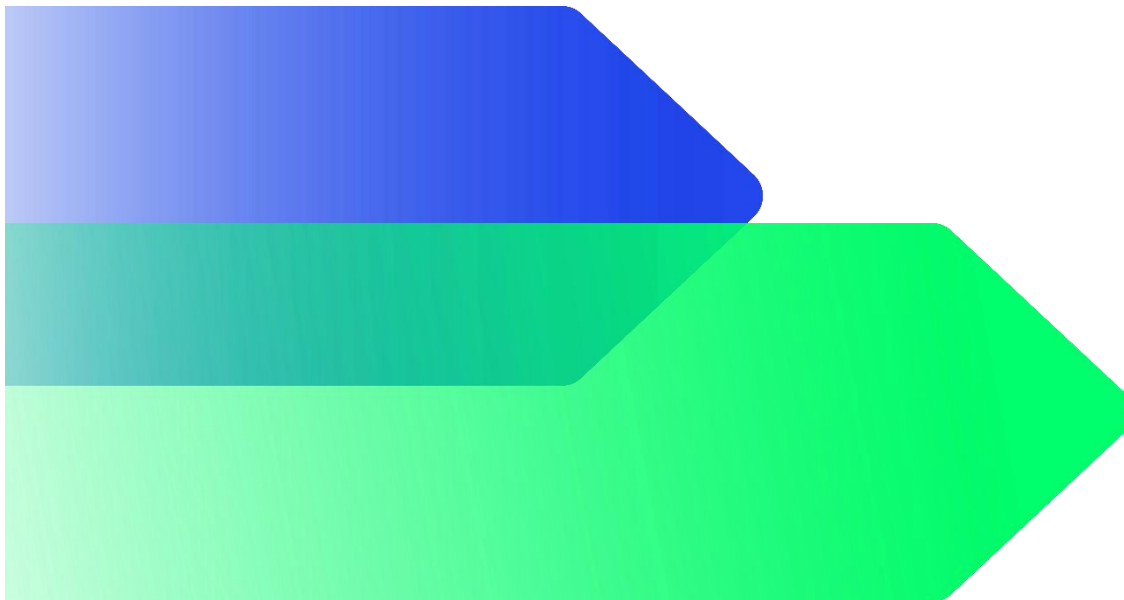# 2030 NET ZERO STRATEGY: PROGRESS REVIEW BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

v.01 (draft)

March 2025

THE CARBON TRUST

Our mission is to accelerate the move to a decarbonised future.

We have been climate pioneers for more than 20 years, partnering with leading businesses, governments and financial institutions globally. From strategic planning and target setting to activation and communication - we are your expert guide to turn your climate ambition into impact.

We are one global network of 400 experts with offices in the UK, the Netherlands, South Africa, China, Singapore and Mexico. To date, we have helped set 200+ science-based targets and guided 3,000+ organisations in 70 countries on their route to Net Zero.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

This report assesses progress against Bridgend County Borough Council's ('BCBC' / 'the Council') 2030 Net Zero Strategy and provides insights to inform the next implementation phase. The Carbon Trust has produced this report following in-depth engagement with key Council stakeholders and an objective review of documentation and data related to progress against BCBC's Net Zero strategy. A full list of the reviewed documents and stakeholders engaged is provided in Appendix X. BCBC should use the contents of this report and accompanying outputs to revise its Net Zero strategy as appropriate.

The first chapter of this report outlines the current policy landscape, including key Welsh Government policies and legislation relevant to BCBC's Net Zero Strategy. It sets the context for the review by summarising progress against BCBC's own corporate policies and decarbonisation initiatives, and presents BCBC's latest carbon footprint in relation to the 2019/20 baseline footprint.

The second chapter evaluates the governance of BCBC's Net Zero Strategy, informed by interviews with the six Carbon Leads and feedback from a presentation the Decarbonisation Programme Board. This section reviews the structures, processes, and leadership mechanisms in place to drive progress and identifies areas for improvement in strategy coordination and accountability.

The third chapter evaluates BCBC's progress in implementing its 2030 Net Zero Strategy, assessing actions taken across the six main activity streams: Carbon Management, Buildings, Transport, Land Use, Waste and Procurement. The review assesses project progress since 2021 and outlines developments, plans, successes and challenges.

The fourth chapter outlines the emission and cost modelling for the recommended actions. The chapter provides an update to BCBC's emission model and projections, assesses the 'gap to target' for 2030 goals, estimates project costs and appraises potential offsetting options.

A qualitative score (1–5) was assigned to each action identified within each activity stream. The scoring methodology is detailed in Appendix X.

1.1 DRIVERS FOR DECARBONISATION

WALES AND WELSH GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

Wales has been at the forefront of environmental, social and governance improvements, accounting for the impact climate change will have on future generations and enshrining in law mitigation and adaptation measures to reduce the worst consequences of global heating.

The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015, requires public bodies listed in the Act to work together to improve the "social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales." The world-leading Act sets out seven well-being goals addressing challenges including climate change, to ensure that future generations have a good quality of life.

The Environment (Wales) Act, 2016, promotes the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales, balancing the competing priorities of building the necessary infrastructure and protecting vital ecosystems. The Act requires Welsh Ministers to set decarbonisation targets and carbon budgets – an essential first step in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The revision to the Act (Amendment of 2050 Emissions Target) Regulations 2021, sets the target for Wales to achieve Net Zero by 2050.

In 2019, Welsh Ministers and the Senedd **declared a climate emergency**, reaffirming Wales' commitment and determination to tackle the climate crisis. Subsequently, the Welsh Government published it's Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales– a plan which sets out what Welsh Government are already doing and what they will do in the future to respond to the changing climate.

constraints. A review of the approach to the 2030 target is expected next year, which may lead to further strategic adjustments.

To achieve Net Zero by 2050, a series of 5-year carbon budgets between 2016 and 2050 have been agreed by the Welsh Government in **Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2**, published in 2021. This outlines 123 policies and proposals to meet the second of these carbon budgets (2021-2025), by reducing emissions by 37% against the baseline.

Net Zero Wales also has the ambition for the public sector to achieve Net Zero by 2030. In line with this commitment, the Welsh Government Net Zero Strategic Plan (2022) sets the approach for their own operational and supply chain emissions. Current modelling shows a gap between ambition and delivery .

Welsh Ministers have the ambition for public bodies and community enterprises in Wales to develop over 100MW of new renewable capacity by 2026. They also have the aim for 1.5GW of electricity generated in Wales to be locally owned by 2035.

REVIEWING THE 2030 NET ZERO TARGET FOR THE WELSH PUBLIC SECTOR

The feasibility of the 2030 Net Zero ambition for the Welsh public sector is increasingly under discussion. While Welsh Government has not formally revised the target, there is recognition that significant challenges exist, particularly for local authorities facing financial, operational, and policy

The Welsh Government Energy Service worked alongside Welsh Government in 2022 to develop its own plan for achieving Net Zero as an

organisation, set out in the Welsh Government's Net Zero Strategic Plan. As part of this process, the Welsh Government aligned itself with the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) standard, adopting a minimum 90% reduction target by 2030 (on total emissions) relative to its 2019/20 baseline. Although SBTi was originally designed for private sector organisations, it was chosen not only due to the absence of a dedicated public sector Net Zero standard, but also because it ensures alignment with climate science, providing a robust, evidence-based approach to emissions reduction. Under this framework, the Welsh Government will prioritise reducing emissions as much as possible before considering offsetting any remaining residual emissions.

However, there is currently no firm decision on whether this approach will be extended across the wider public sector, creating some uncertainty for local authorities regarding alignment. Additionally, new Net Zero standards and reporting frameworks are emerging, suggesting that further policy developments could influence how the 2030 target is implemented.

Given these uncertainties, local authorities are advised to maintain their current course, continue implementing feasible decarbonisation measures, remain flexible and closely track evolving policy developments to ensure alignment with future strategic adjustments.

1.2 BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL PROGRESS

BRIDGEND CORPORATE POLICIES

Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) declared a climate emergency in June 2020 and set up a Climate Emergency Response programme. This has a commitment to achieve Net Zero carbon emissions by 2030 across its operations, aligning with Welsh public sector ambitions. This goal is driven by the Well-being of Future Generations Act, the Environment Act, and the Climate Change Regulations (Carbon Budgets). Additionally, the Prosperity for All strategies and the 2021-2026 programme for government steer this work. BCBC follows the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Reporting Process for its annual carbon footprint. Recognising its leadershop role, BCBC aims to enable broader Net Zero goals for local businesses and communities. Decarbonisation is a priority in BCBC's Corporate Plan. Climate change is integrated into decision-making through Bridgend's Public Services Board Wellbeing Plan.

