

**Carbon Neutral Northampton 2030**

**Carbon Neutral Strategy**

**November 2020**

## Contents

1. Vision 2030 ..... page 3
2. Strategy ..... page 5
3. Targets and Action Plan ..... page 10

## **Vision 2030**

Northampton has become a zero carbon, zero waste and climate resilient town, playing its part in limiting the impacts of climate change, both locally and globally, where residents, businesses and partners all benefit from the improved environment.

## **Objectives**

### Zero carbon

Establish a net zero emission economy focusing on;

- Transport
- Buildings
- Waste
- Energy
- Procurement
- Green infrastructure

### Sustainable economy and jobs

- Encourage low carbon businesses to invest and grow in the Borough
- Work with existing businesses and employers to improve their environmental performance
- Develop resident's low carbon awareness and skills to be able to secure local jobs
- Encourage innovative and inclusive local growth

### Healthy Communities

- Promote improving the energy performance of existing homes and properties to reduce fuel poverty and promote healthy living environments
- Promote local food production
- Encourage biodiversity
- Improve air quality
- Maximise the green infrastructure network to increase the number of ecosystem services being offered to residents
- Make changes to the transport network based on sustainable transport modes

### Resilience

- Adapt to minimise the impacts of climate change already happening, including flooding and heatwaves
- Improve water management
- Maximise high levels of renewable local green energy production, supply and storage
- Use land to capture and store carbon
- Improve building standards

### Climate positive

- Embed climate positive thinking in all Council decision-making and encourage others to do the same
- Promote education and engagement with all partners, residents and businesses
- Use the Councils spatial planning role to promote sustainable development, minimise the need to travel, and to support sustainable communities
- Maximise the use of digital technologies and data

### **Governance**

The Council will work with a range of public and private sector partners, including organisations from;

CNN 2030 Forum

Health sector

Education sector

Business and industry

Whilst the Borough Council is keen to start this work immediately, the objectives and following actions have been drafted to also recognise Local Government Reorganisation and therefore could be applied across West Northamptonshire.

## **Strategy**

### Background

At its meeting on 3rd June 2019, Northampton Borough Council agreed two Motions to declare a Climate Emergency

#### *First motion:*

'This council recognises the strength of public opinion recently expressed in London and Northampton to address the issue of climate change and the need to address carbon reduction to protect the health and wellbeing of future generations. The council also notes that the UK parliament has declared a Climate Emergency.

The Council therefore declares "a Climate Emergency" in Northampton and commits to a target of making Northampton carbon neutral by 2030.

The Council Requests a report to be submitted to the council in 12 months' time and updated in January 2021 setting out the action that has been taken in respect to this motion and detailing how progressing this objective has been communicated to and integrated within the start up plans of the West Northamptonshire Unitary Council.'

#### *Second motion:*

'All parties within this council acknowledge the urgency of dealing with climate change. We need cross party agreement to develop strategies for a greener, more sustainable society in Northampton. A green revolution is required.

Working with partners we will seek to implement the following actions, which we strongly believe will benefit Northampton in leading an eco-friendly Britain:

- A ban on single-use plastics within school environments. Schools across Northampton produce a huge amount of plastic waste each week.
- Northampton schools would benefit from educating their students on eco issues through school schemes, where programs could be set up in order to teach students how to stay green in lessons, such as Personal, Social, Health and Economic education or by holding educational assemblies with influential speakers.
- To help further reduce the damaging effects of plastic littering, the council should support and work closely with schemes operated by companies like TerraCycle who turn many unrecyclable plastics (such as crisp packets and wrappers) into outdoor furniture.
- To explore with Local businesses and partners options for an eco-rewards scheme that would allow individuals and groups to gain something back from recycling.
- Northampton Borough Council to commit to reducing carbon emissions, both as an organisation and as the local planning authority and resolve to go further than the UK100 Agreement. To act in line with the scientific consensus that we must reduce emissions to net-zero carbon by 2030, thus use the planning process to encourage developers to consider low carbon developments.

Joining many councils who have already done the same, NBC declares “a Climate Emergency” in Northampton and commits to a target, in line with the above actions, of making Northampton carbon neutral by 2030.

The Council requests a production of a baseline report to be submitted to the council in the beginning of 2020 setting out the action that has been taken in respect to this motion. This Council also resolves to work with other local authorities ahead of Unitary to use the baseline report as the basis on which to develop an action plan which could be adopted by the new Council.’

### Approach

The Council proposes to adopt the Carbon Trust model for Local Authorities declaring a Climate Emergency. This suggests breaking down activity as follows;

1. **Scoping** – will the scope focus on organisational or community sale emissions?
2. **Carbon Baseline** – what are current emissions and what are the hotpots?
3. **Target Setting** – what is a credible and robust target?
4. **Decarbonisation Pathways** – what are the different pathways which be adopted to meet the target?
5. **Action Plan** – what actions will be taken and how?
6. **Monitoring and evaluation** – how should progress be monitored and reported?

