current, national policy (where sufficiently defined by sector or measure) and nationally led decarbonisation of the electricity grid. In contrast, Level 4 assumes that the region goes significantly beyond national policy and national grid decarbonisation, across both energy supply and energy demand measures.



High-level analysis of the borough’s greenhouse gas emissions under SCATTER is set out below:

**Figure One:**



<sup>4</sup> Accessible Description, Figure 1: There are three pie charts in the image. The first is the SCATTER sector inventory for direct and indirect emissions within Cheshire West and Chester excluding agriculture, forestry and land use. This chart details that in the total buildings section of the chart, there are 3,165 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e, or 79 per cent of the total emissions. Transport makes up 779 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e, or 19 per cent of total emissions, while Waste makes up 2 per cent of emissions. The second pie chart is the SCATTER sub-sector inventory for direct and indirect emissions within CW&C excluding agriculture, forestry and land use. Industrial and institutional buildings are the largest section, at 2126 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e, or 53 per cent. Transport makes up 769 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e at 19 per cent. Residential makes up 572 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e at 14 per cent. Commercial makes up 442 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e at 11 per cent. Solid waste disposal makes up 1 per cent. Rail, waterborne navigation and wastewater make up less than 1 per cent respectively. The third pie chart is the BEIS sector inventory for direct and indirect emissions within Cheshire West and including land use, land use change and forestry, 2017. Industrial and commercial emissions are the largest section, at 2622 ktCO<sub>2</sub>. Transport makes up 947 ktCO<sub>2</sub> or 23 per cent, and domestic makes up 534 ktCO<sub>2</sub>, at 13 per cent, for a total of 4,100 ktCO<sub>2</sub>.

Figure Two:

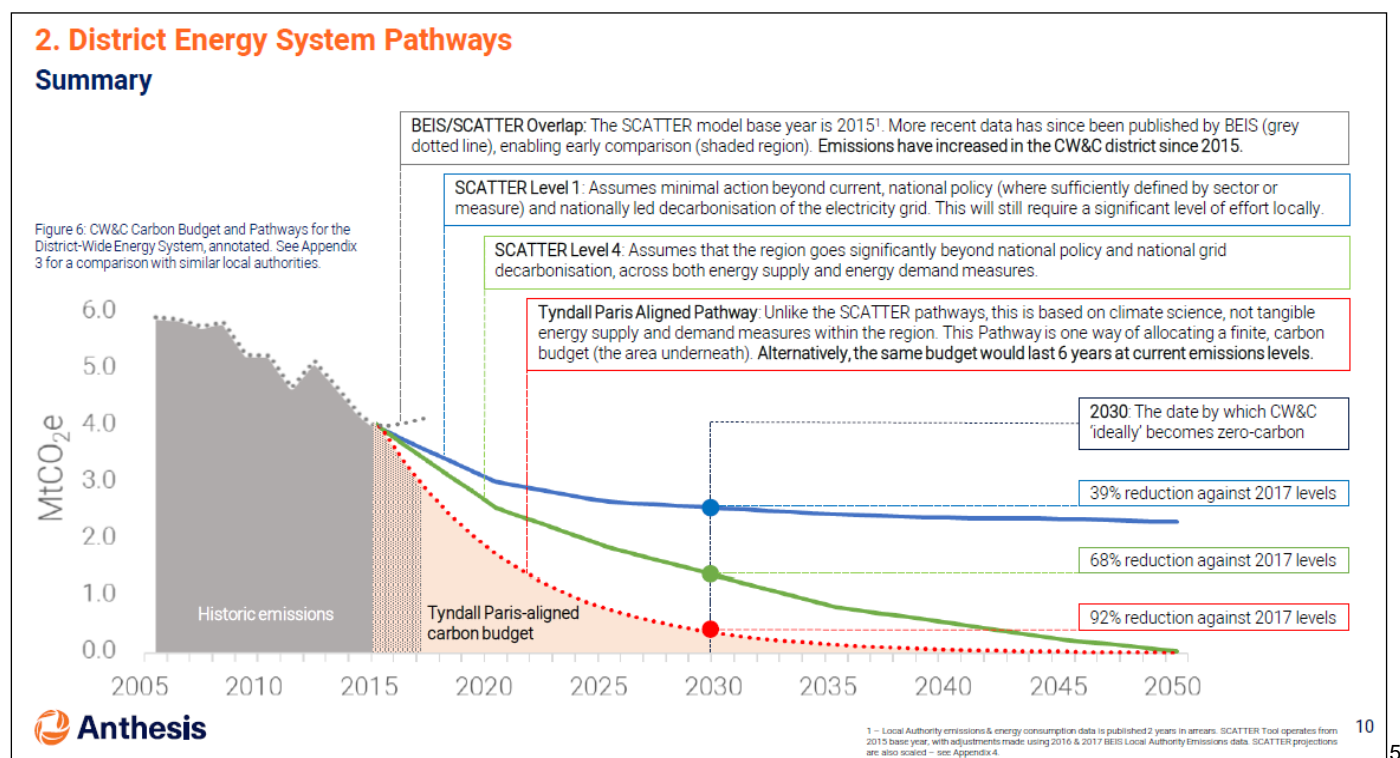


Figure Two demonstrates that achieving carbon neutrality and meeting the Tyndall-aligned carbon budget in Cheshire West and Chester by 2045 would require a level of technical intervention that is not currently feasible under the most ambitious scenarios. It is therefore recognised that the 2045 target is exceptionally challenging based on the current policy, funding and technological environment. However, setting an exceptionally challenging target is in this case, appropriate, as it will facilitate speed of action in reducing carbon emissions, which is the most significant consideration in tackling climate change.

### 2.3 A Co-produced Plan

The scale of this challenge means that it cannot be addressed by a traditional, 'top-down' public sector response. The response to the climate emergency must draw on the skill, knowledge and enthusiasm of all of our businesses, residents and partners if it is to be effective. Therefore, we have sought throughout this process to take a collaborative approach. This is exemplified by

<sup>5</sup> Accessible Description, Figure 2: This graph covers the Cheshire West and Chester Carbon Budget and Pathways for the district wide energy system. It details that as of 2017 Cheshire West and Chester's emissions stood at around 4 million tons per year. It describes three pathways, the first is SCATTER level 1, which assumes the current level of intervention. This achieves a 39 per cent reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> against 2017 levels by 2030. The second is SCATTER level 2, which is the highest level of intervention possible, which would achieve a 68 per cent reduction by 2030. The third is the Tyndall Paris aligned carbon budget, which required a 92 per cent reduction against 2017 levels by 2030. The Tyndall and SCATTER level 4 pathways intersect by 2050.

ensuring that all meetings of the Taskforce and Advisory Panel are open to public attendance, and that we will continue with a programme of co-production and engagement on this Plan throughout its lifetime, rather than treating this as a static document. Further information on our approach to co-production is included in section 3 – Communications.

### **3. Strategic Context**

In February 2020 the Council ratified its four-year Council Plan, “Play your part to Thrive”. This document, accompanied by a four-year budget, sets out the strategic priorities for the Council in coming years, and how we will change the way we work to meet the needs of our communities. It is underpinned by the principle of listening and co-producing services with residents. The Council has subsequently developed a Recovery and Renewal Plan which sets out updated action plans against the Council priorities following the impact of COVID-19 and the national and local response.

Six main challenges were identified in the plan:

- Tackling the climate emergency;
- Growing our local economy and delivering good jobs with fair wages for our residents;
- Supporting children and young people to get the best start in life and achieve their full potential;
- Enabling more adults to live longer, healthier and happier lives;
- Making our neighbourhoods even better places to call home;
- Being an efficient and empowering Council.

The fact that tackling the Climate Emergency is central to the Council Plan illustrates the significance of the issue. This is a priority that we know our residents share. In the survey which informed the Council Plan, 83 per cent of respondents said that they were concerned about climate change, with 44 per cent of respondents being very concerned. 21 per cent agreed that 2050 is the right deadline by which to bring UK emissions to net zero, but 55 per cent think that it should be done more quickly, in-line with the Council’s aspiration of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045.

The plan set out that over three-quarters of participants agreed with all the Council's proposals for tackling the climate emergency, with particularly strong support around tree planting, energy

efficient homes and supporting industry to reduce their carbon footprint. There were also calls for the Council to lead by example, to invest in awareness and educational behaviour change campaigns and to improve the public transport and cycling infrastructure to make sustainable transport a more viable option. Over two-thirds of residents agreed with ideas of how residents could play their part, particularly around reducing and recycling waste, buying local and green and switching to greener energy.

But we know that real change requires both money and time. In order to deliver this we are investing £300,000 per year on a permanent basis over the course of the four-year budget, with £100,000 temporary funding in 2020/21, alongside £16.2m of capital investment in low-carbon projects. More importantly, we will begin to use all of the Council's purchasing power to reduce carbon emissions throughout our supply chain, by taking carbon considerations in to account when making procurement decisions. The Council cannot however bring about the required change independently, we are dependent on a range of factors such as clarity regarding the national planning framework and the provision of a long-term funding settlement from government. We will continue to work with government to create the foundations required for effective local action on climate change, and in the interim will do all we can with the powers, resources and time available to us.

### **3.1 Scope**

This plan is focused on achieving carbon neutrality within the Cheshire West and Chester area by 2045. Carbon neutrality means that we need to reduce our emissions to 'net zero', so that any carbon emissions produced in Cheshire West and Chester by 2045 would be met by an equal level of carbon sequestration (capture). Throughout this document, the term carbon neutrality and net zero are used as widely understood proxies for net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, which is the intent of the Council's Climate Emergency declaration. The actions within the plan are intended to be initiated within the Council's current Council-plan period, 2020-24.

This plan and objective is linked to, but distinct from the Council's organisational Carbon Management Plan, which concerns the actions that the Council will take to reduce its emissions to carbon neutrality by 2030. The delivery of this objective will help support the borough as a whole to be carbon neutral by 2045.

### 3.2 Consultation:

Given the scale of public interest and enthusiasm within communities to tackle the Climate Emergency, the Council has started a programme of internal and external communications activity to engage with staff and residents. Initially this involved ensuring that all relevant campaigns and stories include consistent messages on the significance of considering the climate impacts of the Council's activities.

The Council has also established a webpage to summarise its Climate Emergency Response, at: <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/the-climate-emergency/the-climate-emergency.aspx>

This page provides information regarding the times and dates of public meetings, the minutes of meetings, the Council's commissioned research, and links to wider resources on climate change. To provide regular progress updates to residents and other interested local stakeholders, we have established a monthly e-newsletter which now has a regular readership of more than 1000, and the Council has a regular campaign of social media promotion and engagement on the issue of the climate emergency.

The Council held a public evidence session on Friday 24 January. We received more than 100 written evidence submissions and public speakers from a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives. The key messages from this session are included in the action plans section of this report. The minutes and webcast of the meeting are available on the Council's website.

