



Policy & Resources Committee

9 December 2021

Title	Sustainability Strategy Framework
Report of	Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix A – Sustainability Strategy Framework Overview of Commitments
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Summary

The report provides Policy & Resources Committee with an overview of the Sustainability Strategy Framework which will be used to scope and inform the forthcoming Sustainability Strategy. This framework builds on existing sustainability action the Council is taking and has been written in the context of the agreements reached at COP26 and the Environment Act 2021.

We have prepared an overview of the borough's carbon baseline. We note the range of existing actions taken to address sustainability across the borough and within the Council as an organisation. The report also proposes a series of commitments by the Council in relation to reaching net zero carbon.

The report identifies:

- Why the Sustainability Strategy and Framework are needed, and the work undertaken so far to develop and produce the Strategy.

- The Net Zero ambitions of the Council, including a commitment to reach Net Zero as an organisation by 2030, and as a borough as soon as possible after this and in advance of the government's 2050 target.
- The carbon baseline for the borough and the organisation, as well as the findings of the report and what they mean for the Council's sustainability work.
- The areas for action the Council should initially focus.
- The Strategy Framework which informs the production of the Sustainability Strategy. This will focus on the areas with the highest carbon cost, as identified in the carbon baseline, and provides an overview of the actions taken to date to address sustainability across the borough and an initial set of high-level targets and workstreams that can be imminently implemented to facilitate immediate progress towards our Net Zero targets.

The development of the wider Sustainability Strategy has an important part to play in Barnet Council's role of improving the lives of residents and businesses across the borough. Through investing in sustainability, the Council will be able to deliver long and short term improvements in the lives of residents. Implementation of this strategy will also be beneficial for residents financially, for example through lower household utility bills and lower vehicle running costs in the future.

Officers Recommendations

- 1. That Committee approve the net zero ambitions laid out within the report, including the Council's target of being a net zero organisation by 2030, and for Barnet as a place to be net zero as soon as possible following this and by 2050 at the latest**
- 2. That Committee note the carbon baseline and its findings (section 1.4-1.6)**
- 3. That Committee note the actions already taken to date that have helped to begin addressing carbon emissions within the Council and across the borough, and the communications activity that has taken place**
- 4. That Committee approve the Sustainability Strategy Framework (section 1.9-1.11), which will form the basis of the Sustainability Strategy**
- 5. That Committee instruct officers to begin work on conducting feasibility studies and implementing the workstreams (section 1.9-1.11), and delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources in order to take the necessary actions to look at the funding and resource requirements needed to deliver on these ambitions, and authority to proceed with procurements for the development of the Sustainability Strategy**

1. Why this report is needed

1.1 Why is a Sustainability Strategy needed?

- 1.1.1 This report outlines Barnet's Sustainability Strategy Framework which provides the groundwork for the forthcoming Sustainability Strategy by defining the scope of the work, by asking that Committee approve the Council's net zero ambitions, and an overview of the boroughs carbon baseline. The carbon baseline will allow the Council to take a data led approach to tackling, and mitigating the impacts of, climate change and targeting sustainable interventions. The framework also outlines a series of high-level targets to be adopted which will form the basis of the Sustainability Strategy, which will be presented to Policy & Resources Committee in the new year. The Strategy will build upon the targets and actions included below and outline the approach the Council will take to ensure their delivery.
- 1.1.2 Barnet's Sustainability Strategy will then bring together the work of existing strategies, build upon existing projects and activities, and propose new workstreams to enable us to meet our ambitious targets, which are based on the government's targets; while also detailing how we can empower residents, businesses and partners to similarly make meaningful changes.
- 1.1.3 There is a clear case for the development of a Sustainability Strategy to draw together the sustainability aspects of existing strategies and plans, such as the Growth Strategy, the Long-Term Transport Strategy, the draft Local Plan, and the Air Quality Action Plan, and coordinate a comprehensive approach to sustainability. It is an opportunity for the Council to commit to the intended environmental outcomes and be explicit about the measures required to achieve them.
- 1.1.4 The Sustainability Strategy will serve to outline the Council's response to existing and emerging legislation, such as the Environment Act 2021, and the emerging legislation detailing how the measures in the Act will be implemented, and the Government's Net Zero Strategy. We will create a framework that will assist in the development of future strategies, and the review of existing strategies. We will need to clarify our plans and vision for ensuring sustainability in the borough and provide a basis to support applications for funding.
- 1.1.5 The Sustainability Strategy will look specifically at the ways in which the Council can work to improve the lives of residents, in both the short and long term. By becoming more sustainable, the Council will be able to drive through tangible improvements for residents and businesses, such as cleaner air, reducing the reliance on petrol and diesel vehicles and, in many cases, reducing energy consumption.
- 1.1.6 The Resident Perception Survey, carried out in Autumn 2020, highlighted that 87% of residents strongly agree/tend to agree that tackling environmental issues should be included in the Council's priorities and future plans. Additionally, protecting the environment was the fifth highest priority in the most recent Youth Perception Survey 2019. The responses to the Growth Strategy, Long Term Transport Strategy, and Local Plan all highlighted that matters of sustainability were of particular concern to residents.