#### 1. **Scope**

In light of the motions, this Carbon Neutral Northampton 2030 Strategy (CNN 2030) covers the operations of Northampton Borough Council activities, and activities resulting in Northampton’s community carbon emissions as a whole.

#### 2. **Carbon Baseline**

It is proposed to include the following **organisational** emissions within the baseline;

Scope 1	Owned transport
	Fuel use
	Process emissions
Scope 2	Purchased electricity
Scope 3	Purchased goods
	Operational waste
	Business travel
	Capital goods purchased
	Employee commute

The following **community** emissions will be included within the baseline;

Scope 1	Land use Stationary fuel consumptions In-boundary transportation In boundary waste and wastewater
Scope 2	Grid supplied electricity

Scope 1, 2 and 3 are defined in the Greenhouse Gas Protocol as follows;

Scope 1 – direct emissions which can be controlled by the organisation

Scope 2 – indirect emissions used by the organisation, for example during energy production

Scope 3 – all other indirect emissions.

The Council will undertake a detailed carbon baseline audit based on the above.

### 3. Target Setting

The Council motions have established that the target is for the **Borough to be carbon neutral by 2030**. This is considered as being net carbon neutral in the CNN 2030 Vision.

Specific targets are set out in the Action Plan below.

### 4. Decarbonisation Pathways

These will, based on the outcome of the Carbon audit, identify which emissions should be targeted and how this will impact on reductions over the 2020-2030 period. It will also need to include estimates of the impact of changes likely to take place beyond the Councils control. These might include;

- Earlier take up of electric vehicles
- Large scale improvements in domestic energy efficiency
- Increases in renewable energy generation

### 5. Action Plan

The CNN 2030 Strategy will set out actions under the following headings;

- Influence
- Transport
- Buildings
- Waste
- Energy
- Procurement
- Green and Blue infrastructure

## 6. Monitoring and evaluation

This will include;

- Regular progress updates
- Performance monitoring against agreed targets
- Produce an annual monitoring report
- Embed carbon neutral thinking into all decision making
- Capture lessons learnt and apply these

### Operational arrangements

#### Governance

The development of the CNN 2030 Vision, Strategy, and Action Plan, their implementation and monitoring performance agreed targets will be the responsibility of the Portfolio Holder , in conjunction with the Energy Forum which was established in June 2019. This forum will be chaired by the Councils Energy Champion.

The Strategy and subsequent targets will be agreed by the Borough Council Cabinet, who will also oversee performance against these.

#### Partnership arrangements

Whilst the Council can review its own activities and policies to reduce its carbon footprint, there is clearly a wider role to encourage the Borough as a whole to do the same. To deliver this, the Council will need to work with a wide range of partners to establish a town wide carbon neutral agenda.

These partners will include the below and the Council will need to ensure that all connect with existing local networks, including working in conjunction with the Countywide Climate Change Officers Group -

- Employers
- Major landowners, including NCC, Homes England
- Housing providers, including NPH
- Transport organisations, including bus service operators
- Education providers including UoN, Academies
- Health providers including NHS England, Public Health England, CCTs
- Sports and Leisure providers, including NLP
- Local interest groups
- Town and Parish Councils
- Energy providers

## *References*

Carbon Trust, A Framework for Climate Emergency Action, 2019

FoE, 33 actions local authorities can take on climate change, 2019

Greenhouse Gas protocol, 2019

## Action Plan and Targets

### Influence

- Target 1            The Council will expressly consider the carbon implications of all its decisions
- Action 1.1        By March 2021, every Council Full Council, Cabinet, Committee and delegated report will contain an Environmental Implications section, highlighting the carbon implications of the recommendation and alternatives considered, and, where possible, the potential emission savings resulting from these.
- 
- Target 2            The Council will engage with all partners to promote Carbon awareness, empower individual and group actions, develop partnerships and identify the most effective ways to support partners with climate change actions
- Action 2.1        The Council will establish a Northampton Climate Change Forum, including all major employers, landowners, public and private sector bodies to promote CNN decision making and agree priority areas for joint action
- Action 2.2        By June 2021, the Council will host a West Northamptonshire Carbon Neutral Conference to engage with partners, share information and ideas, and agree specific actions
- 
- Target 3            The Council will develop a Northampton CNN 2030 Hub and Communications Plan
- Action 3.1        By April 2021, the Council will set up a CNN 2023 website, signposting residents and businesses to Climate Change information to help inform sustainable choices.
- Action 3.2        By April 2021, the Council will establish a Communications programme to promote sustainable choices and highlight opportunities to bid for funding.
- 
- Target 4            The Council will become a net zero carbon operation by 2030, or earlier if possible
- Action 4.1        By April 2021, the Council will commission and collate, in conjunction with partner public and private sector organisations, energy audits at all of its buildings, in order to agree actions to reduce energy use and increase efficiency.
- Action 4.2        By April 2021, the Council will commission and collate, in conjunction with partner public and private sector organisations, energy audits of its own fleet, in order to agree actions to reduce energy use and increase efficiency.
- Action 4.3        By April 2021, the Council will commission and collate, in conjunction with partner public and private sector organisations, audits of its procurement policies, in order to agree actions to include climate change considerations to use its purchasing power to reduce direct and indirect energy use and increase efficiency.