In February 2020, the Council held a Climate Summit, "West Cheshire Action on Climate Change", in order to bring together a diverse range of stakeholders from the public, private, third sectors and from our communities in order to share the outputs of our research develop a consensus regarding the scale and urgency of the challenge, and begin jointly producing solutions with our partners. While in-person engagement has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have continued to regularly engage digitally to ensure that we continued to share progress and invite contributions from the public.

The Council has engaged with a diverse array of stakeholders, including;

- Engagement with voluntary and community sectors groups such as the Chester Sustainability Forum and Friends of the Earth;
- Engagement with private sector partners in a range of sectors, including the energy, chemicals and manufacturing sectors;
- Receiving enquiries and public evidence submissions to inform the Public Evidence session of the Taskforce via [ClimateChange@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:ClimateChange@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk);
- Engagement with the Local Enterprise Partnership on the issue of the Climate Emergency to ensure this issue is central to the development of the Local Industrial Strategy.
- Engagement with local authority partners in the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region and in North Wales to align action to tackle the Climate Emergency, including supporting the delivery of shared priorities such as Growth Track 360.
- Engagement with partners in the local public sector, including the NHS, Police, Fire and Rescue service.
- Engagement with Housing Associations via the Housing Partnership;
- Engagement with stakeholders via the Climate Advisory Panel such as;
- Engagement with the Federation of Small Business;
- Engagement with the Environment Agency;
- Engagement with the Cheshire Energy Hub;
- Engagement with WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme);
- Engagement with Chester Zoo;
- Engagement with the Mersey Forest;
- Engagement with Grosvenor Farms.
- Engaged with the University of Chester.

Staff engagement will be central to the Council delivering on its ambition to be a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, and to support the borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. In light of this, the Council has rolled-out a mandatory e-learning module to all staff on carbon literacy to promote awareness of the changes that can be made in both a personal and professional capacity to reduce carbon emissions. This is accompanied by a corporate objective for all staff to complete this module and to take action to reduce carbon emissions within their roles.

The Council believes that transparency of decision making is essential to maintaining and increasing public trust on this vital issue. In order to promote transparency, the Taskforce and Advisory Panel have held open meetings, with their agendas published on the Council's climate emergency webpage. There have also been provisions for members of the public to ask questions

of and make statements to the Taskforce. Through these measures, we want to create the conditions for this plan to be delivered in partnership with our communities.

### 3.3 Performance Management:

The requirement to annually report on progress against the borough's attainment of carbon neutrality by 2045 was set out by Council. A clear performance framework is required to enable Members, officers, partners and the public to assess whether the Council is achieving what it set out to do in this plan. In order to align to the Council's Corporate Performance Management approach, the following key principles are adopted:

- **Proportionality:** Performance management will track and focus on the issues that make the biggest difference, being tailored to the appropriate audience, rather than being an end in itself. The focus will be on improvement supported by efficient processes and systems for reporting, analysis and data collection
- **Depth vs breadth:** There needs to be a balance between the range of information available and the depth of understanding it can give. Fewer indicators enable more insight, analysis and focused improvement
- **Intelligent target setting:** Recognising that this plan is the start of a 25-year monitoring period, targets are set on a medium-term basis where possible, specifically, to the end of the current Council Plan period. Targets will be set by taking account of Anthesis data, benchmarking information, considering historical trends and considering resources.
- **Managed flexibility:** Measures, targets and actions are sensitive to changed circumstances and a refresh of the framework takes place on annual basis in an open and transparent manner.

A suite of 20 performance indicators are proposed to track performance against this plan. These indicators are not directly correlated to all actions within the plan, but act as proxies for the delivery of the plan's objectives. The Council is not able to directly influence the attainment of the target on all indicators. Measures are therefore categorised as being either "Direct Influence" or "Indirect Influence". The performance framework will enable members and residents to hold the Council to account for under-performance, and enable us to celebrate good performance. Where a need to improve performance is identified, the Climate Change team will offer facilitated workshops with the relevant service to seek to understand and resolve barriers to delivering better outcomes.

### 3.4 Best Practice:

Hundreds of Councils throughout the UK have declared a climate emergency, in a range of different contexts, from predominantly rural areas such as Cornwall, to cities such as Manchester, Leeds and Bristol. We have reviewed the process of responding to the declaration of a Climate Emergency and sought to take learning from areas evidencing best practice. Examples of common themes in responding to the Climate Emergency, and how we have learnt from them, include:

- 1. Be inclusive:** The development of local plans should be as inclusive as possible, as local residents, businesses, public sector partners and community groups will be more likely to support a plan they have been involved in co-designing from the outset.
- 2. Make a statement of intent:** Councils that have been successful in promoting and delivering on their climate emergency goals have made a clear declaration of intent, i.e. setting a target for area-wide carbon neutrality, rather than a more generic aspiration to reduce carbon emissions. They have launched the action planning process and set out a timeline, calling for input from residents, business and partners. They have used a range of communications channels from in-person, to social media, to online direct engagement to develop engagement in building the plan.
- 3. Engage Key Stakeholders:** Authorities have worked as 'convenors' to bring together thought leaders such as universities, community groups, think-tanks and experts to ensure processes are informed by the best available evidence. There are a range of models to facilitate expert engagement, from options such as Leeds, where the Climate Change Commission is chaired by the University of Leeds, to Lancaster's Climate Change Cabinet Liaison Group, which is chaired by Lancaster City Council and includes representatives from Lancaster University and a range of other interested stakeholders. In Cheshire West and Chester, we have sought to learn from these examples by creating the Climate Advisory Panel. Chaired by the Chief Executive of the Council, this group is made of up expert representatives from the public, private and third sectors, and includes representatives from our communities. The group advises the Taskforce and ensures that the Taskforce receives relevant and high-quality information.
- 4. Reflect local issues:** The Climate Change engagement process must be responsive to local needs and key issues to be meaningful. The issues faced in each local area are significantly different. In Cheshire West and Chester, this is reflected in the borough's engagement with industry, given the high proportion of industrial emissions in our area. In



light of this, we have engaged with bodies such as the Cheshire Energy Hub throughout this process to co-design solutions to reducing industrial emissions. This involved representatives from local industry hosting a session at the West Cheshire on Climate Change event on industrial decarbonisation.

- 5. Be clear on scope:** Action plans should be clear on what they have responsibility for, and what targets they are working towards. For example, Bristol has a clear target to be carbon neutral by 2030, and has a One City Climate Strategy to achieve that, underpinned by the Mayor's Climate Emergency Action Plan that sets out the actions the Council will take. Cheshire West and Chester's Plan builds on this learning and is in two parts, the Climate Emergency Response Plan covers how the Council will support the borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045, while the Carbon Management Plan sets out how the Council as an organisation will achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.
- 6. Emphasise co-benefits and empower residents:** When considering interventions, the most successful plans are broad rather than narrow in how they convey the benefits of taking climate action. Projects typically do not only deliver carbon benefits, and these are not always the most engaging benefits to residents, especially when projects can be disruptive. E.g. home insulation projects may deliver carbon benefits, but it is often having a warmer home and lower heating bills that are more meaningful for people. It is important to emphasise the co-benefits of climate action, such as cleaner air, healthier diets, and creating safer, stronger communities. Citizens also need to understand how we can bring about change in our own lives. In-line with the Council's aspiration to enable all our residents to play their part in helping the borough to thrive, this plan includes guidance on how residents can make an immediate impact in their communities.

## Action Plans by Sector:

### 4. Transport:

#### 4.1 Sector Description, Key Targets:

Road, rail and waterborne navigation are the second-highest emitting sector locally, only surpassed by industry. Anthesis' report sets out that significant changes in the way we travel will need to occur in order to achieve carbon neutrality. Currently, 74 per cent of employed residents travel to work by car, with 15 per cent of residents commuting out of the Cheshire West and Chester region. 40 per cent of households own more than one car, and within the Chester urban area, fewer than 10 per cent of journeys to work were undertaken on public transport. The most impactful intervention we can make is distance reduction, (the most significant change we can make is avoiding powered travel entirely, followed by reducing the distance that we travel), which can be facilitated by the use of digital infrastructure. This sits at odds with continued projected rises in traffic growth, of 8.3 per cent locally by 2030. The extent of change required is therefore stark, and would represent a fundamental change in the way we live and move in the borough, including measures such as:

- By 2025, a 17 per cent reduction in total travel demand will be required, alongside a 25 per cent reduction in car travel. This will be required to increase to 25 per cent and 38 per cent respectively by 2050;
- Where travel is required, however, there is a substantial carbon benefit derived from using public transport. The modal share of public transport would need to increase from less than 10 per cent, to 18 per cent by 2025, increasing to 29 per cent by 2050;
- This public transport would itself be low-carbon, either via electrification or the use of low-carbon hydrogen fuel, with the achievement of 100 per cent low carbon rail and 51 per cent low carbon buses by 2025;
- Where car travel is unavoidable, these cars would need to be low or zero carbon, with a transition to 100 per cent electric or hydrogen vehicles by 2050;
- The most challenging aspect of transport to decarbonise is road freight, and a conservative 6 per cent transition to zero carbon freight is assumed in SCATTER Level 4.

## **4.2 Feedback from the Climate Emergency Taskforce and Residents:**

The Taskforce noted that the Council's Cycling and Walking strategy had been recently consulted on, and that alongside this, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) are being developed focusing on our economic hubs. The LCWIP was adopted in July 2020. These consultations set out that there was strong support for improving cycling and walking infrastructure. Members highlighted the importance of integrating active travel and public transport. Members discussed that when considering potential routes for cycling infrastructure, there is a need to ensure that all areas can benefit rather than just those where active travel is already common. The opportunity for a significant expansion in green infrastructure when considering new development and the re-design of existing transport networks was raised by at the Advisory Panel, and it was discussed that wildflower planting should play a role in this to promote biodiversity and improve air quality.

The need for appropriate metrics was also discussed – moving past using the number of vehicles as a measure of success, and towards broader public satisfaction with our places and spaces. It was discussed that Government, both local and national, needed to improve on how it valued non-motorised traffic in business cases in order to shift investment towards lower-carbon options. The importance of transport options that work around people's lives was also discussed, and that given the complexity of the journeys that might occur during the course of a day, sustainable transport options must be flexible and have the same degree of accessibility as personal transport.

## **4.3 Residents' Recommendations:**

58 responses to the Climate Emergency Taskforce involved references to Transport and Infrastructure. The following key themes are present in multiple submissions:

1. Expanding cycling and walking infrastructure, and distance reduction opportunities.
2. The promotion of public transport options, with multiple references to bus and rail subsidies.
3. Support for electric vehicles, with recommendations that the Council take the lead in respect of its fleet.
4. Consideration of the carbon impacts of the Council's current and planned infrastructure and regeneration schemes.

