

**Report of the Executive Director Core Services,
and the Executive Director Place,
to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC)
on 1 December 2020**

**Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's (BMBC's) Sustainable Energy Action Plan
(SEAP), Zero Carbon Engagement, Governance and Delivery Proposals**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) of BMBC's Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) (Item 4b) which sets out the Council's ambitions for Zero40 and Zero45 and how it plans to achieve these targets through engagement, the adoption of key principles and partnership working.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In July 2019, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee were presented with a report on energy efficiency and pollution reduction which highlighted the Council's current Energy Strategy 2015-25 and progress towards targets, including wider but linked activity around the themes of affordable warmth, air quality and moving towards a zero carbon borough by 2050.
- 2.2 In September 2019, a report was presented to Cabinet recommending that the Council declare a Climate Emergency; develop a funded five-year Strategic Energy Plan (SEAP); and establish a Feasibility and Enabling Fund to facilitate project development.
- 2.3 As a result, BMBC declared a Climate Emergency and set a target for the Council to be zero carbon in its operations by 2040 and for the borough to be zero carbon by 2045. This was a response to growing concern about an imminent climate crisis, as set out in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report that said the global rise in temperature needed to be contained to 1.5c above pre-industrial levels, and government setting a target of zero carbon by 2050.
- 2.4 A further report to Cabinet in 2020 recommended that these targets be redefined as 'net zero' targets, aligning the Council with government ambitions, meaning that carbon will be reduced as far as possible with any remaining carbon being offset.
- 2.5 The report also set out the approach to developing measures to deliver the Council's net zero carbon initiatives through the Sustainable Energy Action Plan.

3.0 Current Position & The Impact of COVID 19

- 3.1 The Council has already exceeded the previous target to reduce carbon emissions by 30% from the 2012/13 baseline. In fact, it has reduced its carbon emissions by nearly 40%.
- 3.2 Achievements so far:-

- the Council already generates 22% of its total energy consumption via renewables, which is also ahead of the target. This has been done via the use of biomass boilers and solar PV
- 75mgw per hour of electricity is produced from wind power to provide energy across the borough
- over the last four years, 33,000 streetlamp bulbs have been replaced with LED units and reduced carbon emissions permanently by 7,100 tonnes
- Energise Barnsley is the largest authority and community energy rooftop solar PV and battery storage project in the UK. As a result, Energise Barnsley have recently been awarded funding to develop a solar PV scheme to five of the largest schools in the borough
- the Local Plan has ambitious targets around increasing biodiversity and it identifies how housing with reduced carbon emissions can be delivered at scale by developers
- 16 low carbon homes are in the process of being built in the borough
- Berneslai Homes currently support 700 homes with solar PV, nine biomass boilers and eight ground source heating schemes
- less than 3% of the borough's waste is sent to landfill. Black bin waste is reused to generate electricity across the region and even the waste from this process is reused in road construction materials
- over the next couple of months, over 30 electric vehicles will join the Council's fleet
- over 20 miles of active travel routes have been introduced to improve walking and cycling accessibility across the borough
- over the last three years, over 50,000 tonnes of excavated road materials have been used which has stopped it going to landfill and saved new virgin material from being excavated
- the Council will be investing nearly £400,000 in tree planting to offset and increase natural flood defences
- the old coal boilers at the Metrodome are to be replaced with a combined heat and power unit which will save approximately 1,500 tonnes of carbon a year

3.3 Unfortunately, since the Council's Climate Emergency declaration, the COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted the original implementation plan making it difficult to move forward. With a clear Recovery and Renewal Strategy in place at both a Council and City Region level, and services returning to new normalities, recovery in this area can begin alongside the current work to deliver the Council's Barnsley 2030 plans and the work on the Inclusive Economy Strategy.

3.4 Most of the borough's emissions are from three broad areas and the following is a reflection of the current position across these key sectors:-

3.5 **Transportation:** A third of all the borough's carbon emissions are the result of transportation. Lockdown has made people operate in different ways; the number of vehicles on the roads has reduced significantly and the number of people cycling, or walking has increased. This has resulted in lower carbon emissions and has also shown that by reducing vehicle journeys it is possible to reduce pollution, increase physical activity and create a more welcoming urban environment.