In 2021, BCBC, in collaboration with the Carbon Trust, developed its Net Zero Carbon Strategy, which was formally adopted by the Cabinet in January 2023. The strategy outlines six priority action plans covering carbon management, buildings, transport, procurement, land use and waste, alongside governance arrangements to support delivery.

Recognising the need for continuous improvement, BCBC committed to reviewing the strategy in 2024 and 2027 to account for policy changes, technological advancements and market developments. This report forms part of the 2024 review, assessing progress against the strategy's objectives, updating emissions modelling, and refining action plans to ensure they remain aligned with Welsh and UK policy while supporting the council's 2030 Net Zero target.

BRIDGEND RECENT PROGRESS

Since declaring a climate emergency in 2020 and developing the 2030 Net Zero Carbon Strategy in 2021, Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has made progress in reducing carbon emissions across its operations and supporting the county's transition to Net Zero. Over the past three years, BCBC has delivered decarbonisation projects amounting to , addressing key areas such as buildings, transport, procurement, and land use.

A summary of recent and active schemes progressing decarbonisation across the themes of buildings, transport, land use, and procurement is shown in the table below.

Transport	Buildings	Land Use	Procurement
LED street lighting	Re:fit Cymru –retrofit programme	Coastal protection scheme	Regional procurement networks
Porthcawl - new bus terminus	Bridgend District Heat Network	Extending area of Local Nature Reserves	Green energy tariffs
Civic Centre – 8 charging points	Bryncethin Depot - PV, LED & battery storage	Feasibility – land-based renewables	Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy
ULEV infrastructure	Roof mount solar PV – multi-site	Tree planting – i-Tree eco study	
Active travel provision	21st Century Schools Programme	Local Development Plan update	
	Re:Fit		
	Low Carbon Heat Grant - round 2		

A detailed assessment of all action areas outlined in the strategy will be conducted in the next chapter, evaluating progress, identifying gaps, and determining where further acceleration or adjustments are needed.

While these achievements mark important steps forward, the carbon footprint data in the next section demonstrates that much more remains to be done to meet the 2030 Net Zero target. The scale and pace of transformation required demand sustained effort, increased investment, and continuous adaptation. Challenges such as financial constraints, technological advancements, and evolving policy landscapes mean that continuous refinement of actions is necessary to stay on course.

1.3 CARBON FOOTPRINT AND BASELINE

BASELINE

The baseline year for BCBC's Net Zero Strategy is 2019/20, aligning with the Welsh Government's initial commitment to a Zet Zero public sector and the first year of Net Zero Reporting.

As part of the development of the 2021 Net Zero Strategy, BCBC's 2019/20 total carbon footprint was estimated at approximately 90,241 tCO_2e, broken down as follows. For a detailed breakdown of the emission categories included in the footprint, see Appendix X.

- Scope 1: 6,106 tCO_2e
- Scope 2 : 4,983 tCO_2e
- Scope 3 : 79,152 tCO_2e[1]

However, subsequent calculations under the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Reporting methodology produced a different footprint figure for 2019/20, with total emissions estimated at 67,011 tCO_2e, broken down as follows:

- Scope 1: 6,146 tCO_2e
- Scope 2: 5,405 tCO_2e
- Scope 3: 55,459 tCO_2e

2019/20 BCBC Carbon footprint by Scope (Strategy 2021)

6,106 7%
4,983 5%
79,152 88%

2019/20 BCBC Carbon footprint by Scope (Net Zero reporting)

6,146 9%
5,406 8%
55,459 83%

■ Scope 1   ■ Scope 2   ■ Scope 3

[1] Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions that are owned or controlled by the organisation. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from purchased electricity, heat or steam.
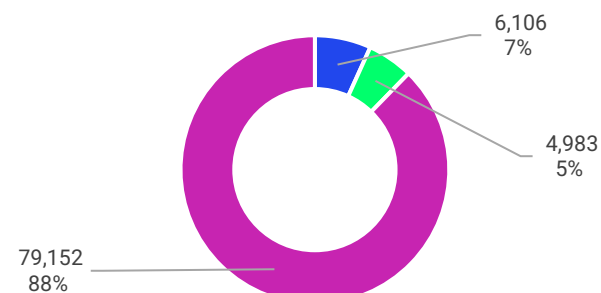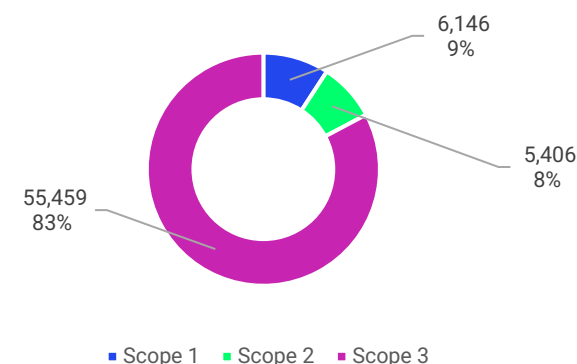
Scope 3 emissions are all other indirect emissions, such as those from supply chains, business travel and employee commuting.

The difference in Scope 2 emissions is relatively small and is due to adjustments in energy consumption data. The larger discrepancy is in Scope 3 emissions, particularly in purchased goods and services. This difference is primarily due to variations in emissions factors used in the calculations:

- The footprint calculated during the strategy development applied Environmentally Extended Input-Output (EEIO) factors
- The footprint calculated under the Net Zero Reporting methodology used DEFRA published Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) emissions factors.

As the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Reporting methodology has now become the standard approach for local authorities in Wales, all of BCBC's emissions figures have been updated to align with this approach (e.g. from now on, the emissions figure used as the baseline for the year 2019/20 will be 67,010 tCO$_2$e.). This decision ensures consistency in reporting, provides access to multiple years of data, and enables BCBC to track progress using a standardised methodology.

2023/24 CARBON FOOTPRINT

The diagrams below illustrate the 2023/24 carbon footprint from the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Reporting, broken down by scope, along with year-on-year (YOY) emissions trends since the 2019/20 baseline.

Over the past five years, BCBC's emissions have fluctuated, peaking in 2021/22, followed by a significant decline in 2022/23, before increasing again in 2023/24. Comparing the 2019/20 baseline (67,070 tCO$_2$e) with 2023/24 (64,758 tCO$_2$e), total emissions have decreased by 3.4%, indicating some progress toward decarbonisation.

Scope 3 emissions continue to be the primary driver of emissions, accounting for 84% of the total footprint in 2023/24, while Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions have shown more limited variations.

2023/24 BCBC Carbon footprint by scope (Net Zero reporting)

6,835
11%

3,573
5%

54,417
84%

■ Scope 1   ■ Scope 2   ■ Scope 3
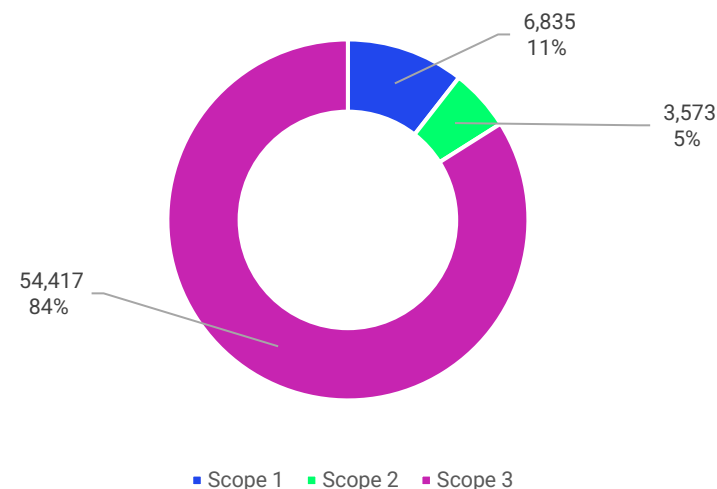
The breakdown of emissions by scope gives greater insights into the changes over the last five years. Scope 1 emissions have risen by 11.2%, from 6,146 tCO$_2$e to 6,835 tCO$_2$e, suggesting a moderate increase in fuel consumption. Scope 2 emissions have decreased by 33.9%, from 5,405 tCO$_2$e to 3,573 tCO$_2$e, likely due to a combination of energy efficiency improvements, increased on-site renewable energy generation, and a reduction in carbon intensity from grid purchased electricity. Scope 3 emissions have seen only a marginal reduction of 1.9%, from 55,459 tCO$_2$e to 54,417 tCO$_2$e,

YOY BCBC Carbon footprint by Scope (Net Zero reporting)