#### 4.4 How the Council will play its part:

#### 4.5 Local Action:

1. Develop a Residential Design Guide that drives modal shift and supports the achievement of carbon neutrality. In-line with the government's 'Gear Change' vision, develop separate cycling and active travel infrastructure that is designed around usability, that is joined up, and which feels direct, logical and intuitive. This will be achieved by creating segregated cycling infrastructure, re-balancing the street towards equal prioritisation of pedestrians, cyclists and cars, and supporting electric vehicle/low carbon vehicle infrastructure.
2. All future major transport projects will have a carbon assessment as part of their business case.
3. Review Bus Transport in 2021-22, working closely with local operators to review options for zero emissions buses on all routes, to create the conditions to achieve 51 per cent electrification by 2025 and full electrification by 2030. This will be enabled by provision of zero emission fuelling infrastructure, including hydrogen buses and future electric buses.
4. Within the current Council Plan period, review the Local Transport Plan to strengthen provisions regarding climate change in-line with the Council's Climate Emergency priority.
5. Seek approval for the development of e-scooter trials within Cheshire West and Chester.
6. Procure zero emission vehicles where technology is available and cost effective when we replace our existing fleet.
7. Ensuring that residents and businesses can access fast and reliable digital connections is a social and economic goal for the council. Whilst we have made some significant progress through the Connecting Cheshire programme to date there is more to do. Almost 39,500 premises having benefited from public sector funding for superfast broadband access, but we need to go further to address disparities in coverage and to ensure that all communities benefit from future technological change and growth. Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is nearing the completion of a Digital Infrastructure Plan, a key action from the Cheshire & Warrington Digital Strategy (published 2019). We are a strategic partner in this work and will be working with them once completed to help ensure it results in action and tangible outcomes for residents and businesses. Having the skills to know how to access and use digital devices and connections is also an important part of our focus and we are supporting this through the delivery of digital skills in our own adult education programmes and working with the Digital Skills Partnership for Cheshire and Warrington.

8. Work with Building Digital UK (BDUK) through next phases of gigabit capable infrastructure programmes.

#### **4.6 Working with Partners and Government:**

9. Support the development of Hydrogen infrastructure for trains, buses and road freight, and review opportunities for hydrogen refuelling stations on arterial routes.
10. Work with partners and draw down funding from Government to increase the number of publicly available EV charging points developed by the Council.
11. Support the development of Growth Track 360, which includes the electrification of the line from Crewe to North Wales.
12. Continue to work with Transport for the North and Department for Transport on their respective key transport decarbonisation plans.

#### **4.7 How residents can play their part:**

1. Consider if you can avoid the need for a journey by using technology;
2. Prioritise making journeys by no-carbon options, such as cycling or walking;
3. Where powered travel is needed, use public transport;
4. Consider purchasing an electric or low-carbon vehicle;
5. Share a car with a colleague or friend if you can;
6. Aviation is a significant contributor to carbon emissions, and reducing our use of flights makes a significant difference to reducing our personal carbon footprints;
7. Buy local products to reduce the emissions incurred to transport your goods to their destination;
8. Consider offsetting your travel emissions by contributing to offsetting schemes.

#### **4.8 Key Performance Indicators:<sup>6</sup>**

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<sup>6</sup> Accessible Description, Transport Indicators Table: Measure One is Transport Sector Annual Carbon Emissions for Cheshire West and Chester. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is 950 ktCO<sub>2</sub>. The 2024 target is 17 per cent reduction. Measure 2 is Electric Vehicle Infrastructure: Number of publicly available electric vehicle charging devices developed by the Council. This is a direct measure. The baseline is 0 reflecting that this is the start of the measuring period. The 2024 target is 48. Measure 3 is Department for Transport Modal Share by Local Authority, Weekly Cycling. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is 8.7 per cent. The target is a 25 per cent increase. Measure 4 is Department for Transport Modal Share by Local Authority, Weekly Walking. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is 69.1 per cent. The target is a 25 per cent increase. Measure 5 is Public Satisfaction in Public Transport Options. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is 58 per cent. The target is 61 per cent.

Ref	Measure	Measure Type	Baseline	2024 Target
M1	Transport Sector Annual Carbon Emissions – Cheshire West and Chester - (BEIS)	Indirect Influence	950.1 ktCO <sub>2</sub>	17 per cent Reduction
M2	Electric vehicle infrastructure: Number of publicly available electric vehicle charging devices developed by the Council	Direct Influence	0	48
M3	Department for Transport: Modal Share by Local Authority, Weekly Cycling	Indirect Influence	8.7 per cent	25 per cent increase (Target under review following Taskforce/Advisory Panel feedback).
M4	Department for Transport: Modal Share by Local Authority, Weekly Walking	Indirect Influence	69.1 per cent	25 per cent increase 25 per cent increase (Target under review following Taskforce/Advisory Panel feedback).
M5	Resident Satisfaction (Public Transport options - NHT)	Indirect Influence	58 per cent	61 per cent

#### 4.9 Key Supporting Documents:

- Local Transport Plan – Update 2017
- LEP Transport Strategy
- Chester Transport Strategy
- Northwich Transport Strategy
- Winsford Transport Strategy
- Cycling Strategy
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
- Local Plan

## 4.10 Community Action Case Study

### **Council and Sustrans working together to get people more active**

A project funded by Cheshire West and Chester Council and delivered by Sustrans aims to get residents in Chester and Winsford travelling more actively, such as by walking or cycling.

The Active Travel Transformation project is a two-year behaviour change project which started in May 2019. Active travel is a simple low cost and effective way for people to travel whilst increasing levels of physical activity in their day to day life.

As well as health benefits, the project will also benefit the environment. An increase in walking and cycling can help to reduce car travel leading to reductions in air pollution, carbon dioxide emissions and levels of congestion.

[https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/the-climate-emergency/updates/Council-and-Sustrans-working-together-to-get-people-more-active.aspx?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/the-climate-emergency/updates/Council-and-Sustrans-working-together-to-get-people-more-active.aspx?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## 5. Energy and Industry:

### 5.1 Sector Description, Key Targets:

Emissions from industrial processes make up the largest single element of Cheshire West and Chester's total emissions at approximately 2.1 million tons per year based on Anthesis' SCATTER analysis, or 53 per cent of total emissions. There are differing methodologies to capture and attribute emissions produced by industry and it is important to be aware of these. Based on BEIS Local Authority statistics, combined Industrial and Commercial emissions stand at 2.6 million tons per year. Based on EU Emissions Trading scheme data, these emissions stand at 3.5 million tons per year. This is linked to the fact that BEIS and SCATTER analysis re-distributes carbon emissions from large industrial installations throughout the country in its analysis. For more information on the EU Emissions trading scheme, refer to Appendix 1. The conclusion however remains unchanged. We need to reduce carbon emissions that are produced by the use of fossil-fuel derived energy both in industry, and also in our homes, shops and other premises by switching to renewable sources. It is important to note that while industrial processes do generate carbon emissions, that industry has achieved significant reductions in emissions in recent years, and these businesses are essential to area's economic prosperity, supporting a range of high-quality jobs. Artificially reducing emissions by out-sourcing emissions to nations with lower environmental standards is not a sustainable way to reduce global emissions. Projects such as HyNet, which plans to reduce carbon emissions across the North-West by 10 million tonnes, and which is centred in our area due to its assets enabling hydrogen production, storage and networking, offer a unique opportunity for Cheshire West and Chester to be the UK's first low-carbon hydrogen borough. Achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 will require a significant increase in renewable energy production and infrastructure to meet increased demand, both for electricity and low-carbon hydrogen. Within the Energy systems analysis provided by Anthesis, the scale of change required in the delivery of renewable energy is set out:

- To provide sufficient solar power to support the decarbonisation of the grid, 0.3 gigawatts (GW) of installed capacity is required by 2025, prior to the delivery of 0.8 GW by 2050. This would represent a 25x increase in installed capacity, based on current capacity of 0.032 GW;
- The report also references the need to significantly increase wind capacity, at a 20.4x increase by 2050;
- A 52.6x increase in Bioenergy capacity – from 5 MW to 263 MW, is required, alongside a 681x increase in installed solar thermal capacity for the provision of hot water;



- Furthermore, the potential for wave and tidal power to grow in capacity over time is noted but is largely unaccounted for in the tool.

The Council also works closely with local industry to support the development of a green economy which provides high-quality, skilled and low-carbon jobs to our residents. This is via existing partnerships such as the Cheshire Energy Hub. Anthesis described a range of interventions for reducing industrial emissions;

- An 11 per cent reduction in industrial energy demand would need to be achieved by 2025, moving towards a 38.5 per cent reduction by 2050;
- This would need to be accompanied by a 6 per cent electrification of industrial processes, with a view to a 31 per cent increase by 2050. Significant expansions in carbon capture usage and storage are required; with 2 per cent of industrial energy coming from carbon capture and storage by 2025, increasing to 42 per cent by 2050.
- Anthesis also noted that a significant reduction in Oil production would be required relative to 2015 levels.

It should also be noted that it is inevitable that there will be residual emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases. Therefore, there will also be a need to remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere (negative emissions) so that the UK achieves its goal of net zero emissions. Clearly natural absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> by tree planting will be a key component of this. There are also early stage technology developments of 'Direct Air Capture (DAC)' which would extract CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere, and then store it in carbon capture and storage (CCS) facilities. The technical and economic feasibility of DAC is currently unknown. However, a proven route to negative emissions is Bio-energy with CCS (BECCS). Biomass used as the feedstock to make synthetic natural gas or hydrogen, with carbon capture and storage for the by-product CO<sub>2</sub> from the process, results in an overall removal of emissions from the atmosphere. The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) has estimated that the UK will require 51 million tonnes per year of negative emissions from BECCS by 2050 to achieve net zero. With carbon capture and storage already planned to be delivered at scale by the HyNet project, and several biomass-based processes planned at locations including Protos, Cheshire West and Chester, and the wider north west UK region, will be very well placed to support the delivery of this UK need.

## **5.2 Feedback from the Climate Emergency Taskforce and Residents:**

The Climate Emergency Taskforce noted that the borough's energy intensive industries, while contributing a significant proportion of local emissions, were also vital to sustaining a range of high-quality jobs. Neither the Council nor the Taskforce support reducing local emissions by encouraging these industries to move out of the borough. The Taskforce was updated on the work undertaken by the Cheshire Energy Hub and the development of a local hydrogen economy. It was agreed that Government, both national and local, would need to support the decarbonisation of existing industries via a range of mechanisms in order to retain the benefits of these industries while reducing carbon emissions. It was requested that the Council continue work to engage with Government to maximise the benefit of existing renewable energy funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy generation projects across the public sector estate.

## **5.3 Residents' Recommendations:**

25 responses to the Climate Emergency Taskforce related to Energy and Industry. Residents' recommendations were wide-ranging, but the following key themes were present in multiple submissions to the Climate Emergency Taskforce:

1. Expanding renewable energy generation, such as solar, wind, geothermal on Council land and assets, promoting the roll-out of these power sources across the wider borough, and exploring the use of district heating networks.
2. Exploring the area's potential for Energy innovation relating to Hydrogen and Carbon Capture and Storage.