3.6 Clearly the gains that have been made are to a large degree the result of lockdown and the prohibition on all but essential travel. The government has made limited funding available during the pandemic to support active travel and this suggests a change of priority that the Council can benefit from in the future.

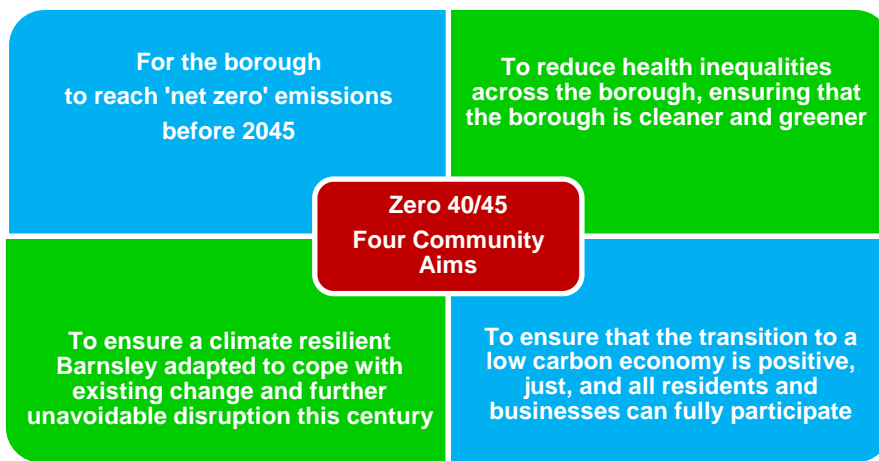
- 3.7 **Residential:** A further third of all emissions are the result of heating and lighting from residential properties. If government are to meet their 2050 net zero carbon target, they know that measures need to be introduced to retrofit existing housing stock. It is likely that significant funding will be made available to support a national programme of domestic refit and Barnsley already has a strong track record of realising opportunities in this area through the Better Homes Barnsley programme.
- 3.8 Recent announcements suggest that this funding will be made available through the North East Yorkshire and the Humber Energy Hub in the form of Local Authority Delivery (LAD). A successful bid for LAD1 (with Doncaster MBC) has been made and we are waiting for details of LAD2. This new funding will offer significant opportunities to Barnsley by providing skilled secure jobs in construction and manufacturing. It has been clearly established that by improving housing conditions, a range of positive benefits can be achieved in relation to health, educational achievement, employment and general wellbeing. Without good quality housing we risk undermining the work being undertaken across the Council to improve the life chances of all our citizens. A task and finish group has recently been instigated to review current best practise in this area.
- 3.9 **Industrial:** Industry is responsible for a further third of the borough's emissions. There will be a role for the Council to assist businesses in developing more sustainable operating models by, for example, the provision of new low carbon district heating and cooling infrastructure, and advice in relation to improved efficiency of buildings and operating processes. This support can be provided by working with national and regional government and through the Council's existing business support mechanisms. The effect of COVID-19 is currently unknown and further work will look at this sector, albeit many cities across the UK are reviewing the need for large industrial assets, particularly in the service sector.

4.0 Sustainable Energy Action Plan

- 4.1 The purpose of the SEAP 2020-2025 (Item 4b) is to set out how the Council will deliver on the commitment made by Cabinet over the next five years.
- 4.2 The SEAP proposes that zero carbon becomes a 'foundation for change' for the Council and makes links to the United Nations' (UN) 17 global goals for sustainable development, pictured below:-



- 4.3 These UN Goals will inform the delivery of four Zero Carbon Community Aims which aim to deliver a healthier and greener borough:-



- 4.4 The Community Aims will be delivered by focusing on projects based on the five themes of energy efficiency; renewable energy; sustainable transport; resource efficiency; and decentralised heating.
- 4.5 In order for the Council's ambitions to be realised, it will need to adopt key principles and acknowledge the scale of the change required.
- 4.6 It is proposed to recruit two new additional Project Officers to the Sustainability and Climate Change Team to support the implementation of the SEAP and work with services to help embed carbon reduction in the culture of the Council. These posts will be funded from the Zero 40 Feasibility resources set aside as part of the 2020/21 budget setting process.
- 4.7 In addition to the above, there may be further costs that need to be considered in order to introduce measures to reduce carbon emissions. These costs will need to be considered in due course as schemes or projects come forward for consideration against other Council priorities.