YoY BCBC Carbon footprint by emission category (Net Zero reporting)
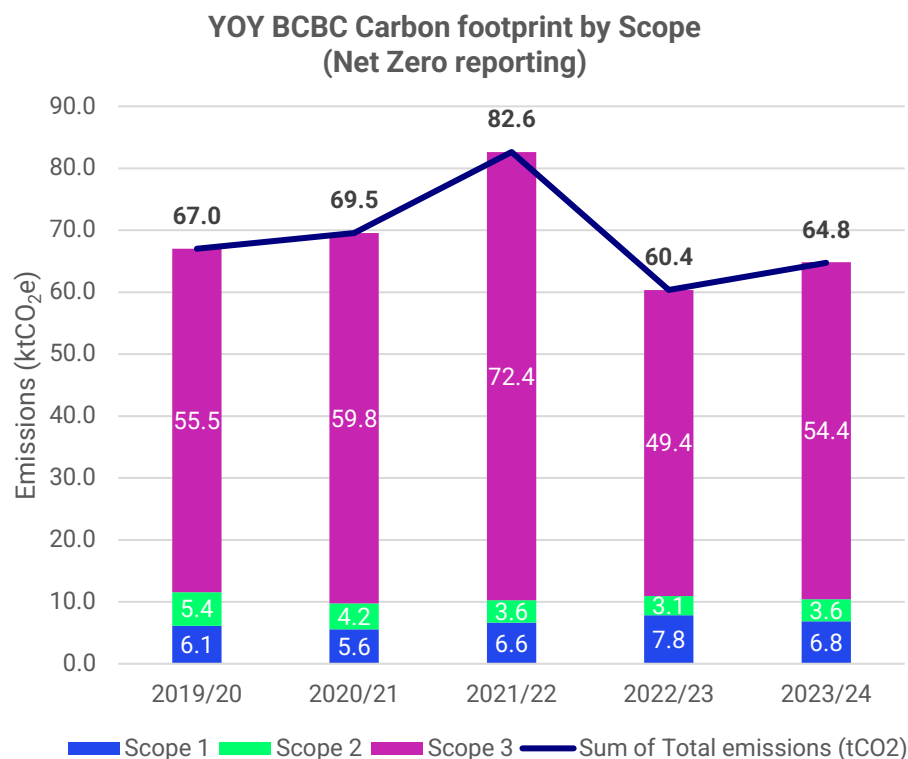
The diagram below presents the emissions breakdown by category, highlighting key sources such as buildings, supply chain, transport, and waste. This provides further insight into which sectors contribute most to BCBC's overall footprint and how emissions have evolved since the 2019/20 baseline.
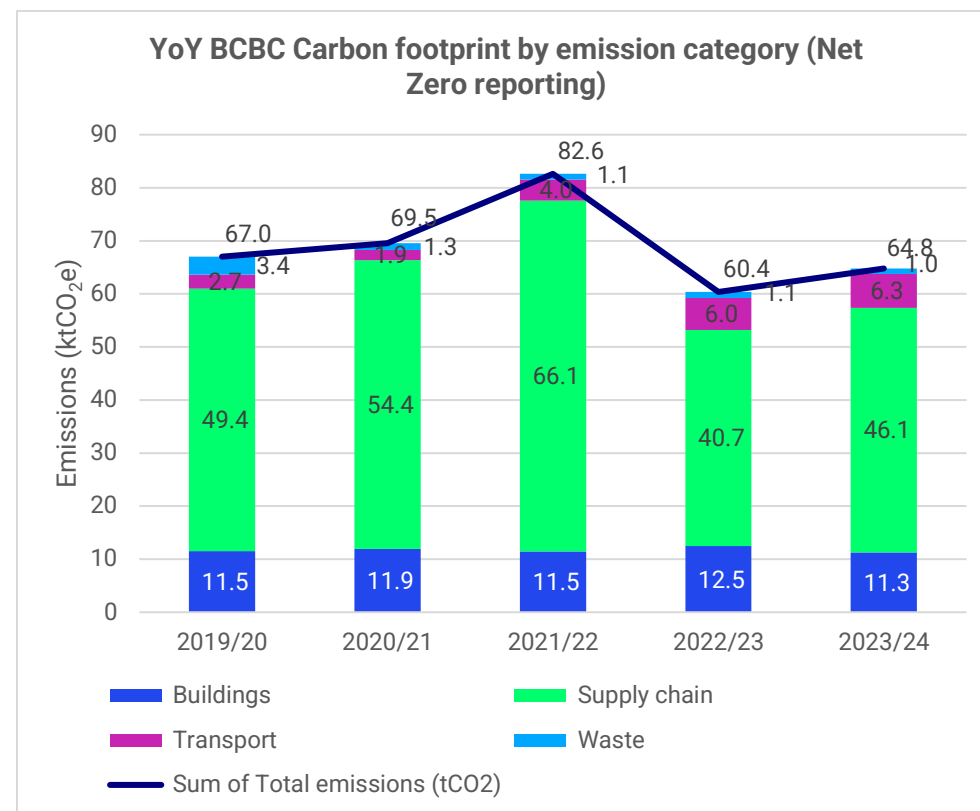
Comparing 2023/24 with the 2019/20 baseline, supply chain emissions remain the dominant contributor, although they have fluctuated over the years. In 2023/24, supply chain emissions were 46,106 tCO$_2$e, a 7% decrease from 49,427 tCO$_2$e in 2020/21, but still a major driver of BCBC's footprint at 71% of the total footprint. Supply chain emissions were also the main factor behind the peak in 2021/22, reaching 66,135 tCO$_2$e, highlighting the significant impact of procurement-related activities on overall emissions trends. This underlines the continued need for decarbonisation efforts in procurement and supplier engagement.

Building-related emissions have remained relatively stable at around 17% of the total footprint, with 11,284 tCO$_2$e recorded in 2023/24. Transport emissions have increased, rising from 4% of the total (2,677 tCO$_2$e) in 2020/21 to 9% (6,344 tCO$_2$e) in 2023/24, suggesting a potential rise in vehicle use or changes in commuting and fleet operations. Waste emissions remain low, contributing just 2% of total emssions, at 1,024 tCO$_2$e in 2023/24, similar to previous years.

The overall emissions trend indicates some progress, but supply chain emissions continue to be the most significant challenge in reaching BCBC's 2030 Net Zero target. While further action in procurement policies, fleet decarbonisation, and building efficiency measures will be essential to drive future reductions, some progress will also depend on external factors beyond BCBC's direct control — such as the decarbonisation of the national electricity grid and wider changes in supply chain practices.

2. GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY ASSESSMENT

2.1 CURRENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The 2030 Net Zero Carbon Strategy maintained the Decarbonisation 2030 Programme Board to oversee and track progress, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Communities and led by the Corporate Director of Communities. The Decarbonisation Programme Manager organises strategy delivery.

To embed delivery across the Council, the Strategy set out a structure whereby each of the six activity streams – carbon management, buildings, transport, land use, waste and procurement – would be assigned a 'Carbon Lead'. Each stream has an associated action plan that is the Carbon Lead's responsibility.

The strategy also envisioned a 2030 Steering Group, chaired by the Decarbonisation Programme Manager, where Carbon Leads could meet regularly and collaborate across the decarbonisation programme.

The current Carbon Lead appointments are:

- Carbon Management – Group Manager Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability
- Buildings – Group Manager Corporate Landlord
- Transport – Group Manager Highways & Green Spaces
- Waste – Head of Operations, Community Services
- Procurement – Corporate Procurement Manager
- Land Use – Climate Change Response Manager

Organogram

2.2 CARBON LEAD ENGAGEMENT CONCLUSIONS

The Strategy's governance arrangements, established to oversee and deliver Bridgend's Net Zero ambition, have been identified as a key area for review. The Carbon Trust undertook half-hour interviews with all six Carbon Leads to evaluate the governance arrangements and/or adjust objectives for the Carbon Leads and implementation-focussed staff. The interviews generated the following conclusions:

1. SENIOR CARBON LEADS HAVE COMPETING PRIORITIES

All the Carbon Leads acknowledged that they have too many competing priorities to drive delivery. This was stressed particularly for the Waste, Carbon Management and Transport Carbon Leads. For Procurement, though the Lead is the most appropriate officer for the position, they lack the necessary staff resource to drive delivery.

2. SOME STREAMS CUT ACROSS MULTIPLE SERVICE AREAS

Two of the Carbon Lead activity streams – Transport and Carbon Management – cut across multiple service areas within the Council. For example, Transport actions cut across Human Resources (e.g. initiatives T1, T2, T3, T4) and Education/Social Care (T5, T6, T7). Having one Carbon Lead, acting across service areas is proving ineffective. Conversely, in streams with centralised management under one service area, such as Buildings, the individual Carbon Lead works well.

3. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS ARE THE MAIN DELIVERY DRIVER FOR SOME STREAMS

In the Waste and Land Use activity streams, it was noted that the primary delivery driver is not the Strategy but other legislative requirements. Waste actions are driven primarily by the Workplace Recycling regulations, adopted in April 2024 and Bridgend's Local Development Plan 2018-2033, adopted in March 2024, is the main driver of land use activity.

4. THE PROGRAMME BOARD AGENDA HAS BECOME DISCONNECTED FROM THE STRATEGY

Some interviewees discussed the role of the Programme Board. One noted that as the Carbon Lead structure has failed to deliver, the agenda for the Board has been less connected to the Strategy actions. Another echoed this point and noted that there is a lack of clarity on how the work of the Carbon Leads feeds into the bigger picture and connects to the strategy. Progress linked to the Strategy is no longer routinely reviewed and benchmarked.

5. DIFFICULTY EMBEDDING THE STRATEGY WITHIN THE COUNCIL

The Carbon Management action plan contains several actions relating to staff communication and engagement, job descriptions and training for council officers and/or councillors. The action plan is centred around embedding the Strategy within the Council. Collaboration with Human Resources has been difficult and there have been unforeseen complexities, for example, the need to consult with the Unions to include carbon reduction in staff job descriptions.

Furthermore, opportunities to promote ownership of the decarbonisation agenda amongst the wider elected membership could be more fully explored.

2.3 MOBILISATION AND MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the conclusions of the Carbon Lead interviews and in discussion with the Decarbonisation Programme Manager, we recommend that, instead of having six individuals responsible for each activity stream, for some areas responsibility is spread across a 'Community of Practice' (CoP), a group with representatives across different, relevant service areas:

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

We recommend each Community of Practice constitutes a formal group with a Terms of Reference, a Chair and a rolling agenda. Each CoP should meet every six weeks before the Programme Board. The Chair will manage the delivery of the targets for their activity stream and report to the Programme Board.

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

We recommend replacing the Carbon Management Carbon Lead and Waste Carbon Lead with a Behaviour Change Community of Practice. The CoP will be made up of the following members:

- o Climate Change Response Manager (Chair), Decarbonisation Programme Manager, HR Manager, Senior Regeneration Funding Officer, Communications officer.

This recommendation reflects feedback that officer engagement needs to be prioritised to meet key targets in the strategy.

The overall aim of the Behaviour Change CoP is to reduce Council emissions by influencing behaviour change amongst officers.

The objective of the CoP is to coordinate the delivery and monitoring of actions in the Behaviour Change action plan, with particular focus on:

- Improving the integration of sustainability considerations into Council decision-making.
- Advancing officer engagement and training on climate change in a way that is strategically aligned with the Strategy targets.
- Tracking and improving behaviours that affect sustainability across the council in areas such as commuting, homeworking, Council office waste and procurement.

FLEET COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

We recommend replacing the Transport Carbon Lead is with a Fleet Community of Practice. The CoP will be made up of the following members from multiple service areas:

- o Decarbonisation Programme Officer (Chair), Group Manager – Highways & Green Spaces, Fleet Manager, Strategic Planning & Commissioning Officer – Adults, Cleaner Streets & Waste Contract Manager

This recommendation reflects feedback that management of the Council's fleet is fractured across multiple service areas, making it difficult for one officer to coordinate the level of collaborative action required.

The overall aim of the Fleet CoP is to reduce emissions from the Council's fleet.

The objective of the CoP is to coordinate emissions reduction actions across service areas, prioritising Highways, Waste, Education and Social Care. There should be a particular focus on:

- Developing a best practice approach for ULEV technology across the Council's fleet, staff vehicles and public EV charging.
- Developing an EV charging infrastructure plan for the estate.
- Prioritise EVs as replacements for Council-owned fleet vehicles.

PROCUREMENT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

We recommend replacing the Procurement Carbon Lead with a Procurement Community of Practice. The CoP membership will include:

- ○ Corporate Procurement Manager (Chair) and commissioning officers from across the Council.

The recommendation reflects feedback from the Programme Board presentation that it would help procurement to feed into Directorate procurement exercises at earlier stages.

We also recommend that extra resource is committed to help the procurement team with the additional workload. With supply chain emissions accounting for 71% of the Council's footprint, it is integral that this is treated as a priority.

The overall aim of the Procurement CoP is to reduce emissions from the Council's supply chain.

The objectives of the CoP are to coordinate a more sustainable approach to Directorate procurement exercises and improve the Council's supply chain emissions reporting.

ESTATES CARBON LEAD

We recommend replacing the Buildings Carbon Lead and Land Use Carbon Lead with a single Estates Carbon Lead. We also recommend integrating the actions into the wider Corporate Landlord Directorate business plan. The Lead will project manage delivery using pre-existing meetings within the Corporate Landlord service area. We recommend that the Lead is the Energy Manager.

This recommendation reflects feedback that the work required for Buildings and Land Use sits centrally within the Corporate Landlord service area. Combining the previous activity streams into one reflects this and minimises the need for additional time and resource.

The overall aim of the Estates Lead is to reduce emissions from the Council's estate.

The objective of the Lead is to coordinate emission reduction actions within the Corporate Landlord service area, with a particular focus on:

- Managing the ongoing energy and water efficiency retrofit programme across the estate, collating a full asset and condition list of energy-consuming equipment.
- Delivering renewable and offsetting opportunities on Council-owned and neighbouring land..

PROGRAMME BOARD AND MANAGEMENT

We recommend the Programme Board membership is streamlined to include: Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment, Corporate Director for Communities, Decarbonisation Programme Manager, Decarbonisation Programme Officer, Behaviour Change CoP Chair, Fleet CoP Chair, Procurement CoP Chair, Estates Lead.

A more streamlined board will ensure officers can prioritise action delivery.

We also recommend the Council follow the project management pack attached in Appendix X. This pack provides specific KPIs relating to the management of actions that are the responsibility of the Decarbonisation Programme Manager.

3. 2030 NET ZERO STRATEGY PROGRESS REVIEW

This chapter evaluates BCBC's progress in implementing its 2030 Net Zero Strategy, assessing actions taken across the six main activity streams. Each activity stream is currently led by a designated Carbon Lead, who is responsible for driving implementation and monitoring progress. The review assesses project progress since 2021 and outlines developments, plans, successes and challenges.

Each sub-section of this chapter focuses on one of the activity streams and presents a table outlining the actions originally identified in the strategy. The Carbon Trust has included additional columns to provide a commentary on progress, a progress score ranking from 1 to 5 (see Appendix X), and a recommendation on the status of each action. Actions are categorised as: Remove, Retain, Revise or New (introduce new initiative).

3.1 CARBON MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

The following table outlines the initiatives identified in the 2030 Net Zero Carbon Strategy, published in 2021, that the Council is undertaking to implement carbon management across the organisation.

Ref.	Description	Progress Score	Status	CT Comments
CM1	The Council will appoint a technical expert in 2022 to undertake a more specific 'bottom-up' reduction pathway, providing more detailed carbon and financial modelling results for the agreed Action Plans in the 2030 Strategy.	1	Remove	No progress. This Strategy review provides updated pathway modelling for carbon and finances. This initiative can be removed from the revised Strategy.
CM2	Carbon impact and implications to be included in all council business cases for investment, integrated with the wellbeing of future generations assessment.	2	Revise	All Council reports include a 'Climate Change Implications' statement. However, these are not reviewed or tracked, and more comprehensive tools could be implemented (see Cornwall Council's doughnut economics). Furthermore, carbon costs should be integrated into decision-making processes.
CM3	The decarbonisation agenda will be proactively communicated to staff to support the uptake of low-carbon behaviours.	1	Revise	No engagement plan. We recommend that engagement initiatives strategically link to targets, e.g. upskilling building managers to improve building energy use, educating building managers about the waste hierarchy and educating Directorates and service areas about sustainable procurement practices.
CM4	Carbon Literacy training will have been completed by the end of the 2022/23 financial year and the training will be integrated into standard HR processes, such as e-learning modules.	2	Revise	Six officers received carbon literacy training (two received 'Training the trainers' training). A climate change e-learning is now available but not compulsory. We recommend prioritising targeted training (e.g. to building managers and commissioning officers) over blanket training.