## **5.4 How the Council will play its part:**

### **5.5 Local Action:**

1. Purchase renewable electricity for the Council, beginning in 2020-21;
2. In 2021-22, review the feasibility of purchasing 'green' gas for the Council's buildings;
3. When replacing heating systems in buildings, or including systems in new Council developments, our default option will be low-carbon alternatives to gas/coal/oil based heating systems.

4. In 2020-24, review the establishment of a recycling fund to deliver renewable energy or energy efficiency projects, and prioritise in the Council's capital programme improving the energy efficiency of public sector buildings through measures such as improved insulation.
5. The Council will deliver Phase 2 of the Council's LED streetlight replacement programme, reducing energy demand and speeding the achievement of carbon neutrality in the Council's own operations.
6. The Council will make available a Climate Emergency Fund in 2020-21, which among other uses will provide opportunities to expand community energy provision.

## **5.6 Working with Partners and Government**

7. Work with the LEP, the Mersey Dee Alliance, Net Zero North West and Cheshire Energy Hub to review opportunities to reduce industrial energy use within Cheshire West and Chester, through projects such as the Energy Innovation District and E-Port Smart Energy Master Plan, which aim to aims to reduce the carbon emissions from the Ellesmere Port industrial cluster by 34 per cent by 2030;
8. Working with the Liverpool City region on the Mersey Tidal project to seek to deliver clean energy to the Cheshire and Merseyside region;
9. Support in principle the development of a low-carbon hydrogen economy. The HyNet project aspires to capture 10 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from the North West's industrial cluster, add £17bn Gross Value Added to the North West economy, alongside supporting 5979 jobs. It is noted that the blue hydrogen proposed in HyNet is intended to be a transitional step towards green hydrogen, and therefore the development of green hydrogen will also be supported by the Council.
10. The Council will work with central Government and local industrial stakeholders to promote the development of funding mechanisms to ensure the economic viability of blue hydrogen, as a transitional step towards green hydrogen, to enable the delivery of initial HyNet infrastructure by 2025.
11. The Council will work with the Mersey Dee Alliance on the development and delivery of an energy prospectus.
12. The Council will work with the local Energy Network infrastructure provider, SP Energy Networks, to assure the delivery of network upgrades to facilitate readiness for 100 per cent electric vehicles by 2030.

## 5.7 How residents can play their part:

1. Switch to a renewable energy supplier;
2. Install renewable energy generation at home;
3. Plan to switch your home heating system to a renewable alternative, such as a heat pump.
4. Consider the energy required to produce the products you purchase.

## 5.8 Key Performance Indicators:<sup>7</sup>

Ref	Measure	Measure Type	Baseline	2024 Target
M6	Industrial Sector Annual Carbon Emissions – Cheshire West and Chester - (BEIS)	Indirect Influence	2,147.4 ktCO <sub>2</sub>	11 per cent reduction
M7	Percentage of the LED streetlight replacement programme completed	Direct Influence	73 per cent	100 per cent

## 5.9 Key Supporting Documents:

- Local Enterprise Partnership Energy and Clean Growth Strategy
- Mersey Dee Alliance Energy Prospectus

## 5.10: Community Action Case Study

### Green energy for Vivo Care Choices

Cheshire West and Chester Council company Vivo Care Choices has signed a renewable energy contract to help create a greener and cleaner environment.

As part of its Carbon Neutral Plan for 2020-25 to support the Council's Climate Emergency

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<sup>7</sup> Accessible Description: Energy and Industry Indicators Table. Measure 6 is Industrial Sector Annual Carbon Emissions, Cheshire West and Chester. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is 2,147.4 ktCO<sub>2</sub>. The 2024 target is an 11 per cent reduction. Measure 7 is the Percentage of the LED streetlight replacement programme completed. This is a direct measure. The baseline is 73 per cent. The target is 100 per cent by 2024.

campaign, Vivo will be using 100 per cent renewable energy from April 2021.

Vivo's Plan sets out for the organisation to become carbon neutral by 2025, with renewable energy one of the 12 key actions being put in place. Others include measuring its carbon footprint, using light-emitting diode (LED) lighting and solar panels, and contributing a percentage of Community Fund grants to environmental projects.

[https://www.yourwestcheshire.co.uk/NewsArticle/%7BB8978788-CF08-49B9-9BF5-6D0015D78524%7D?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.yourwestcheshire.co.uk/NewsArticle/%7BB8978788-CF08-49B9-9BF5-6D0015D78524%7D?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

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## 6. Housing:

### 6.1 Sector Description, Key Targets:

Residential property makes up a substantial proportion of Cheshire West and Chester's greenhouse gas emissions, at 572,000 tons carbon dioxide equivalent per year, or 14 per cent as of 2016 based on SCATTER data<sup>8</sup>. This is the third largest element of the borough's emissions, following Industrial and commercial emissions and Transport.

Steady progress has been made on improving the energy efficiency of domestic properties in recent years. Residents within the borough have benefited from the installation of energy efficiency measures provided through a variety of funding sources, including the national Energy Company Obligation (ECO). Since the inception of ECO in 2013, 9,122 Cheshire West households have benefitted from the installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft or wall insulation and efficient boilers. In addition, the Council has been successful in applying to funding bodies for delivery of energy efficiency schemes and works closely with affordable warmth practitioners within the borough signposting eligible residents into local schemes which install measures and provide energy efficiency advice and guidance.

The energy efficiency of properties is measured using Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings. The information below shows the EPC ratings for domestic properties from 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2020 <sup>9</sup>:

- EPC Rating A: 170 Lodgements
- EPC Rating B: 12,992 Lodgements
- EPC Rating C: 25,197 Lodgements
- EPC Rating D: 35,236 Lodgements
- EPC Rating E: 12,627 Lodgements
- EPC Rating F: 12,627 Lodgements
- EPC Rating G: 853 Lodgements
- Not Recorded: 1
- Total Number of Lodgements: 95,955

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<sup>8</sup> The latest available data from BEIS relates to 2018. This sets out that emissions from domestic sources stand at 530,000 tons CO<sub>2</sub>.

<sup>9</sup> Only 66 per cent of properties carry a publicly available EPC rating.

Source: <https://epc.opendatacommunities.org/login>

In order to achieve carbon reductions to enable carbon neutrality by 2050, Anthesis proposed that the following scale of intervention would be necessary;

- Solid wall insulation at a rate of 1,087 households per year;
- Loft insulation at a rate of 2,500 households a year;
- Super-glazing installations of 2,345 per year;
- new builds to Passivhaus standard and a 21 per cent reduction in thermal leakiness, by 2025.
- By 2050, the vast majority of homes would have been subject to retrofit, and a 75 per cent reduction in thermal leakiness would have been achieved on all properties;
- Furthermore, average home temperatures would have reduced from 17.3 degrees Celsius to 16 degrees; this could be achieved through zonal heating controls, rather than reducing comfort.
- Significant changes are required to home heating. Currently, 139,200 – or 96 per cent of homes, have gas systems installed.
- While gas boilers will be banned in 2025, there is a need to rapidly accelerate a transition from gas, through the installation of 43,400 new heating systems, including technologies such as air or ground-source heat pumps.
- By 2050, 144,000 or 93 per cent of homes will have had new heating systems installed.
- Finally, the electrification of cooking (currently 47 per cent) will need to continue, achieving 69 per cent by 2025, and 100 per cent by 2050.

## **6.2 Feedback from the Climate Emergency Taskforce and Residents:**

The Climate Emergency Taskforce reviewed work planned by ForHousing, the Council's Housing Management Provides for Council homes in Ellesmere Port, Neston and Winsford. The Taskforce welcomed ForHousing's plans to improve the energy efficiency of its housing stock with up to £17m of planned investments. Members also supported the work of the Council's Housing Partnership (including Sanctuary, Weaver Vale, ForHousing and other registered providers) which is encouraging and working with all providers to understand how they are contributing to achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. It was discussed that this could involve enabling Housing providers to also declare a Climate Emergency.

The delivery of new build homes was also discussed. Officers highlighted the opportunity for the Council to deliver high standards in its own housing delivery, and the need to reflect on the balance between cost and the number of affordable homes delivered.

The Taskforce also reviewed the impact of building regulations on local property development. It was discussed that while the Council could set higher local standards, without effective tools for ensuring compliance they may not be adhered to, as nationally operating building control inspectors do not necessarily check for local variations from the national regulations. The Taskforce recommended that the Council should lobby for a change in regulations regarding building control services to ensure that locally set requirements are prioritised.

In addition to the Climate Emergency Taskforce, there has also been a Scrutiny review of the Local Plan which is due to be finalised in the autumn and subsequently report to Cabinet. One of the draft recommendations from this review is: that all new builds (Council and private developments) are built at least to a higher standard such as the Passivhaus Standard, renewable energy and EV charging points and access to a high standard of broadband infrastructure. This will be incorporated into the action plan.

### **6.3 Residents' Recommendations:**

17 responses to the Climate Emergency Taskforce's call for evidence included reference to Housing interventions. Residents recommended:

1. Consideration of increasing building regulations to Passivhaus standards;
2. Supporting the retrofitting of insulation and other energy efficiency measures in domestic properties, including a transition to low-carbon methods of home heating such as electrification.

### **6.4 Actions**

#### **6.5 Local Action:**

1. The Council will review options and costs for low-carbon housing in Council-led housing schemes, and work with social housing partners to deliver low-carbon housing. The Council will ensure that the local planning framework supports this ambition. It is estimated that



building to carbon neutral standards costs on average approximately 20 per cent more than building to existing regulations.

2. Develop an action plan specifically aimed at reducing the number of fuel poor households across the borough, working closely with established affordable warmth partners.
3. Work with the Housing Partnership to agree shared Climate Emergency goals, including the aspiration to work towards a carbon neutral borough by 2045.
4. Ensure the Council and housing providers support all forms of homeowners, tenants and occupiers to maximise access to all available funding opportunities for retrofit measures to improve homes, including the Green Homes Grant LAD scheme, energy redress programmes and others.
5. Review the available domestic energy advice and support offer to ensure that government funding schemes are appropriately promoted and leveraged to achieve the highest possible carbon return on investment. This includes the Green Homes Grant.
6. Review opportunities to provide loan funding to private sector landlords for whole house retrofit and other energy improvements for private rented properties that do not meet the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard.
7. Review the feasibility of ensuring that all new builds (Council and private developments) include renewable energy and EV charging points and access to a high standard of broadband infrastructure.
8. The Council will explore options for ensuring that new development should comply with the UN Sustainability Targets and the Anthesis targets.

#### **6.6 Working with Partners and Government:**

9. Support the development of the hydrogen economy, exploring opportunities for hydrogen to be mixed with the gas grid using existing infrastructure.
10. Support businesses and partners to sign up to the Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment. This commitment challenges organisations to reach net zero carbon in operation for all assets under their direct control by 2030.
11. Work with Government and partners to review opportunities for significantly expanding whole-house retrofit programmes in social housing to support the achievement of Anthesis' targets relating to low carbon energy, solid wall insulation, loft insulation and superglazing.
12. Work with Homes England to deliver our shared priorities around climate change and ensure sufficient resource is available to deliver new build low carbon affordable homes and request that Homes England considers establishing and providing expert support to housing providers regarding delivery options for low carbon homes.