5.0 Engagement Framework

- 5.1 It is important that the Council engages with all communities across the borough in order that citizens can take an active part in deciding their future. Learning has been taken from the success in using external support to develop the Barnsley 2030 plan and from other cities that have positively engaged around carbon with their residents and businesses.
- 5.2 The consultation approach will include members of the public, Council staff, senior managers and politicians, and communities. Specific programmes will be developed for young people via the Youth Council; colleges of further education and Area Councils. Different approaches will be required for each group and consultation will involve the use of workshops (especially via the Area Councils and their membership), carbon literacy training and the use of the Council's online training application.
- 5.3 Because of the complex nature of achieving carbon reductions the intention is to appoint a suitably experienced organisation or organisations to develop an engagement plan and a carbon reduction 'road map'.

6.0 Governance and Delivery

- 6.1 Carbon reduction is explicit in everything the Council does, so the overriding aim will be to use all existing boards wherever possible to bring focus to achieving the goals and to build on the proposed governance arrangements for Barnsley 2030.
- 6.2 The intention will be to establish two separate bodies to oversee the delivery of the SEAP:-
- the existing Carbon Management Group will report on the Zero 40 programme
 - a Positive Climate Partnership will be formed for the Zero 45 programme and the Council will seek partnership from a range of community, voluntary, statutory and business groups. The Partnership will be supported by, but independent of, the Council
- 6.3 It is anticipated that the emerging Barnsley 2030 Board will act as the main board overseeing the delivery of zero carbon, and also overseeing a number of sub-groups that will address the various carbon reduction, health and inclusive economy themes set out in the SEAP.
- 6.4 Other boards, including the existing Health and Wellbeing Board, will report on various carbon related health issues.
- 6.5 Ownership of the Council's emissions will sit with individual Directorates, commensurate with the control they have over relevant revenue and capital budgets. Overall control and direction sit with the Carbon Management Group. Each Directorate will receive individual greenhouse gas reports linked to the overall reduction target for the Council. It will be the responsibility of the Directorates to determine how to achieve the necessary savings using existing budgets and promoting behavioural change. Where this is not possible the Directorate will look to secure additional funding either internally or from external sources. Where possible carbon emission targets will be achieved by integration into existing schemes rather than by new programmes, it is felt that this will deliver greater value to the Council.
- 6.6 Each carbon 'owner' will be required to assess the carbon impact of future projects to ensure that the premise of 'Do No Harm' is embedded as part of the Council's business as usual approach. The Council's governance structures will be updated to enable this assessment to take place.
- 6.7 In order to drive performance it will be necessary to develop and agree a suite of corporate and operational key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor and measure success. Discussions have already been initiated with the Council's Business Intelligence team to set and agree these KPIs.
- 6.8 To oversee the programmes a restructure of the existing energy team will be required. It is anticipated that this will require additional project management resources. This will be contained within the existing service budget.

7.0 Demonstrating Civic Leadership

- 7.1 In order to demonstrate civic leadership it is proposed that carbon impacts and mitigations are identified and assessed in all cabinet reports. There is a need to improve 'carbon literacy' (the awareness of climate change and the climate impacts of everyday activities) and for carbon to become embedded in all considerations and decisions the Council

makes. Discussions have already commenced with corporate governance to establish how this can be achieved.

- 7.2 To develop carbon literacy skills an assessment of what our current state across the organisation will be undertaken as part of the engagement work. It is anticipated that there will be a 'tool kit' developed thereafter.

8.0 Future Plans & Challenges

- 8.1 The COVID-19 pandemic has had tragic consequences for many of Barnsley's residents and this has challenged people's values. It is important that we engage now with our residents regarding how we reduce carbon in order to produce a better, more sustainable and inclusive future. It will be necessary to identify the links to Barnsley 2030, Inclusive Economy and the Recovery and Renewal Strategy, and link into the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Economic Plan.
- 8.2 It is essential that the Council put in place engagement and governance structures to deliver the carbon reductions that were set by the Council when a Climate Emergency was declared in September 2019. If no action were taken, then the Council would fail to deliver on its commitments and risk adverse impacts in relation to the climate and wider employment and health outcomes.