CM5	All council job descriptions will be updated to include the general carbon responsibilities of employees and selected key council job descriptions will include defined carbon responsibilities as part of their role within the Council.	1	Revise	No progress. The process is more time-intensive than anticipated, with the need to consult Unions. We recommend prioritising selected key job descriptions, including defined carbon responsibilities, particularly for Carbon Lead/CoP members.
CM6	Through its participation in the Local Government Pension Scheme, BCBC acknowledges that climate change and carbon emission management is one of the risk factors of responsible investment and will support and actively monitor the delivery of the Fund's commitment to an orderly carbon transition and its active engagement with investee companies to reduce carbon exposure across the Pension Fund.	1	Retain	No progress.
CM7	Utilise the Welsh Government Public Sector Carbon Reporting Guide to report annually the Carbon Footprints of Council's operations, this will form the basis for tracking progress against the Net Zero 2030 target.	4	Retain	Bridgend reports a complete emissions inventory to the Net Zero Reporting scheme. Using the Reporting results to encourage widespread understanding of the Council's emissions and how they relate to different service areas is key to diffuse ownership of the agenda. Next steps should focus on providing building-level data and moving to Tier 2 supply chain reporting. These actions will sit in the Estates and Procurement activity streams.

3.2 BUILDINGS INITIATIVES

The following table outlines the initiatives identified to reduce the emissions associated with the operation of buildings*.

Ref.	Description	Progress Score	Status	CT Comments
B1	The Council will progress a transformational energy and water efficiency retrofit programme across its estate – every building will have undergone a multi-technology energy efficiency upgrade by 2030.	3	Retain	Ongoing. Completed work with Re:Fit and currently have two buildings with Low Carbon Heat funding. While a register is being created, there is currently no consolidated monitoring of progress. Finishing the register should be a priority. Also, this initiative would benefit from being broken down into interim/shorter-term targets.
B2	The Council will undertake and commission surveys to collate a full asset and conditions list of energy consuming equipment across its built estate by end of 2023.	2	Review	Ongoing. As above on register and interim targets. Noted that AECOM is pulling together a report for all Schools in Wales. This will be even more important with updates to the Net Zero Reporting guidance, asking public sector bodies to

Ref.	Description	Progress Score	Status	Carbon Trust Comments
				provide floor area data alongside energy use. Revise the initiative completion year.
B3	The Council will complete expert low carbon heat studies for all large strategic sites to set the plan to transition away from fossil fuel heat sources.	2	Retain	Ongoing. As above on register and interim targets. Council needs to consider creating a list of shovel-ready projects to access grant funding when it become available.
B4	Decommissioning of traditional boilers will be preferred over replacement, with low carbon heat solutions appraised and prioritised within the business case process.	2	Retain	Ongoing. As above on register and interim targets.
B5	Legacy lighting will only be replaced with modern LED alternatives; all lighting will be LED by 2030.	3	Retain	Ongoing. As above on register and interim targets.
B6	All buildings will be assessed to have standardised, effective building management systems including a dedicated central resource to optimise energy use across the built estate on a consistent basis.	3	Retain	Roughly 60 out of 120 buildings have BMS. Low cost of installing BMS makes it a high-priority action. As above on register and interim targets.
B7	The Council will complete surveys to understand the overall viable potential for onsite renewable energy generation across the estate, by 2026 half of this potential should be installed, with the remainder by 2030.	3	Retain	Nine sites have been identified for PV installation. As above on register and interim targets.
B8	The Council will work closely with schools to develop a plan to better deliver carbon reduction in these buildings.	2	Retain	AECOM report currently underway.

*Actions related to new buildings are all considered to be ongoing and should be retained in the new strategy.

3.3 TRANSPORT INITIATIVES

The following table outlines the initiatives identified to reduce the emissions associated with transport, including from fleet, business travel and commuting.

Ref.	Description	Progress Score	Status	Carbon Trust Comments
T1	The Council will complete a business travel review to appraise the use of staff vehicles, pool cars and public transport across all departments; Council business travel policies will be updated accordingly.	1	Retain	No progress. Management fractured across departments. Retain but move to the proposed Behaviour Change Community of Practice (CoP) (see Governance and Delivery Assessment).
T2	The Council's staff business travel policy will prioritise the use of virtual meetings, active travel and public transport.	1	Retain	As above.
T3	The Council will undertake a detailed review of staff commuting patterns to better understand the impact on its overall carbon footprint; guidance and incentive schemes will be considered to support staff.	1	Retain	As above. Prioritise undertaking a staff commuting survey and offer incentives such as a Cycle to Work scheme and EV salary sacrifice scheme (e.g. https://octopusev.com/salary-sacrifice). Retain but move to the proposed Behaviour Change Community of Practice (CoP).CT can provide support on the staff commuting survey.

T4	The Council will support the Welsh Government's 30% work from home target by continuing to facilitate home working, developing digital infrastructure, and rationalising office space.	1	Review	No progress. Management fractured across departments. Retain but move to the proposed Behaviour Change CoP. Noted that some services require more in-person work (social care, education, highways maintenance) – there can't be 30% target for every service area.
T5	The Council will oversee the development of a best practice approach for ULEV technology across the Council's own fleet, staff vehicles and public EV charging.	1	Retain	Minimal progress. We recommend the Council seek support from WGES on ULEV and EV transition planning and implementation.
T6	To encourage the transition to an EV fleet the Council will prioritise the development of an EV charging infrastructure network plan for the existing estate.	1	Retain	Management fractured across departments. Progress has been made in the Highways team (though coming up against barriers). Progress is unknown in other service areas (e.g. social care, education).
T7	EVs will be prioritised as replacements for Council owned cars and small vans in the short term, with all conforming to ULEV standards by 2025.	1	Retain	No progress.
T8	All new medium/large freight vehicles procured across the Council after April 2026 will be to the future modern standard of ULEVs.	1	Retain	Some testing of large freight EVs as they come onto the market but it is very dependent on load and cost.
T9	The Council will actively engage with innovation projects to help shape the future landscape of the ULEV market, specifically hydrogen-powered vehicles.	2	Retain	Some activities ongoing. No available data.
T10	The Council will undertake a review of fuel used in small plant and equipment to understand their carbon footprint and what assets can be replaced with electric versions.	2	Retain	Electric equipment is being used but a review has not been completed. Lack of register for management of progress. Retain and make it a priority to register and track equipment.
T11	The Council will pro-actively engage with other public bodies within the County to ensure strategic travel plans do not counteract each other.	1	Remove	No longer sits with Highways and is more related to area-wide emissions than organisational emissions.

3.4 LAND USE INITIATIVES

The following table outlines the initiatives identified to promote sustainable land use on its land: to generate renewable energy, carbon sequestration and create spaces to encourage biodiversity. All retained and revised actions should be moved to the proposed Estates activity stream.

Ref.	Description	Progress Score	Status	CT Comments
L1	The Council will support the delivery of LDP identified renewables and offsetting opportunities on its own land and neighbouring land, and also influence and support broader county-wide schemes through the council's role in planning.	1	Retain	No progress. Information on land identified for renewables and offsetting opportunities was not available to the Land Use Carbon Lead.
L2	The Council will improve its understanding of all owned land assets to correctly appreciate the levels of carbon sequestration by March 2023 and develop plans to maximise carbon benefits in these areas.	1	Review	No progress. Revise the timeline for this initiative.
L3	The Council will ensure all owned woodland and greenfield areas are maintained in a way to promote enhanced biodiversity and avoid any unnecessary loss of carbon sequestration.	2	Retain	Noted that the Council manages five local nature reserves. The initiative would be improved with monitoring and interim targets.
L4	The Council will identify its own and neighbouring land for large-scale renewable developments, primarily solar and wind projects. Private wire connections to owned sites will be prioritised over exporting directly to the grid.	1	Retain	No progress. Noted that majority of large-scale land ownership is reserved to fund capital programmes like school development.
L5	Where large-scale renewable developments are not possible, the Council will prioritise these areas for afforestation/reforestation and biodiversity programmes on its own land.	1	Retain	Though the Council has tree planting projects (e.g. Ogmore Valley community woodland), it is not clear how land use designations are prioritised.
L6	The Council will undertake an assessment to understand the extent of peatland across its estate; a continual maintenance and regeneration programme will be put in place for any identified areas.	1	Retain	No formal assessment was undertaken but noted that an officer believes there is no peatland. We recommend undertaking a formal assessment.
L7	The Council will identify the additional maintenance resource needed to help kick start a more extensive green infrastructure programme across the county.	1	Retain	Noted that this is less relevant to making the Council's own operations Net Zero.
L8	Work with partners to map and review Council-owned land to identify categories that align with the Net Zero Reporting commitment	-	New	Potential to use the WLGA/DataMapWales Land and Carbon Sequestration Mapping tool.

3.5 PROCUREMENT INITIATIVES

The following table outlines the initiatives identified to reduce the emissions associated with procurement. It was noted in the Carbon Lead interview that there has been no progress on any of the procurement actions to date due to a lack of resource.