13. The Council will respond to Government consultations to ensure that the legislative framework for Planning and Building Control promotes the ability for local areas to set higher standards for energy efficiency than the national minimum standards and puts a framework in place to ensure these standards are implemented.

## 6.7 How residents can play their part:

1. Consider switching to electricity for cooking.
2. Switch provider to one that provides sustainable energy
3. Ensure your home has LED lighting and draught-proofing.
4. Upgrade your home insulation – loft, cavity wall and draught.
5. Turn down your heating where you can, while remaining comfortable.
6. Think about whole-house retrofit, particularly if carrying out renovations.
7. Review government grant opportunities to improve homes.

## 6.8 Key Performance Indicators: <sup>10</sup>

Ref	Measure	Measure Type	Baseline	2024 Target
M8	Annual Housing Emissions (BEIS LA CO <sub>2</sub> emissions)	Indirect Influence	530kt CO <sub>2</sub>	450kt CO <sub>2</sub> per annum
M9	Carbon neutral new build homes planned, pipeline delivered include council housing programme and housing provider programmes	Direct Influence	In measurement	To be determined
M10	Private sector landlords supported to retrofit	Direct Influence	In measurement	To be determined

<sup>10</sup> Accessible Description: Housing Indicators Table: Measure 8 is Annual Housing Emissions based on BEIS data. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is 530 ktCO<sub>2</sub>. The target is 450ktCO<sub>2</sub> per annum. Measure 9 is Carbon neutral new build homes planned, pipeline delivered including council housing programme and housing provider programmes. This is a direct measure. The baseline and target for this measure are in development. Measure 10 is private sector landlords supported to retrofit properties that do not meet the minimum energy efficiency standard. This is a direct measure. The baseline and target for this measure are in development. Measure 11 is retrofit measures to council housing and housing provider stock. This is a direct measure. The baseline and target for this measure are in development. Measure 12 is the per cent of properties achieving Band C EPC rating or above. This is an indirect measure. The baseline and target are in development. Measure 13 is Fuel Poverty indicators, this measure and its baseline and target are in development.

	properties that do not meet the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard.			
M11	Retrofit measures to council housing and housing provider stock	Direct Influence	In measurement	To be determined
M12	Per cent of properties achieving to Band C or above	Indirect Influence	In measurement	To be determined
M13	Fuel Poverty indicators (to be confirmed)	TBC	To be confirmed.	To be determined

### 6.9 Key Supporting Documents:

- Housing Strategy 2014-2020
- Local Plan
- Home Energy Conservation Act Reporting

## **7. Business Premises and Engagement:**

### **7.1 Sector Description, Key Targets:**

Commercial and non-domestic buildings fall within the 64 per cent of emissions derived from Commercial (11 per cent) and Industrial and Institutional buildings (53 per cent). Emissions from commercial buildings total 442,000 tons per year, the fourth highest emitting sector after industry, transport and residential. In order to achieve the SCATTER Level 4 pathway, four interventions are proposed;

- A significant reduction in commercial heating and cooling (16 per cent by 2025);
- The electrification of heat (a 32 per cent reduction in gas and oil-fired boilers by 2025);
- A significant increase in the energy efficiency of appliances and lighting in non-domestic buildings (from 1.63 TWh to 0.59 TWh) by 2025;
- A 22 per cent increase in the electrification of cooking.

### **7.2 Feedback from the Climate Emergency Taskforce and Residents:**

The Climate Emergency Taskforce received information on the work of the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council to support the decarbonisation of small and medium enterprise (SME) locally, and the work of the Federation of Small Businesses. This included information on the FSB report for the Welsh Government “The New Normal – an Environmental Approach for SMEs” published in December 2019. The primary drivers covered were power, transport, air pollution and recycling/ waste. The report contained the FSBs environmental principles, the five actions SMEs can take and the five actions the government can take to facilitate decarbonisation, listed below.

Five actions SMEs can take:

1. Understand their own environmental impact, including their supply chain;
2. Consider energy efficiency improvements;
3. Aim for best practice;
4. Redesign the commute;
5. Prepare for changes to waste and recycling policy.

Five actions that government can take:

1. Provide an advice line for SMEs on environmental issues;
2. Consider including business premises in decarbonisation or insulation schemes;

3. Develop a long term EV strategy;
4. Deliver a clean air framework that works for smaller businesses;
5. Ensure new recycling and waste regulations understand the needs of SMEs.

The Taskforce raised the following key issues:

- The need to have a clear starting point in terms of businesses readiness to adapt to climate change, this could include measures such as the business needs survey;
- It was noted that Cheshire West and Chester is well-placed geographically in terms of connectivity, and it was discussed that a holistic approach to transport which enabled SMEs to thrive was necessary;
- In relation to electric cars, range anxiety was discussed as an issue for SMEs, but it was felt this would reduce as vehicles improved and EV infrastructure is bolstered;
- In relation to power supply, businesses did not feel they always had significant influence on power supply in leased properties, and this was felt to be a significant issue. Therefore, engagement with landlords would also be necessary to promote the adoption of renewable energy in the commercial sector;
- The cost implications of clean air zones for SMEs were highlighted, though it was recognised that businesses understood the need to improve air quality;
- Similar concerns were expressed around the cost implication of a workplace parking levy and it was discussed that it would be important to provide transitional support if these measures were implemented;
- It was discussed that zero percent loans to businesses to support them to transition to renewable forms of energy would be helpful;
- Providing support for businesses to gain environmental accreditation such as PAS 2060 was also suggested as a potential measure;
- It was discussed that the Council was a large client for businesses throughout the borough and that standardising its procurement approach.
- The need to promote working from home was discussed, as a measure to both tackle COVID-19 and to potentially reduce transport emissions.

### **7.3 Residents' Recommendations**

30 responses provide views on interventions regarding how the Council could work with business to reduce carbon emissions. The following key themes are present in multiple submissions:

1. Communicating with and supporting local businesses to reduce their carbon emissions, through 'quick wins' such as closing doors during the day to reduce heat loss.
2. Encouraging businesses to transition to low-carbon heating;
3. Encouraging businesses to ensure their staff do not keep engines on while stationary;
4. Work with business to support the transition to low-carbon transport e.g. asking businesses to commit to having 30 per cent of their fleet as EV by 2030;

#### **7.4 How the Council will play its part:**

#### **7.5 Local Action:**

1. Review the Business Needs Survey process, ensuring that this is used to gather baseline information on business needs regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation;
2. Develop a communications plan that includes an information pack on the LetsTalkBusinessCW website that: provides helpful information to support SME's to make changes; informs and engages business in this agenda; that supports business to access new initiatives and funding streams.
3. Ensure that the energy efficiency of the Council's own industrial and commercial assets improves in order to support the delivery of the Council's own 2030 carbon neutrality target, further information is available in the Carbon Management Plan.
4. Working with partner agencies, ensure that any regeneration or enterprise zone projects are designed with net-zero in mind and contribute to the achievement of net-zero by 2045.

#### **7.6 Working with Partners and Government:**

5. Work with the Local Enterprise Partnership to develop a long-term business grant programme (phase 2 programme) to support low-carbon and energy efficiency investments;
6. Work with Government to develop new financial models to make commercial retrofit at scale a feasible option.
7. Work with the Mersey-Dee Alliance to initiate activity as part of the MDA workplan.
8. Embed low carbon discussions into the Inward Investment and Key Account Management strategy (in development).

#### **7.7 How businesses can play their part:**

1. Understand your own emissions and environmental impact, including your supply chain;
2. Switch to a renewable energy supplier;

3. Engage with your landlords/tenants to switch to green energy;
4. Access support available via existing schemes such as the LEP Blue Orchid programme, the LEP Low Carbon Energy Fund, and the Industrial Energy Transformation Fund;
5. Install renewable energy generation at your premises;
6. Plan to switch your heating system to a renewable alternative;
7. Support your employees to work from home and use public transport;
8. Switch your fleet to electric or low-carbon vehicles;
9. Include carbon management and sustainability in your procurement policy;
10. Ensure any land you own or manage promotes biodiversity.

## 7.8 Key Performance Indicators:<sup>11</sup>

Ref	Measure	Measure Type	Baseline	2024 Target
M14	Commercial property median EPC rating;	Indirect Influence	D	C

## 7.9 Key Supporting Documents:

- LEP Strategic Economic Plan
- LEP Energy and Clean Growth Strategy
- Local Plan

<sup>11</sup> Accessible Description: Business Premises and Engagement Measures Table: Measure 14 is Commercial Property Median EPC rating. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is D. The 2024 target level is EPC rating C.

## 8: Land Use, Adaptation, Climate Repair

### 8.1 Sector Description, Key Targets:

Land management can have a range of impacts on the mitigation of climate change through complex systems of emissions and sequestration (capture) of CO<sub>2</sub>. Land management also plays a key role in the adaptation of communities and landscapes to the projected climate change due to historic emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>. Organisations, businesses, and communities have a role to play in maximising the impact of land management to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and climate change adaptation. Some of the mitigation and adaptation opportunities are described below:

#### Mitigation:

- Carbon storage and sequestration
- Providing low carbon fuels
- Material substitution
- Food production
- Reducing the need to travel by car

#### Adaptation:

- Managing high temperatures
- Managing water resources
- Managing riverine flooding
- Managing coastal flooding
- Managing surface water
- Reducing soil erosion
- Helping other special adapt
- Managing visitor pressure

Avoiding the worst impacts of climate change is complementary to many other objectives. In the context of land use in CW&C, there are many co-benefits of taking steps to cut emissions. When deciding where and how to make emissions reductions there are many other considerations, including but not limited to:

- Future land stewardship promotions by government for mitigation and adaptation
- Balancing food production with land-use management and land-use change;
- Flood management;



- Maintaining landscape character, particularly in the context protected land, nature reserves;
- Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, including connected habitats;
- Improving animal welfare;
- Improving wellbeing, our natural capital as a health asset
- Opportunities to work together as a wider region to make the necessary carbon reductions in a way that maximises the co-benefits while minimising potential adverse impacts

