

REPORT TO EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE - 18 MARCH 2021

CARBON BUDGET SIX-MONTHLY UPDATE

1 Reason for Report/Summary

- 1.1 The report presents the Education and Children's Services Carbon Budget six-monthly update. This update is required to be brought to both the Education and Children's Services Committee and Sustainability Committee following the decision of Aberdeenshire Council on [18 March 2020](#), Item 10, Carbon Budget 2020-21.

2 Recommendations

The Education and Children's services Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 **Consider and comment on the Education and Children's Services Carbon Budget six-monthly update, as attached in Appendix 1 and the development of the Education and Children's Services Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.**
- 2.2 **Determine any further actions required by the Director of Education and Children's Services with regard to the Education and Children's Services Carbon Budget**
- 2.3 **Note the ongoing responsibility of each Director to secure their reduction targets as set out in the Carbon Budget, and to report progress at six-monthly to the relevant Policy Committees and to the Sustainability Committee.**

3 Purpose and Decision-Making Route

- 3.1 All Directors are required to submit Carbon Budget six-monthly updates to their relevant Policy Committees and additionally to the Sustainability Committee following the decision of Aberdeenshire Council on [18 March 2020](#), Item 10, Carbon Budget 2020-21.

4 Discussion

- 4.1 The Carbon Budget was set at the meeting of Aberdeenshire Council on 4 March 2021. For Education and Children's Services the target for carbon reduction for 2020/21 was set at 570 tCO₂e, the Council's overall target is 5000. At the same meeting each Service was instructed to develop a Carbon Reduction Plan-setting out how their Directorate will reach 75% emissions reduction by 2030 and Net Zero by 2045-and present this to their relevant Policy Committee by 31 October 2021.

- 4.2 The projects already identified in 2020/21 have not progressed as planned due to the Covid-19 pandemic and this has led to a shortfall in the expected carbon reduction.
- 4.3 Appendix 1 highlights proposed projects that have been identified for progression during 2021-22 in LLA and Education. Considerable work is required to progress these carbon reduction solutions during the Covid-19 pandemic. During the course of the year further savings will be identified on completion of the work surrounding the development of an ECS Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy and a short-, medium- and long-term action plan.
- 4.4 Work is starting in Education and Children's Services on a Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. The Service recognises that we have an impact on the environment and is working to reduce its impact locally and globally through responsible waste, energy and water management. As part of our commitment to safeguarding the local environment we will develop an approach to protect our natural surroundings and work collaboratively with Landscape Services, Green Space Officers and local communities to increase and protect the biodiversity on the sites where we are custodians.
- 4.5 Work will also start with colleagues in other Services who record carbon budget savings in the areas of energy supply and consumption, building insulation, and waste reduction in their own reporting to enable ECS officers to highlight the savings achieved on ECS sites in this reporting to Elected Members to show the work being undertaken collaboratively with staff, pupils and facility users to support the adjustment of behaviours to reflect an increased awareness and commitment to reduce the use of energy and the production of waste. There is a commitment in ECS to work in collaboration with colleagues across the authority to replace existing lighting with LED lights; install heat recovery systems to swimming pool areas, continue the work of installing AV panels as an energy source, improve the insulation of facilities to conserve heating and replace older windows.
- 4.6 One key element of the carbon reduction strategy is the development and implementation of a Sustainability Policy for Schools which will be developed with pupils and staff from schools with the support of elected members and colleagues from across the Authority. Work is being undertaken for a new land management regime to be established and surveying all school sites is starting to support discussions with school staff and pupils to identify areas for utility cutting for sports and play, biodiversity areas and re-wilding areas to form carbon sinks.
- 4.7 Support is being offered by colleagues in Landscape Services to allow schools to develop areas for food growing, orchard planting and polytunnels. Schools will be surveyed shortly to establish school requirements for the development of sites.
- 4.8 The Sustainability in Schools Policy will include developing strategies for energy budget management in school, food recycling in all school areas,

general waste recycling, reduction in the volume of paper used (schools consume approximately 75% of all paper utilised within the council), litter management, use of sustainable resources, green space management and pupil projects in this area. ECO Schools will be included in the policy and work undertaken to promote this in schools further. There is already excellent work being undertaken by individual schools and existing good practice will be included in the development of the policy. This will require a mixture of process change but equally and possibly more importantly cultural change.