Ref.	Description	Progress Score	Status	CT Comments
P1	The Council will develop a Sustainable Procurement Code of Practice to include a framework for assessing the sustainability credentials of suppliers at varying contract values and types; this will consider the evolving Welsh Procurement Policy Notes (WPPN).	1	Retain	No progress.
P2	The Council will aim to engage with and utilise the local and low carbon supply chains whilst maintaining high standards for goods and services. This will be a corporate initiative and not just the responsibility of the procurement team.	1	Retain	No progress.
P3	The Council will build upon WPPN 06/21 and require carbon management plans/decarbonisation improvement to be demonstrated in the highest carbon impact and strategic contracts by 2025, this will include contracts as they come to be procured associated with 'Transit & Ground Passenger Transport Services' and 'Nursing & Residential Care Services'.	1	Retain	No progress.
P4	The Council will apply the principles of 'WPPN 12/21 Decarbonisation through Procurement', to an increasing proportion of contracts such that by 2030, all contracts above an agreed value are subject to carbon assessment and reporting.	1	Retain	No progress.
P5	The Council will work to ensure decarbonisation selection criteria and the requirement for supplier carbon reduction plans is integrated into contract procedure rules for contracts valued at £5 million or more (as per WPPN 06/21) for contracts procured from 2025. This will be a corporate initiative and will involve the development of a work plan which will be presented to Cabinet and Council to amend the Contract Procedure Rules.	1	Retain	No progress.
P6	The Council, through its Economic Development function, will engage with its supply chain to communicate its ambition for Net Zero and the request for suppliers to come on the journey; the Council will share its developing procurement practice, resources for suppliers, and any opportunities for supply chain decarbonisation funding.	1	Retain	No progress.
P7	The Council will provide a training programme for internal service commissioners by developing best practice and engaging experts; the Council procurement and service commissioners will work in collaboration to champion decarbonisation in the supply chain. This will be resourced through the Climate Change Response Programme.	1	Retain	No progress.
P8	Contract management will be used to oversee decarbonisation progress and carbon accounting in both short- and long-term contracts, this will be overseen by the BCBC 2030 Programme Board and reported to Corporate Management Board (CMB) as required.	1	Retain	No progress.

P9	A task and finish group will be established to identify funding option to secure a dedicated resource will be put in place to support development of the Sustainable Procurement Code of Practice, Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy, and ongoing management of decarbonisation through procurement.	1	Remove	Responsibility for allocation of this funding sits within Senior Leadership, not just the Procurement Lead.
R	The Council recognises the need for a regional and national approach and will identify other organisations and forums (e.g. TOMS, WLGA) for collaboration across Wales to help develop its understanding and take note from best practice approaches.	1	Retain	We recommend attending the WLGA Procurement Task and Finish Group.
P11	Prioritise enabling a move from Tier 1 to Tier 2 supply chain emissions reporting. Engage with work being done by the Welsh Government Energy Service to develop a supplier contract emissions reporting tool.	-	New	This action depends on senior leadership providing procurement with additional resource, as we recommend in the Governance and Delivery Assessment.

3.6 WASTE INITIATIVES

The following table outlines the initiatives identified to reduce the emissions associated with the waste the Council produces and collects. Though the Council has made significant progress on municipal waste, this review concerns how organisational waste actions have progressed. In discussion with Council officers, it has been agreed that the new Workplace Recycling regulations will be the main driver of change on this issue.

Ref.	Description	Progress Score	Status	CT Comments
W1	The council will build on its performance in regard to reducing waste sent to landfills and recycling in line with the Welsh Government Towards Zero Waste strategy.	2	Retain	Retain but move to the proposed Behaviour Change Community of Practice (CoP).
W2	All waste streams will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the most sustainable method of disposal is being undertaken, the waste hierarchy will be used as a template for action.	2	Retain	Noted that this is already a legislative requirement. Retain but move to the proposed Behaviour Change Community of Practice (CoP).
W3	Undertake a more joined up approach across the council on waste data collection to ensure all waste streams are being identified.	2	Retain	Retain but move to the proposed Behaviour Change Community of Practice (CoP).
W4	The council will work with the schools to implement further food waste initiatives to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills.	4	Remove	Superseded by the Workplace Recycling regulations.
W5	The council will develop a plan to agree on future step changes to continue working to achieve the outcomes set out by Welsh Governments: Towards zero waste: our waste strategy.	3	Remove	Currently mid-commission. Noted that Welsh Government have not set specific waste targets beyond 2024 for councils to work to, complicating future mapping. Not relevant to Council Waste.

W6	The council will review best practice advice and develop a plan to support highways and capital projects on hard to decarbonise waste streams such as cement, concrete and Asphalt.	TBD	Retain	TBD.
W7	The council will increase the availability of battery-powered equipment and tools in its supply chain to reduce disposal and replacement cycles.	2	Remove	Ongoing. Noted that there is no overall monitoring of equipment (as with T10).
W8	The council will prioritise the purchase of reused and remanufactured products that have recycled content, this will be embedded into best practices for service commissioners.	1	Retain	No progress. Retain but move to the proposed Behaviour Change Community of Practice (CoP).
W9	The council will continue to engage with key stakeholders and work with our communities to encourage the reduction of waste, reuse and recycling.	1	Retain	Engagement is ongoing. Noted that this is more relevant to the Borough's Net Zero target and is less relevant to making the Council's own operations Net Zero. Retain but move to the proposed Behaviour Change CoP.

4. EMISSIONS PROJECTIONS MODELLING

In collaboration with the Carbon Trust, the Council has established a baseline of its total carbon emissions for the year 2019/20, calculated at 67,0111 tonnes of CO_2e. This figure is based on actual data wherever possible. However, certain elements—such as the current level of carbon sequestration from natural assets on Council-owned land—could not be quantified at this stage.

It is recognised that completely eliminating all carbon emissions from Council operations is unlikely to be feasible—this is true for all Local Authorities in Wales. The Council must therefore focus on reducing its emissions as much as possible before relying on offsetting measures to achieve Net Zero.

The remaining emissions that would require offsetting are referred to as the "Gap to Target." By 2030, this gap is projected to be 54,656 tCO_2e under a Business As Usual (BAU) scenario, and 36,996 tCO_2e if the proposed emissions reduction initiatives are implemented (sjhown in the chart below).