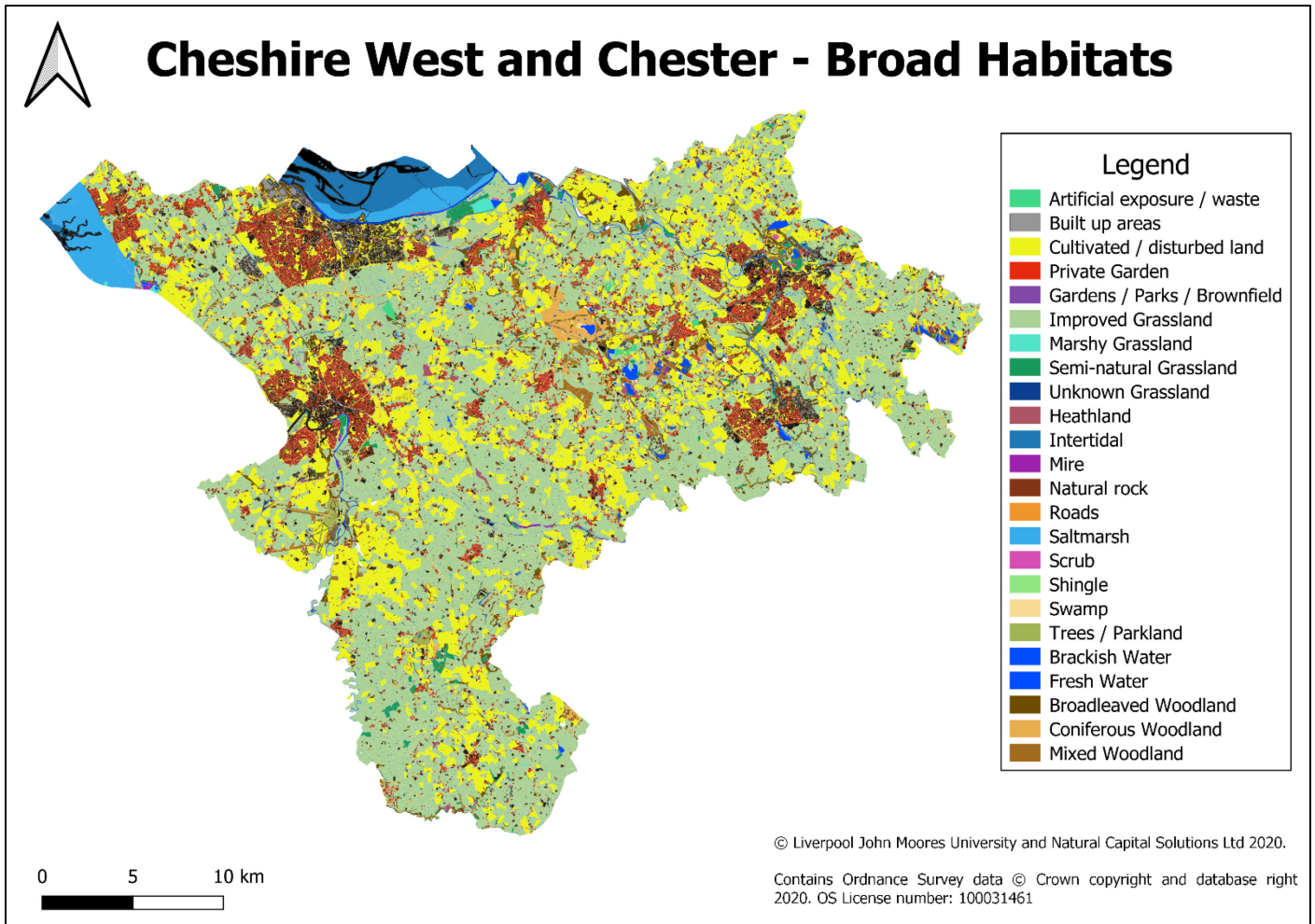
## 8.2 Land Use:

Natural capital is the concept that we can use to value the assets that nature provides to us. We need a flourishing natural environment to support economic growth and development. The stock of natural capital, our biodiversity, wildflowers, forests, and rivers has been significantly depleted during the twentieth century. This depletion needs to be reversed to support long-term natural and economic prosperity. To support this, the Council is jointly funding a Local Enterprise Partnership project to produce a Natural Capital Audit, Investment and Implementation Plan. This work will lead to:

- Improved knowledge about the stocks and flows of natural capital across the Cheshire and Warrington area, forming the basis for increasing awareness of the opportunities to use the areas natural capital more effectively to support sustainable growth in the sub region and provide Improved air, land and water quality as well as health, resilience, carbon capture and inward investment.
- Improved level of understanding of the scale and value of natural capital in Cheshire and Warrington on a regional and national scale and how this relates/contributes to socio-economic factors including social and economic deprivation.
- Identification and quantification of opportunities to improve the quality and quantity of natural capital within Cheshire and Warrington.
- Development of mechanisms (including potential modelling) to support the identification and prioritisation of significant projects that will enhance ecosystem service benefits from our natural capital assets and lead to more resilient communities and our economy.
- Identification of investment opportunities which will maximise the value of prioritised natural capital assets in Cheshire and Warrington and help meet local and national socio-economic priorities.

As part of a Natural Capital Audit and Investment Plan for Cheshire and Warrington, current land management types have been identified.

**Figure 3:**

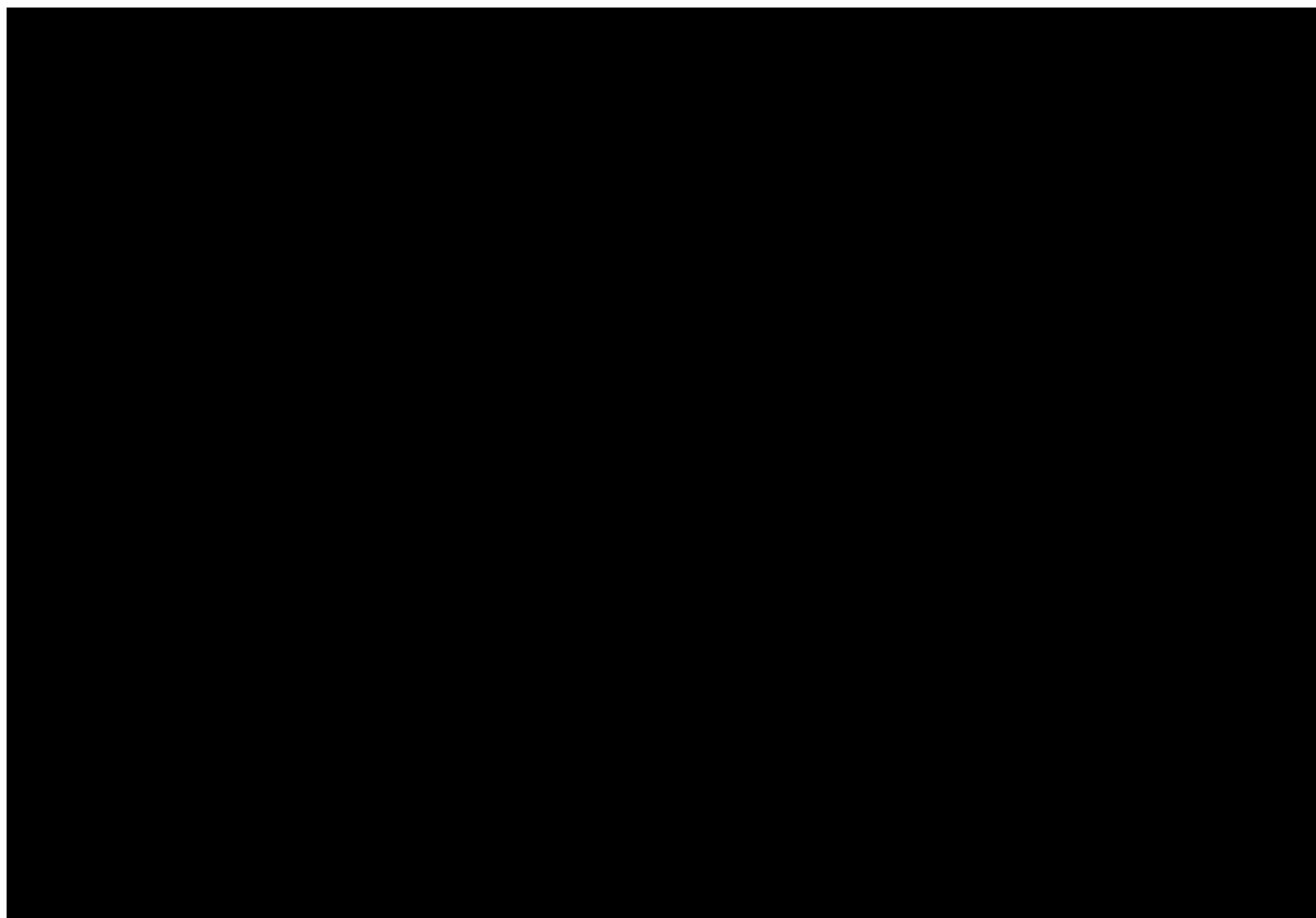


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<sup>12</sup> Accessible Description: Figure 3: This is a map which describes land use in west Cheshire. It is a map of the borough in which land is categorised by its use, such as improved grassland, arable land, garden, amenity grassland, roads, etc.

We can look in detail at the breakdown of land use types in Cheshire West and Chester below.

**Figure 4:** <sup>13</sup>



In terms of land types, agriculture and in particular improved grassland is the most abundant land type and from Anthesis' research we know that it is an area for GHG emission reductions to be targeted. Gardens are also one of the top 10 land use types and here individuals can act. Whilst individually these areas are small, cumulative action could provide significant benefits.

Emissions from agriculture and land use (gross) in Cheshire West and Chester are in excess of 340 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e/annum, approximately 8 per cent of emissions from CW&C area. Emissions from livestock are the dominant source of emissions from land use and agriculture, responsible for approximately 92 per cent of gross emissions. Dairy cows are responsible for 55 per cent of gross emissions and non-dairy cows are responsible for 33 per cent. The other 8 per cent is the result of crop and grassland emissions, typically the result of nitrous oxide emissions from fertilisers. The

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<sup>13</sup> Accessible Description, Figure 4: This table describes land use in west Cheshire in a different format to figure 3. It demonstrates that improved grassland is the most common land type. Arable is the second most common land type. Garden is the third most common, followed by built up areas and woodland.

land also acts as a carbon sink, removing approximately 1 per cent of gross emissions from the atmosphere. Using Committee on Climate Change forecasts, reducing consumption of beef, dairy and lamb could reduce gross emissions by as much as 37 per cent per year as compared to current gross emissions. Doubling the area of planted forest within the CW&C region could reduce emissions from livestock and land by approximately 25 per cent as compared to current gross emissions.

Emissions from agriculture come from two main sources:

- Livestock production produces 92 per cent of gross emissions. The majority comes from enteric fermentation in dairy cattle.
- Fertiliser applications produce the remaining 8 per cent. The main sources are nitrous oxide from grassland (which has low fertiliser applications but a large total area) and wheat production (which has a high average fertiliser application rate and large area). These will vary each year if crops are rotated.

The table below shows emissions from livestock. These come predominantly from methane emissions by breeding dairy cattle, due to the large feed intake required for producing milk, and the large herd size.

**Figure 5:** <sup>14</sup>

Livestock type	Number	Total CO <sub>2</sub> e, t	Per head CO <sub>2</sub> e, t
Dairy Cattle	40,828	188,377	4.61
Non-dairy cattle	58,156	111,637	1.92
Sheep	42,444	5,575	0.13
Pigs	21,750	8,712	0.40
Poultry	508,024	966	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>671,202</b>	<b>315,269</b>	<b>0.47</b>

Land-use, land-use change and forestry is currently acting as a net sink of CO<sub>2</sub>, storing 1 per cent of the gross emissions from livestock and land each year.