9.0 Invited Witnesses

- 9.1 The following witnesses have been invited to today's meeting to answer questions from the committee:
- Paul Castle, Service Director, Environment & Transport, Place Directorate, BMBC
 - Richard Burnham, Head of Housing & Energy, Place Directorate, BMBC
 - David Malsom, Group Leader, Housing & Energy, Place Directorate, BMBC
 - Cllr Chris Lamb, Cabinet Spokesperson - Place (Environment and Transportation)

10.0 Possible Areas for Investigation

- What are the immediate priorities for tackling the climate emergency and protecting the borough?
- What is Barnsley already doing that is considered notable and how are you using case studies and evidence-based research to drive changes locally?
- How has COVID and the way that we now live impacted upon on the plans for tackling climate change? Will information and evidence gathered pre-COVID have to be re-evaluated or is it still relevant?
- How is the Council developing economic recovery plans post-COVID, to be in line with carbon targets?
- What assessments have been done to determine how the borough and its residents may be affected by climate change? What are the risks and what is being done to protect the most vulnerable?

- How is the Council ensuring that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to carbon neutral/zero carbon? Other than the Glass Works, can you give an example of when this has been done?
- How do Barnsley's plans link up to those of Sheffield City Region (SCR) and what work could be done with neighbouring authorities to implement joint decarbonisation?
- What is the expectation of community groups and organisations that have had assets transferred to them and what support is available?
- What links have been made with the Youth Council so that young people are involved in the work to achieve targets?
- Which partners has the Council identified who might be able to assist in tackling the climate action agenda? Where are the gaps in existing networks?
- What can be done quickly and what will take more time to achieve? Have these been clearly documented with specific actions that are measurable and have set timescales?
- How well does the Council understand the opportunities associated with, and the scale of, retrofitting existing property and housing stock?
- What is the long-term financial impact for Barnsley customers transferring to British Gas from Robin Hood Energy?
- How do you propose to reduce health inequalities and who are the key players to help you achieve this ambition?
- Has the Council been able to take advantage of the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund or any other funding streams that may be available?
- What can members do to support the work to achieve the Zero40 and Zero45 targets?

11.0 Background Papers and Useful Links

Energy Efficiency and Pollution Reduction Report to OSC, 16 July 2019 :-
<https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s55650/Item%20a%20-%20Energy%20Efficiency%20and%20Pollution%20Reduction%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

BMBC Developing a Zero Carbon Strategy for the Council and the Brough and Declaration of Climate Emergency Report to Cabinet (Cab.18.9.2019/9):-
<https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s57611/ZERO%2040.pdf>

BMBC Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) – Zero Carbon Engagement, Governance and Delivery Proposals Report to Cabinet (7.10.2020/8) :-
<https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s71033/Barnsleys%20Sustainable%20Energy%20Action%20Plan%202020%20-%202025.pdf>

BMBC Energy Strategy:-
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/15635/bmbcenergystrategy.pdf>

BMBC Recovery & Renewal Strategy:-

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/covid-19-coronavirus/covid-19-recovery-plan-for-barnsley/>

BMBC Barnsley 2030:-

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/our-council/barnsley-2030/>

Better Homes Yorkshire/Barnsley:-

<https://www.betterhomesyorkshire.co.uk/help-to-heat-homes>

BMBC Website – Make Your Home Warmer & Cheaper to Run:-

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/housing/energy-at-home/make-your-home-warmer-and-cheaper-to-run/>

Energise Barnsley Website:-

<http://www.energisebarnsley.co.uk/>

Sheffield City Region Energy Strategy:-

<https://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SCR-Energy-Strategy.pdf>

12.0 Glossary

BMBC	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
HUG	Housing Upgrade Grant
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
NZ	Net Zero
OSC	Overview & Scrutiny
SCR	Sheffield City Region
SEAP	Sustainable Energy Action Plan
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
UN	United Nations

13.0 Officer Contact

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