The "Business As Usual" (BAU) scenario models the Council's projected emissions in 2030 assuming no major changes in operational activity compared to the baseline year. It incorporates expected external decarbonisation trends, including reductions in emissions from the national electricity grid and supply chains, but assumes that the Council's own activity levels—such as energy use, travel, and procurement—remain consistent with current patterns.
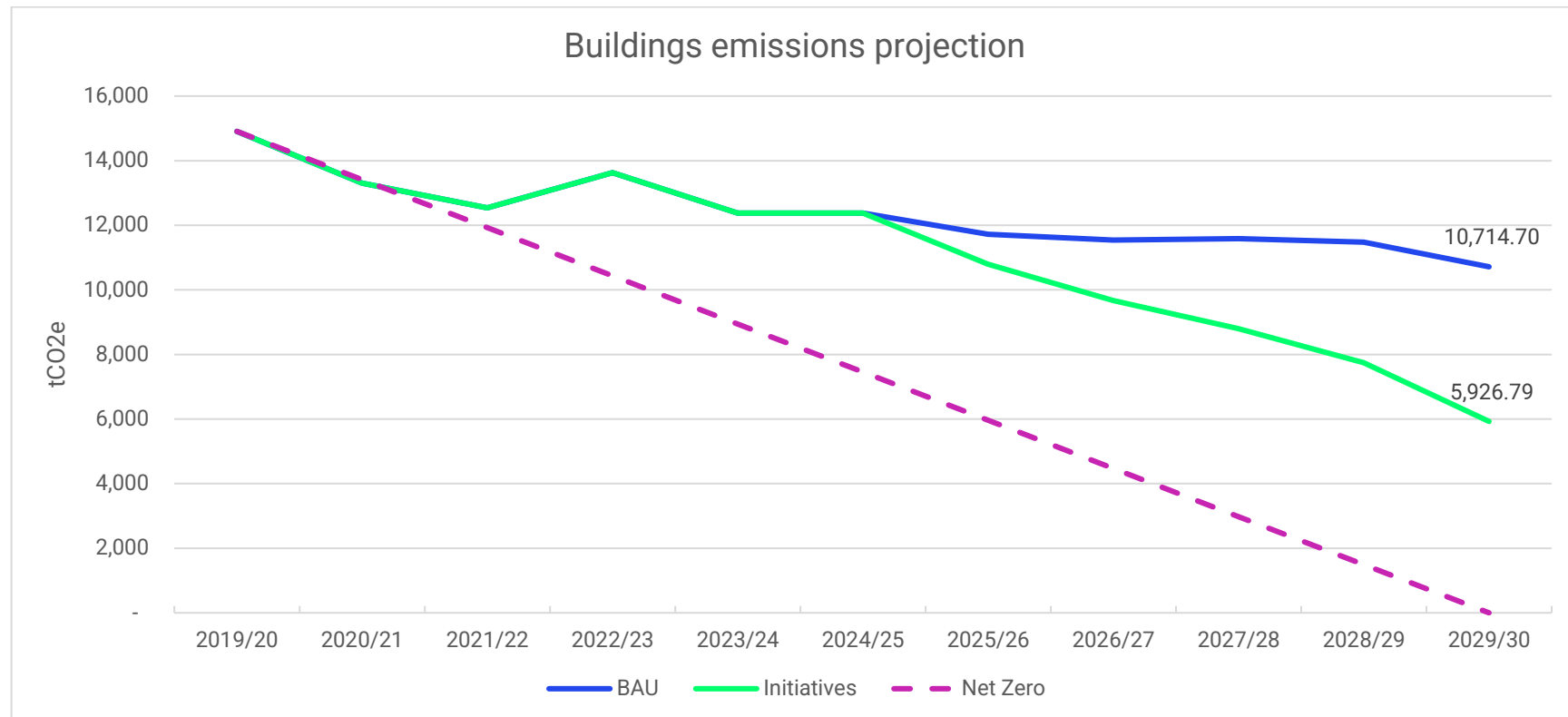
The "Initiatives" scenario builds on this by modelling the combined impact of external decarbonisation and the implementation of the actions outlined earlier in this report. These include measures aimed at reducing energy demand, switching to lower-carbon fuels, and improving efficiency across buildings, fleet, and procurement activities.
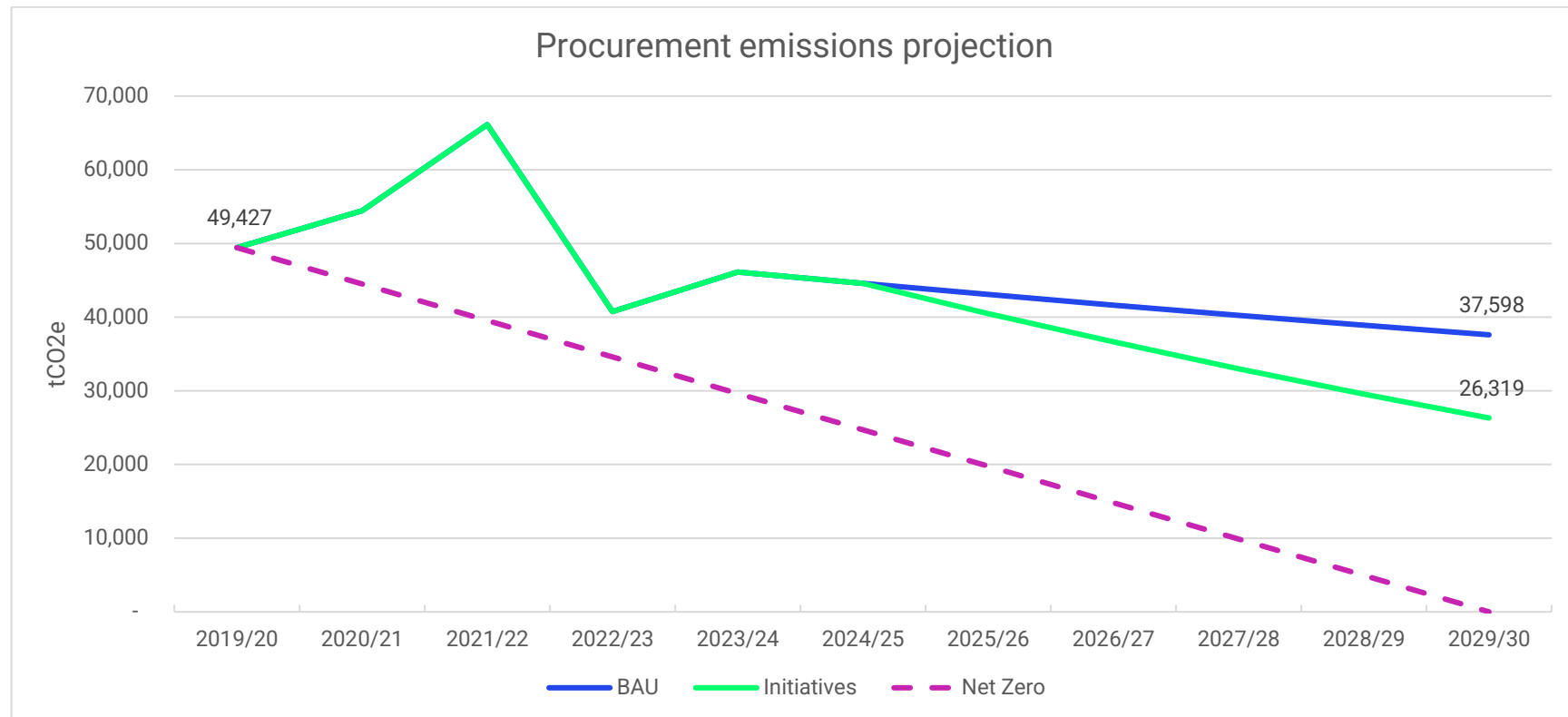
These include measures aimed at reducing energy demand, switching to lower-carbon fuels, and improving efficiency across buildings, fleet, and procurement activities. The implementation of all the proposed initiatives has been estimated to cost approximately **£59,200,000**.

Please see **Appendix X** for the full list of modelling assumptions and Appendix X for assumption on costs estimate.

Total emissions projection
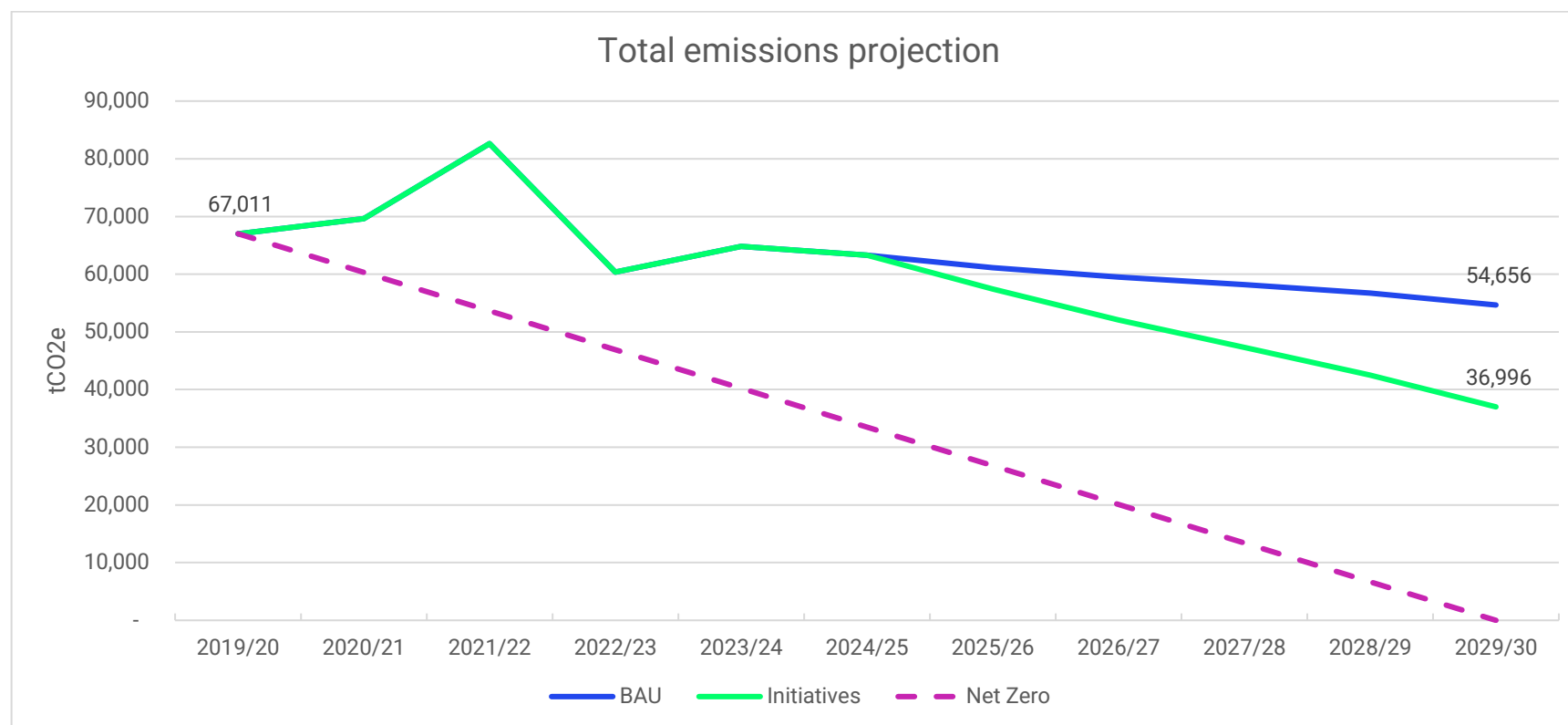
Further decarbonisation pathways are outlined below for supply chain, buildings and transport emissions. These represent in more detail the high-level modelling that has been undertaken as part of this strategy. The Council recognises that further, more detailed 'bottom up' modelling will need to take place as it continues the journey to Net Zero 2030.