- 4.9 An ECS Sustainability and Climate Change Team has been established with staff from across the Directorate working together to develop the strategy factoring their own areas of operation to support all colleagues with their understanding of the impact of climate change and the measures needed to develop solutions to reducing the carbon budget. Pupils are important members of the school community and the Directorate recognises that climate change will have a considerable impact on all aspects of their lives. Pupil groups will also be consulted and their views will be a valuable inclusion in the strategy and the school policy. Training has been undertaken with the Scottish Government funded Royal Sottish Geographical Society Climate Solutions course to support this area of work.
- 4.10 Various specific projects have been identified towards achieving goal for carbon reduction, for example, replacing current ovens in schools with more energy efficient ovens instead of options for 'a like for like' basis, and sustainable grounds maintenance for schools taking into account the need for the protection of the biodiversity of sites. Live Life Aberdeenshire also have a number of projects planned for the year ahead, for example the reduction in the number of printer cartridges and changes to LED lighting in some facilities. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on this and all the other projects. It is hoped to progress with them as soon as is possible. The priority is to first establish a comprehensive strategy that will detail the Directorate's short, medium and long term plan for ensure sustainable practices become eventually embedded in the day to day work of the Service.
- 4.11 The Directorate is now part of the Climate Change Aberdeenshire and will be working with colleagues from across the Authority and with partner organisations to support the work to reduce carbon emissions. Work in the future will include contributing to the development of the Council's Environmental Change Policy, Climate Change declaration, Resources and Circular Economy Commitment and other sustainability related policies and strategies.
- 4.12 We have previously reported on the successful introduction of food waste collection in all schools. Monitoring and data collection will be started as soon as this is possible as Covid-19 has delayed work in this area to record the types of bins used and waste collected.

Previously identified projects as below with progress delayed to be made due to Covid-19, resource and expertise:

1. Replace current ovens with more energy efficient ovens instead of like for like and replacement of Steam ovens with Combination ovens.
2. Replace sterilising sinks with dishwashers.

For these areas energy savings would be made and data on usage collated.

5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 This report supports the embedding of the key principle of ‘climate and sustainability’ in the new Strategic Priorities of Aberdeenshire Council.
- 5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

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

- 5.3 The financial and staffing implications of meeting Carbon Budget targets are potentially significant but will need to be addressed on an individual action or project basis. Implications will need to be identified for the organisation as a whole so that they can inform the Council’s Medium-Term Financial Strategy to ensure affordability and also across the Council’s corporate and informed approach.
- 5.4 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the Carbon Budget process and no detrimental impact has been identified.
- 5.5 A Town Centre Impact Assessment has not been completed as part of the Carbon Budget process as no direct impacts on Town Centres have been identified, however further developments and projects will need to be assessed for potential impact on Town Centres.
- 5.6 Specific risks in setting the Carbon Budget have been identified as part of the Carbon Budget process. The following Risks have been identified as relevant to the Carbon Budget on a Corporate Level:
 - Risk ID ACORP010 as it relates to environmental challenges and Risk ID ACORP006 as it relates to reputation management within the Corporate Risk Register.

The following Risks have been identified as relevant to the Carbon Budget on a Strategic Level:

- Risk ID ISSR004 as it relates to Climate Change in the Directorate Risk Registers.

6 Scheme of Governance

- 6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 6.2 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section E.1.1 and E.6.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the scrutiny of the implementation of the Carbon Budget for services within the remit of the Committee.

Laurence Findlay Director of Education and Children's Services

Report prepared by Karen Tucker, Team Manager and Ian Stephen, Project Officer,
Education and Children's Services
Date 11 February 2021

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Education and Children's Services Carbon Budget six-monthly update

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Summary of Carbon Budget Monitoring 2021/22	EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES								
	Base Budget	May-21 Forecast	Aug-21 Forecast	Nov-21 Forecast	Feb-22 Forecast	Forecast Savings			Comments
	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	Better than Budget	Worse than Budget	Net Variance	
	tCO2e	tCO2e	tCO2e	tCO2e	tCO2e	tCO2e	tCO2e	tCO2e	
Education and Children's Services									
Princh-print from home	TBC	TBC	TBC						Users will be able to print to library printers (and subsequently all LLA facilities) from home. This is expected to reduce the number of home printers and cartridges for the occasional printing that people might have. Payment will be online.
Library Return Bins	TBC	TBC	TBC						Library Service is installing return bins in some localities where there is not a library provision. This will allow residents to return resources without using their car to drive to the nearest library.
Lockers/smallest library	TBC	TBC	TBC						Library Service to install digital library lockers in some localities. This will provide customers with an easy return and pick-up point for their reserved items. Due to an improvement in the Library Management Systems for external connectivity these items may be replaced in other services such as supermarkets and

									train stations, allowing for more interaction during a journey for another reason.
Digital services?	60	60	20						Following the success of digital services during COVID-19 pandemic the Library Service will continue to improve and increase access to all our digital services. This reduces the need for travel.
General waste reduction and increased recycling on school sites	TBC	TBC	TBC						ECS is committed to work with colleagues in Waste Management to reduce the waste for general collection and increase recycling. Covid-19 has impacted on the amount of general waste due to additional cleaning and this work will determine the Service's ability to reduce general waste.
Joint approach with energy team for management of energy usage	TBC	TBC	TBC						ECS is committed to develop practices to review energy use and start working on behavioural change in conjunction with the Energy Team who are able to support with the provision of usage data.
Commitment to start incorporating 'circular economy' principles in procurement as part of strategy	TBC	TBC	TBC						ECS is committed to start incorporating the consideration of sustainability in procurement. The Catering Team has undertaken this commitment in procurements added to the Procurement Plan 2021/2 for the purchase of fruit, vegetables and frozen foods. The carbon budget reduction will be investigated once the procurement is in place.