<sup>14</sup> Accessible Description, Figure 5: This table details emissions from livestock. The largest contributor is dairy cattle, of which there are 40,828 in the borough, they produce 188,377 tons of carbon dioxide in total, at 4.61 tons per head. The second largest category is non dairy cattle, of which there are 58,156 in the borough. They produce 111,637 tons of carbon dioxide, or 1.92 per head. The third largest category is sheep, of which there are 42,444, producing 5,575 tons, or 0.13 per head. The fourth largest category is pigs, of which there are 21,750, producing 8712 tons, or 0.40 per head. The final category is poultry, of which there are 508,024, producing 966 tons, or 0.00 per head.

### **8.3 Dietary Change**

The modelled scenarios include a reduction in the national consumption of dairy, beef and lamb of 20 per cent (medium) and 50 per cent (high) by 2050. Some of this is replaced by increased consumption of pork and chicken. This is modelled as a 20 per cent or 50 per cent reduction in cattle numbers, and the same reductions in grassland and associated fertiliser applications. Pig and chicken numbers increase by 20 per cent under both ambition levels. Grassland is reduced by about 5,000 and 13,000 hectares respectively in the medium and high scenarios. While more crops will be needed to replace some of the animal products, gains in productivity<sup>15</sup> should mean little additional cropland is needed.

### **8.4 New woodland planting**

For this report, the equivalent area of grassland freed by dietary change is converted to forestland over the period to 2100. The forest management plan used by the CCC is followed – a mix of native broadleaved and conifer woodlands which are managed to provide some fuel and harvested wood products. The grassland area is planted at a constant rate per year to the year 2100, equivalent to 60 hectares per year (medium) and 150 hectares per year (high). Grassland is assumed to be replaced by woodland to provide a simple scenario for the purposes of these calculations. Planting 12,600 ha of woodland would double the existing area of woodland within the borough.

### **8.5 Greenhouse gas emissions reductions**

The table below shows average annual emissions reductions associated with these scenarios between now and 2100.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Land-use-Reducing-emissions-and-preparing-for-climate-change-CCC-2018.pdf>

**Figure 6:** <sup>16</sup>

Scenario	CO2e, t net emissions reductions per year		% of current gross emissions <sup>3</sup>	
	Medium	High	Medium	High
Dietary change (grassland) - change to 2100	-388	-969	-0.1%	-0.3%
Dietary change (livestock) - change by 2050	-49,313	-125,710	-14%	-37%
Dietary change (subtotal)	-49,701	-126,679	-14%	-37%
Planting forests on saved land	-37,046	-84,356	-11%	-25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>-86,747</b>	<b>-211,036</b>	<b>-25%</b>	<b>-62%</b>

## 8.6 Adaptation and Climate Repair:

The Council recognises in its Local Plan that “positive adaptation to climate change will continue to be promoted and communities will be supported in taking positive action towards sustainable living”. Adaptation is essential in mitigating the detrimental impacts of Climate Change, such as increased flood risk, sea level rise, increased risk of summer deaths due to higher average temperatures, and many more adverse effects. We will therefore prioritise action that offers adaptation co-benefits alongside mitigation effects, such as nature-based solutions to climate change that also deliver sustainable water management, or the delivery of projects that install green infrastructure in urban locations, to tackle the urban heat island effect and address issues of air quality, while delivering carbon reduction.

## 8.7 Planning and the Climate Emergency:

Planning is a key element of the Council’s ability to influence land use in the borough. The Cheshire West and Chester Scrutiny Committee is currently engaged in a review of the Local Plan to determine whether there are opportunities to strengthen its provisions relating to Climate Change. The Committee will report on the findings of the review in Winter 2020.

## 8.8 Feedback from the Climate Emergency Taskforce and Climate Advisory Panel:

Taskforce Members were supportive of the Natural Capital Audit approach, and wanted to understand if the audit would help identify other potential schemes (relating to peat lands and

<sup>16</sup> Accessible Description, Figure 6: This table describes Anthesis’ modelling of emissions reductions scenarios for land use, land use change and forestry. The interventions are classified as medium or high. The first intervention is changing grassland to woodland. In the medium scenario this is linked to a reduction of 388 tons of carbon dioxide per year. In the high scenario this is linked to a reduction of 969 tons per year. The second intervention is reducing the consumption of beef, dairy and lamb. In the medium scenario this results in a reduction of 49,313 tons per year. In the high scenario this results in a reduction of 125,710 tons per year.

wetlands) in our locality to contribute to this agenda, to what extent can we find more urban solutions to provide tree planting space, and highlighted existing concerns on protecting mature trees during development. It was discussed that the audit would look at a range of different habitats, giving data on the existing carbon balance to inform future decisions on carbon storage and management. Given it is the first time we will have this data it may also provide opportunities to explore a range of new ideas. The Taskforce were supportive of increasing the scale and pace of tree planting in the borough.

## **8.9 Residents' Recommendations**

22 responses provide views on interventions regarding how the borough's environment and green infrastructure should be supported in order to mitigate the effects of, and adapt to, the climate emergency.

The following key themes are present in multiple submissions:

1. Using afforestation to improve air quality, sequester carbon and improve environmental amenity.
2. Tackling engine idling;
3. Support for wildflower planting; but considerations were also raised regarding the biodiversity of the wildflowers that are used.

## **8.10 Local Action:**

1. Support, on average over the 5-year (2020-2025) programme, an aspiration for 150 hectares of new planting a year across the borough, a total of 750ha over the lifetime of the programme.
2. Bid for EU Horizon 2020 funding to deploy exemplar nature-based solutions to Climate Change to provide models for wider deployment and incorporation into borough wide plans and strategies.
3. Implement new policies on wildflower verges, enhancing local biodiversity and reducing our cost for green space management.
4. Review the Council's land holdings, including its farm estate, to explore the case for this land to contribute to the Council's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. This may include reviewing opportunities to support low-carbon agricultural practices which reduce

emissions and increase carbon sequestration, alongside promoting solutions such as tree planting, wetland management and creation.

5. We will work with the Planning Service to introduce the requirement for 'net gain' in biodiversity in new development.
6. We will identify where natural flood management approaches can be used to increase carbon sequestration and deliver improved catchment management. This will be initiated by an opportunity mapping exercise.
7. We will work publish a Biodiversity strategy which sets out how we will promote biodiversity and carbon sequestration through new approaches to Streetscene management and wider work across the borough.
8. Explore opportunities to deliver income generation through Woodland management.
9. We will develop a detailed Action Plan that will support delivery of Local Action and work with partners and local canno.

#### **8.11 Working with Partners and Government:**

10. Work with the LEP to develop, finalise and launch a Natural Capital Audit, Investment and Implementation Plan for Cheshire and Warrington.
11. Assess the opportunity to work with the Local Nature Partnership to develop a co-created, borough wide, Biodiversity Strategy to complement the Natural Capital Audit and providing a framework for investment, including through Net Gain.
12. Apply to be the accountable body, programme managers, funding recipient and distributor for the Trees for Climate national programme, ensuring the effective management of this nationwide programme.
13. Support the ongoing delivery of the Mersey Forest Plan.
14. Assess how we work together to increase carbon capture and store across the whole landscape including wetlands, peatlands, woodland and farmland.

#### **8.12 How residents can play their part:**

1. Choose plants that provide pollen and nectar for as long a season as possible, from spring (Crocus and Mahonia for example) through to autumn (Michaelmas daisy, Sedum spectabile and ivy);
2. Grow a mix of trees and shrubs in your garden;
3. Join a local Friends Group or nature conservation charity;
4. Get out and enjoy local greenspaces;



5. If you can, add water to your garden, even a small pond adds significant wildlife value;
6. Compost;
7. Provide food and water to birds all year;
8. Scatter wildflower seeds in your garden, and don't be too tidy, areas of longer grass and decaying wood can be havens for wildlife.
9. Consider reducing your intake of carbon intensive foods such as beef, lamb and dairy.

### 8.13 Key Performance Indicators: <sup>17</sup>

Ref	Measure	Measure Type	Baseline	2024 Target
M15	Land Use Sector Annual Carbon Emissions – Cheshire West and Chester - (BEIS)	Indirect Influence	340 ktCO <sub>2</sub> e	2 per cent reduction (Target under review following Taskforce/Advisory Panel Feedback)
M16	Annual tree planting (ha)	Direct Influence	In measurement	150 on average by 2024
M17	Natural Flood Management	Indirect Influence	In measurement	2,500,000 litres of additional storage capacity in the landscape
M18	Carbon in the landscape - updated natural capital assessment of carbon stored in the landscape	Indirect Influence	In measurement	1 per cent increase

### 8.14 Key Supporting Documents:

- LEP Natural Capital Audit, Investment and Implementation Plan (Due Winter 2020)
- Local Plan
- Biodiversity Strategy

<sup>17</sup> Accessible Description: Land Use, Adaptation and Climate Repair Indicator Table: Measure 15 is Land Use Sector Annual Carbon Emissions, Cheshire West and Chester. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is 340 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e. The target by 2024 is a 2 per cent reduction. Measure 16 is Annual tree planting (hectares). This is a direct measure. The baseline is in measurement. The 2024 target is 150 hectares on average by 2024. Measure 17 is Natural Flood Management. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is in measurement. The 2024 target is 2,500,000 litres of additional storage capacity in the landscape. Measure 18 is carbon in the landscape. This is an indirect measure. The baseline is in measurement. The 2024 target is a 1 per cent increase.

- Cheshire West and Chester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Cheshire West Tree and Woodland Strategy
- Cheshire West and Chester Green Infrastructure Framework
- Mersey Forest Plan

## **8.15 Community Action Case Study**

### **Mersey forest– tree planting in the borough**

The Mersey Forest is a growing network of woodlands and green spaces across North Cheshire and Merseyside. Since it was established, over 25 years ago, the partnership has planted more than 9 million trees. At the time there was a real sense of urgency about the need to tackle the scars on the area's post-industrial landscape. Now looking ahead, there's that same sense of urgency about how more trees can be planted to help tackle the climate crisis.

In the west Cheshire area, more than 2 million trees have been planted over 793 hectares of woodland - that's the same as 1,111 full-sized football pitches. Trees and learning have been brought to nearly half of the primary schools within the borough, connecting children to nature through tree planting and forest schools.

### **Sustainable Palm Oil City Chester Campaign**

As part of the wider Sustainable Palm Oil Challenge campaign spearheaded by Chester Zoo, the City of Chester was announced as the World's first Sustainable Palm Oil City in March 2019. Palm oil, when produced unsustainably, is linked to many negative environmental impacts including deforestation which is a key contributor to climate change. As a result, Chester Zoo's campaign advocates for certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO) which is grown in a way that protects against deforestation.