## **Transport**

- Target 5 The Council will work to reduce transport emissions through reducing the need to travel, particularly by car; increase active travel; improve the quality, accessibility and frequency of public transport; promote high quality infrastructure; promote the shift to LEV and ULEVs.
- Action 5.1 Work with partners and businesses to develop a Local Transport Plan and Strategic plan to reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable transport, including promoting the use of digital technologies where possible
- Action 5.2 Work with partners and businesses to develop a strategy to development a high quality cycling and walking network
- Action 5.3 Work with public transport operators and large local employers to promote sustainable transport alternatives
- Action 5.4 Work with partners to expand the electric vehicle charging network, including within car parks, and using Planning policies to require new development to provide charging points
- Action 5.5 Agree ongoing emissions targets for public transport operators, including buses and private hire vehicles

## **Buildings**

- Target 6 The Council will encourage all new buildings to be net carbon neutral by 2026, promote low carbon and renewable heating sources, work with businesses and residents to reduce energy demand in existing buildings, and require the minimisation of emissions from construction.
- Action 6.1 Use emerging Planning Policy to set emissions and energy use targets for new buildings by 2024
- Action 6.2 Undertake heat mapping exercises for ground, water, air, waste heat and other sources for low carbon heating by 2022
- Action 6.3 Identify vulnerable properties, and promote the benefits and funding available to improve insulation for domestic properties at risk of fuel poverty, including working with Social Landlords.
- Action 6.4 Promote the use of low cost technologies, such as LED lighting and water demand and usage reduction measures, across the Council estate (including streetlighting), and in domestic and commercial properties
- Action 6.5 Through the use of Planning policies, require new developments to calculate their carbon impact by the use of Embodied Carbon in Construction calculations, and whole -life costing in design and procurement processes as part of planning applications.

## **Waste**

- Target 7 The Council will reduce the total volume of waste generated, through encouraging recycling, reuse and energy generation, and promoting improved waste management
- Action 7.1 Promote behavioural change initiatives and information campaigns
- Action 7.2 By April 2022, the Council estate will be single use plastics free
- Action 7.3 By April 2022, investigate the potential for collecting and using food waste for the generation of energy by anaerobic digestion

### **Energy**

- Target 8 The Council will only use green electricity and gas by April 2022, and will promote the development of low carbon local energy generation and storage
- Action 8.1 By April 2022, review all of the Council property and estate portfolio to understand the potential for further on-site PV and wind energy generation
- Action 8.2 Work with local energy providers to understand the potential for the use of low carbon hydrogen gas in the distribution network
- Action 8.3 Work with partners to investigate the potential for developing a District heat Network scheme, and neighbourhood district heating schemes, including bidding for funding to develop these
- Action 8.4 Work with SEMLEP and business partners to identify opportunities to promote local energy storage, including the possibility of using Council land to promote this
- Action 8.5 Work with SEMLEP and business partners to identify opportunities to promote investment in local low carbon industries, including allocating land for new energy generating technologies and low carbon development
- Action 8.6 Work with businesses and education providers to ensure that students develop low carbon skills to enable them to be able to secure employment in emerging technologies and businesses

### **Procurement**

- Target 9 By April 2022, the Council will review its procurement policies to ensure that climate change, energy use and sustainability are given consideration in the procurement process, and encourage other public and commercial partners to do the same to promote local sustainable suppliers and maximise the carbon benefits of doing so
- Action 9.1 refer to Action 4.3

### **Green and Blue infrastructure**

- Target 10 The Council will identify opportunities to promote and enhance existing and new green infrastructure and habitats; encourage increases in woodland cover in

sustainable locations and encourage sustainable management of existing woodland; require new developments to mitigate for any loss of habitats or green infrastructure; promote green infrastructure in urban areas, including promoting planting to encourage flora and fauna diversity

- Action 10.1 By June 2023, the Council will undertake a review of its green and blue infrastructure, including opportunities to improve the quality of these
- Action 10.2 Use emerging Planning Policy to set green and blue infrastructure targets for new developments by 2024, including promoting green roofs, green walls, and sustainable urban drainage systems
- Action 10.3 Promote sustainable tree planting on suitable sites, and work with land owners, developers and partners to secure funding to support this
- Action 10.4 Use emerging planning policies to ensure that new development manages its impact in terms of reducing flooding, both as a result of new growth and through adaptations to respond to changes in weather patterns already happening