Buildings emissions projection

10,714.70

5,926.79

Legend: BAU — Initiatives — Net Zero

Procurement emissions projection

OFFSETTING APPRAISAL

Currently, there is no defined approach to the creation or purchase of verified carbon credits by Welsh public sector bodies in the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Reporting guidance. This is because emission reductions must be prioritised in the first instance to minimise the need for offsets. The question of how Welsh public sector bodies approach offsetting will be addressed in the pending review of the 2030 Net Zero ambition, noted in the Introduction. While Welsh public sector bodies can currently submit emissions data from land use and agriculture, these are reported separately to the total footprint as 'Out of Scope' emissions. This is in keeping with guidance under the GHG Protocol.

The below appraisal intends to provide an overview of the voluntary carbon market and provide BCBC with estimated costs for offsetting in relation to their modelled gap to target.

OFFSETTING TECHNOLOGIES

Carbon offsetting is a broad term that refers to reducing greenhouse gas emissions or increasing carbon storage to compensate for emissions that occur elsewhere. This involves buying/supporting emission reduction or removal enhancement projects outside an organisation's greenhouse gas inventory boundary. Offsetting can be broken down into four main categories:

Nature-based	**Avoided nature loss** Limits the loss of nature such as forests and peatlands, which currently sequester large amounts of carbon.	**Nature-based sequestration** Uses nature to sequester more carbon in the biosphere, including reforestation/afforestation and restoring soil, seagrass and peatlands.
Technology-based	**'Additional' emissions avoidance/reduction** Reduces emissions from current sources that don't have the financial incentive or regulatory requirements to decarbonise (e.g. renewable energy and energy efficiency).	**Technology-based removal** Removes CO_2 from the atmosphere using technological methods and stores it in the geosphere or through other secure methods such as concrete (e.g. Construction using renewable timber)
	Avoidance/reduction	Removal/sequestration

Several technologies can claim carbon offsets, though technological readiness levels (TRL) and costs vary substantially. Established technologies such as energy efficiency, renewable energy and nature-based solutions (afforestation, soil carbon sequestration) have dominated the voluntary offset market due to their commercial readiness and affordability. However, concerns over the additionality of renewable energy projects and competing land uses for nature-based solutions are valid and require careful management. Newer technologies are emerging with high scale-up and offsetting potential (e.g., bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCs), direct air capture (DACCs)). However, they are currently scarce, expensive and resource intensive.

RENEWABLE ENERGY
TRL: 9, Storage longevity: N/A
Cost per tCO_2e: £1/tCO_2
BCBC gap to target cost: £34,000 to £60,000

ENERGY EFFICIENCY/FUEL SWITCHING
TRL: 9, Storage longevity: N/A
Cost per tCO2e: £1/tCO_2
BCBC gap to target cost: TBD

AFFORESTATION
TRL: 8-9, Storage longevity: 10-100 years
Cost per tCO_2e: £2-£23/tCO_2
BCBC gap to target cost: TBD

ENHANCED WEATHERING
TRL: 1-5, Storage longevity: 10,000+ years
Cost per tCO2e: £38-£380/tCO_2
BCBC gap to target cost: TBD

BIOENERGY WITH CCS (BECCS)
TRL: 4-7, Storage longevity: 10,000+ years
Cost per tCO_2e: £77/230/tCO_2,
BCBC gap to target cost: TBD

HABITAT RESTORATION
TRL: 5-6, Storage longevity: 10-100 years
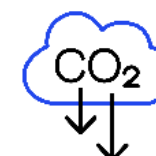Cost per tCO2e: £7-£77/tCO_2
BCBC gap to target cost: TBD

DIRECT AIR CCS (DACCS)
TRL: 5-7, Storage longevity: 10,000+ years
Cost per tCO2e: £150-£460/tCO_2
BCBC gap to target cost: TBD

BIOCHAR
TRL: 3-6, Storage longevity: 100-1000 years
Cost per tCO2e: £0-£154/tCO_2
BCBC gap to target cost: TBD

Sources: For TRL, The Royal Society and Royal Academy of Engineering (2018) Greenhouse gas removal report. For storage longevity and costs, IPCC (2023) Carbon Dioxide Removal Factsheet and UK Parliament POST (2024), Carbon Offsetting report.

OFFSETTING STANDARDS AND FRAMEWORKS

Organisations should try to align with credible Net Zero standards and frameworks where available and applicable. Both the SBTi Net Zero corporate standard and Oxford Principles for Net Zero Aligned Carbon Offsetting outline approaches to offsetting that are relevant to BCBC:

Both standards have slight variations between them. However, there are broadly aligned across three key areas, which set out how an organisation's offsetting strategy should evolve over time to be considered Net Zero aligned.

1. **Cut emissions and use high-quality offsets**

Reductions must be prioritised in the first instance to minimise the need for offsets. Where offsets are required, organisations should perform robust due diligence to ensure credibility and maintain environmental integrity. All reporting should be done transparently, and current emissions, accounting methodology, target setting, and offsetting strategy should all be disclosed.

2. **Shift to carbon removal offsetting**

To ensure compatibility with the Paris Agreement, offset users should increase the portion of offsets that come from carbon removals. By 2050, 100% of offsets should be sourced from emission removals.

3. **Shift to long-lived storage**

Transition to methods of carbon removal that have a low risk of reversal over centuries to millennia, for example, storing CO_2 in geological reservoirs or mineralising carbon into stable forms.

OFFSETTING APPROACHES

There are two main ways that BCBC can offset their residual emissions: within, and beyond their sphere of influence. In the context of this report, sphere of influence could refer to geographic area. Offsetting within an organisation's sphere of influence is sometimes referred to as insetting, which can be categorised in the same way as offsets (i.e., emission avoidance or emission removals). Insetting is still a relatively recent concept for which there is no universal definition or standard, and definitions are expected to continue evolving as an agreed methodology to account for the emission reductions/removal enhancements is developed. Offsetting beyond an organisation's sphere of influence can be viewed as analogous to buying offset credits on global carbon offset markets.

	Local – Offsetting within sphere of influence	Global – Offsetting beyond sphere of influence
Benefits	• Strengthens supply chain and community relations with benefits from the resulting projects (e.g., environmental restoration, increased climate resilience, improved air quality), benefitting the stakeholders and communities engaged with the entity. • Benefits can be more easily communicated to stakeholders. • Greater control, oversight and transparency over projects and the ability to self-verify the project's credentials.	• Minimal work on behalf of the organisation required for measuring and verifying carbon reductions. • High availability with more choices across locations and methods, lowering a) the risk of not achieving offset reductions, and b) costs by allowing developers to use cost-effective methods. • "Global issue requires global solutions" – 1tCO$_2$e carbon offset locally is analogous to 1tCO$_2$e internationally.
Considerations	• Requires additional resource input from the organisation (inc. upskilling) and active management to ensure carbon reductions and/or removals are achieved and meet robust standards. • Measuring and verifying offsets can be complex and reporting standards and guidance is currently under development. • Inherently restricted to the type, size, and number of projects that can be implemented, increasing the risk of not meeting an offset target.	• The market infrastructure required to ensure quality offsets is not yet fully developed, and there are doubts over the credibility of many credits on the market today. The offsetting organisation also has little-to-no oversight over the quality and delivery of offsets. • Exposed to market dynamics (e.g., increasing credit prices, credit supply). • More difficult to communicate benefits to stakeholders.

While there are several considerations, we recommend that organisations prioritise offsetting within their sphere of influence before purchasing credits beyond their influence. This is particularly relevant for local authorities, such as BCBC, where co-benefits and influence can be maximised.

Locality, whilst providing benefits, invariably increases the resource requirement on the insetting entity and should not be undertaken unless projects can be appropriately implemented and monitored. There are a number of standards and accounting rules in development that will provide guidance on how companies should record insets (especially carbon removals), however in the meantime organisations should act as transparently as possible to ensure reported insets are credible. Third-party validation of any scheme could also be considered to ensure robust procedures are being followed.