Sustainable Palm Oil Cities is an innovative behaviour change programme that aims to increase demand for sustainable palm oil one city at a time. A collaboration of more than 50 organisations in Chester from restaurants, cafes and businesses to schools and manufacturers united to help tackle the crisis. These organisations made changes to the products they use in their food procurement, committing to CSPO. Key success stories include Edsential becoming the world's first CSPO schools catering provider, and Chester University working with its national supplier to

commit to CSPO. The success of the project is testament to the community spirit of Chester and shows the need for collaboration and people power in creating a sustainable city model.

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## **9. Waste and Recycling:**

### **9.1 Sector Description, Key Targets:**

Cheshire West and Chester Council is one of England's leading waste and recycling authorities. The area's high performance does not, however, mean that the challenge to decarbonise waste is any less difficult, as many of the 'easy wins' to achieve higher waste and recycling performance have already been delivered locally, such as the implementation of food waste collections. A 1.2 per cent reduction in household waste has been achieved between 2015 to 2018, alongside a 18.4 per cent reduction in non-household waste during the same period.

- The rate of reduction of household waste collection would need to increase from 0.3 per cent per year to around 1.3 per cent per year, in order to achieve the required 8 per cent reduction in household waste by 2025;
- This reduction would need to increase to 25 per cent by 2050. Furthermore, in relation to recycling, currently 58 per cent of waste is recycled, and a 9 per cent increase to achieve 67 per cent by 2025 would be required to be on-track to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

The Council is currently undertaking a strategic review of its waste strategy to provide a 10-year plan for the management of household waste and recycling. The outcomes of the Council's waste strategy review will inform the future shape of our waste collection and recycling services and will be available in spring 2021. The strategy will also align with the Government's National Waste Strategy, which sets out how they will preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy in England. This, combined with bringing the waste collection service back into local authority control from April 2020 rather than being run through a private company, will create exciting opportunities for change. Cheshire West Recycling is run on cooperative principles where residents, businesses and staff have a greater say in the operation of the service, helping to reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

### **9.2 Feedback from the Climate Emergency Taskforce and Residents:**

The Climate Emergency Taskforce discussed Cheshire West and Chester Council's Waste Strategy. The Taskforce discussed the issue of food waste and how recycling rates could be improved. It was discussed that this would be considered and included in the Council's renewed Waste Strategy in Spring 2021. Another issue raised was around school recycling and how this

could be improved. Members also recommended that communications regarding the importance of home composting was shared with residents. The Taskforce also considered the impact of the Environment Bill on the Waste landscape, benefiting from a presentation from the Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP).

Councillors discussed issues around construction waste and what rules or guidance could be put in place for construction firms to factor in recycling and re-purposing before undertaking demolition works. Members also considered packaging standards on plastic. It was discussed that at present, the government approach was to incentivise producers to reduce packaging rather than regulate. The problem is well-recognised in Industry and the UK Plastic Pact is an example of a collaborative approach between businesses, WRAP, non-governmental organisations and Government to work together to tackle this issue.

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen waste collection services affected, including the temporary closing of Household Waste Recycling Centres and the suspension of garden waste collection service. The volumes of household waste collected for disposal has increased significantly during this period due to these changes, and as a result of more people being at home. The overall volumes of household waste and recycling will continue to be monitored to understand the long term impact of COVID-19.

### **9.3 Residents' Recommendations:**

16 responses provide views regarding reducing waste and promoting reuse, repair and recycling. The following key themes are present in multiple submissions:

1. Consideration of the promotion of cloth nappies;
2. The expansion of awareness raising on the impacts of plastic waste, and the adoption of innovative methods of using recycled plastics.
3. Concern regarding the use of incinerators in Waste disposal.
4. Recommendations concerning waste communications, including educating young people on the impacts of waste, promoting a reduction in unnecessary consumption, and conveying the results of recycling, such as the production of energy from waste, and other outputs.

### **9.4 How the Council will play its part:**

## 9.5 Local Action:

1. End avoidable single-use plastics in the Council's operations;
2. Work with Cheshire West Recycling to procure the most efficient and environmentally friendly fleet possible, including exploring purchasing electric or hydrogen vehicles;
3. Review opportunities to use de-commissioned landfill sites to provide renewable energy.

## 9.6 How residents can play their part:

1. Reduce, reuse and recycle: By reducing the amount of waste sent for disposal you can make a massive difference.
2. Reduce your use of single-use plastics,
3. Buy products that use less packaging
4. Reduce your food waste
5. Recycle as much as you can to play your part;
6. Buy local to support local agriculture and reduce transport emissions.

## 9.7 Key Performance Indicators:<sup>18</sup>

Ref	Measure	Measure Type	Baseline	2024 Target
M19	Reduction in household waste	Direct Influence	171195 tonnes	6.7 per cent decrease
M20	Household and non-household waste is sent for reuse, recycling or composting	Direct Influence	58 per cent	65.6 per cent

## 9.8 Key Supporting Documents:

- Cheshire West and Chester Waste Strategy (Spring 2021)

## 9.9 Community Action Case Study

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<sup>18</sup> Accessible description, Waste and Recycling Indicator Table: Measure 19 is Reduction in Household waste. This is a direct measure. The baseline is 171195 tonnes. The 2024 target is a 6.7 per cent decrease. Measure 20 is Household and non-household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting. This is a direct measure. The baseline is 58 per cent. The 2024 target is 65.6 per cent.

## **School meals produced with sustainable palm oil products**

Edsential, a social enterprise that provides west Cheshire and Wirral schools with catering services, became the world's first certified sustainable palm oil catering company in 2019 after being inspired by local school children who were passionate about protecting the natural environment.

The organisation reviewed its whole supply chain in the catering service and started using sustainable palm oil in the five million school meals that they serve each year and were certified by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).

Edsential has also reduced the use of single-use plastics in its food service and has meat-free Fridays each week in the schools it supplies and offers meat free options on their menus every day.

[https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/the-climate-emergency/updates/school-meals-produced-with-sustainable-palm-oil-products.aspx?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/the-climate-emergency/updates/school-meals-produced-with-sustainable-palm-oil-products.aspx?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## 10. Next Steps

This report sets out the scale of the challenge faced in Cheshire West and Chester, the actions we plan to take and the performance indicators that will be used to track our progress. This plan is the product of a considerable amount of engagement, and is intended to be the start, rather than the end, of a process of ongoing co-production with Members, staff, residents and other stakeholders to ensure we can deliver on our goals.

Further work is required to quantify the resourcing requirements for the actions, and this will be undertaken once the actions have been reviewed by the Climate Emergency Taskforce, Cabinet, and their feedback and priorities are reflected in the Plan. There is also a requirement that this plan is aligned with future budget setting priorities.

The next steps for the development of the Climate Emergency Response Plan are:

- Review changes proposed by the Climate Emergency Taskforce and Cabinet and publish the first draft of the Climate Emergency Response Plan.
- Baseline performance targets based on the first year of data-gathering, where required.
- Align the proposals to the Budget process and review in year resourcing reflecting Cabinet's priorities for action.
- Further develop the actions within the sectoral plans, prioritising the delivery of those that do not require additional resourcing and seeking to agree funding sources for those that require resource.
- Engage with and partners, stakeholders, businesses and residents.



## 11. Glossary

**Carbon neutrality:** Carbon Neutrality is a term that is interchangeable with the term 'net zero carbon'. It refers to carbon dioxide emissions being balanced with carbon reduction (offsetting) measures such as tree planting and carbon capture and storage. It is essential that we minimise the need for carbon reduction measures by reducing our emissions as fully as possible. Typically, it is much more expensive to off-set emissions than it is to reduce them, so our efforts are primarily focused on carbon reduction.

**Grandfathering:** A grandfathering approach allocates carbon budgets on the basis of recent emissions data. The most recent annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for Cheshire West and Chester up to the Paris Agreement as of the time of the Tyndall report's production (2011-2016) is averaged and compared to averaged data for the whole UK over the same period. The carbon budget (2020-2100) for Cheshire West and Chester is then apportioned based on Cheshire West and Chester's average proportion of UK CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the 2011-2016 period. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the carbon budget include emissions from fossil combustion within the region and a share of the emissions from national electricity generation (relative to the Cheshire West and Chester area's end-use electricity demand).

**Blue Hydrogen:** Blue hydrogen is produced from natural gas, with carbon capture and storage technology to capture the resulting CO<sub>2</sub>.

**Green Hydrogen:** Green hydrogen is produced by using renewable electricity to split hydrogen from water molecules.

**Enteric Fermentation:** A part of the digestive process in ruminant animals such as cattle, sheep and goats. Microbes in the digestive tract decompose and ferment food, producing methane as a by-product.

**Passivhaus:** Passivhaus (or Passive House) is a voluntary standard for the energy efficiency of a building, which results in low-energy buildings that require little heating and cooling.

**Urban Heat Island:** An urban or metropolitan area that is significantly warmer than its rural surroundings due to human activities. This can be exacerbated by climate change.

## 12. Appendix 1: Industrial Emissions:

### Industrial Emissions Data

Cheshire West and Chester is home to several economically vital mature manufacturing industries of national significance. These industries are mostly energy intensive, and their direct CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are the reason why the borough has such a large emissions footprint. Large energy intensive industries fall within the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS), and so therefore their actual emissions are reported on an annual basis, and allowances for emitting the CO<sub>2</sub> are a traded commodity, with the number of allowances being progressively reduced and hence the cost increasing. The data on actual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for businesses within the EU ETS is published annually. The average for the last 5 years, up to and including 2019, was 3.5 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year from all industrial sites in Cheshire West and Chester registered in EU ETS. These emissions come from 9 large industrial sites in the borough, operated by 7 companies. Whilst the scale of these manufacturing sites mean that these emissions account for by far the majority of industrial emissions in the borough, there are some relatively small additional emissions from smaller businesses which are not included in these figures.

This figure of 3.5 million tonnes per year is substantially higher than the estimate of 2.6 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year from industry and commerce together reported in the Anthesis report, or the figure of 2.1 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year from industrial processes mentioned in section 5.1 of this report. This is due to the way in which BEIS and SCATTER methodologies re-distribute emissions from large industrial installations throughout the country in their analysis. The EU ETS data is a more accurate figure because it is based on real audited emissions from large industrial sites. This means that the total borough emissions of 4 million tonnes per year of CO<sub>2e</sub> mentioned in section 2.2 is a likely to be an under-estimate, but remains an important data-point for the purposes of comparison with other local authorities as this is the only regularly published national data-set that tracks local authority carbon emissions.

Whilst this discrepancy makes it challenging to evaluate the borough's emissions, and draw comparisons based on existing nationally published datasets such as the BEIS local authority carbon dioxide emissions statistics, the conclusions are unchanged. Cheshire West and Chester has very high emissions from within the borough, dominated by those from economically vital energy intensive industries. Existing large-scale decarbonisation plans, subject to Government support and including projects such as HyNet, can mitigate those emissions ahead of the borough Net Zero target date of 2045.