1.2 Net zero ambitions

- 1.2.1 As was highlighted by the Prime Minister at the opening of COP26, the evidence for manmade climate change is now overwhelming, with the need to take action becoming

ever more urgent. This sentiment was echoed in the Leader of Barnet Council's recently released statement on sustainability, which made clear the Council's ambition of being at the forefront of London's programme to tackle climate change. The statement recognises the importance of doing so if we are to match the government's ambition and play our part in supporting the government's commitment of being net zero by 2050 and cutting emissions by 78% by 2035, compared to 1990 levels. Net zero means that the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions would be equal to or less than the emissions the UK removed from the environment (based on the 1990 baseline). This can be achieved by a combination of emission reduction and emission removal¹, by carbon capture, sequestration, or offsetting.

- 1.2.2 The Sustainability Strategy Framework sets out how the Council intends to respond to climate change and the agreements reached at COP26. It sets out ambitious targets for the Council to be net zero by 2030, and Barnet as a place to be net zero as soon as possible following this, and by 2050 at the latest.
- 1.2.3 We are aware of the scale of this challenge for the Council, particularly with regard to those areas which we do not directly control but can influence, such as our supply chain. However, we are committed to using all the levers at our disposal to help our suppliers transition to a net zero future.
- 1.2.4 It is important for the Council to show leadership in relationship to sustainability and demonstrate this through the setting of an ambitious net zero target. The Council will promote and enhance its community leadership role, not just by setting a good example in the way we deliver our services and manage our resources, but also through working with residents and businesses, and supporting them on their journey to net zero.
- 1.2.5 The Council can impact wider emissions across the borough through its influencing role to encourage residents to make more sustainable changes within their own lives and businesses. The availability of government funding alongside national and local regulatory controls, such as planning policies, will be key to enabling faster outcomes, alongside wider innovation, and technological and societal change.

1.3 **Update on the development of the Sustainability Strategy**

- 1.3.1 Following the update report to the Environment Committee in March 2021, Officers began work on the preparation of a carbon baseline for the organisation and the borough, to ensure a data led approach to identifying the areas in which targeted support is most needed. This work to date has led to the production of the Sustainability Strategy Framework included within this report.

1.4 **Creating Barnet's carbon baseline**

- 1.4.1 The Council intends to build a robust and deliverable plan to achieve net zero ahead of the government's target – bringing with it the benefits associated with promoting a green economy and the creation of 'green jobs', the improvement of social outcomes, securing cost efficiencies, and the protection and enhancement of Barnet's greenspaces and public realm.

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/netzeroandthedifferentofficialmeasuresoftheuksgreenhousegasemissions/2019-07-24>

- 1.4.2 To achieve this, the Council worked to produce a holistic carbon baseline which will ensure informed decision making and an empirical approach to the tracking of progress. It will also allow the Council to target interventions where they are most needed to ensure we derive the greatest return on investment, both financially and environmentally
- 1.4.3 The work to produce the carbon baseline required the collection and collation of substantial data, covering the breadth of activities and services delivered by the Council, together with our supply chains (services that are operated on behalf of the Council) and support functions that facilitate this work; this has provided a carbon baseline for Barnet as an organisation
- 1.4.4 Alongside work on a baseline for the organisation, data was collated for the whole borough of Barnet, covering all place-based emissions where the Council may not have direct control, but could provide a key influencing role. To ensure comparability with other local authorities and areas, data for the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Scatter tool was used, this identifies emissions by local authority area.
- 1.4.5 An overview of the carbon baseline is provided in the sections below, this is split between Barnet Council as an organisation and Barnet as a place.

1.5 The Council (as an organisation) carbon baseline

1.5.1 To calculate the emissions of the Council, three years' worth of data were collated in order to take account of any anomalies that otherwise may have arisen due to the impact of the COVID19 pandemic. The total emissions produced by the Council over a three-year period equates to approximately 547,000 tCO₂e, steadily increasing over the three years. 2020/21 was the highest emitting year, producing close to 200,000 tCO₂e. The Council's direct emissions, excluding the supply chain, are on a downward trend, reducing 15% from 2018 to 2019. The total organisational emissions can be seen below in Figure 1.

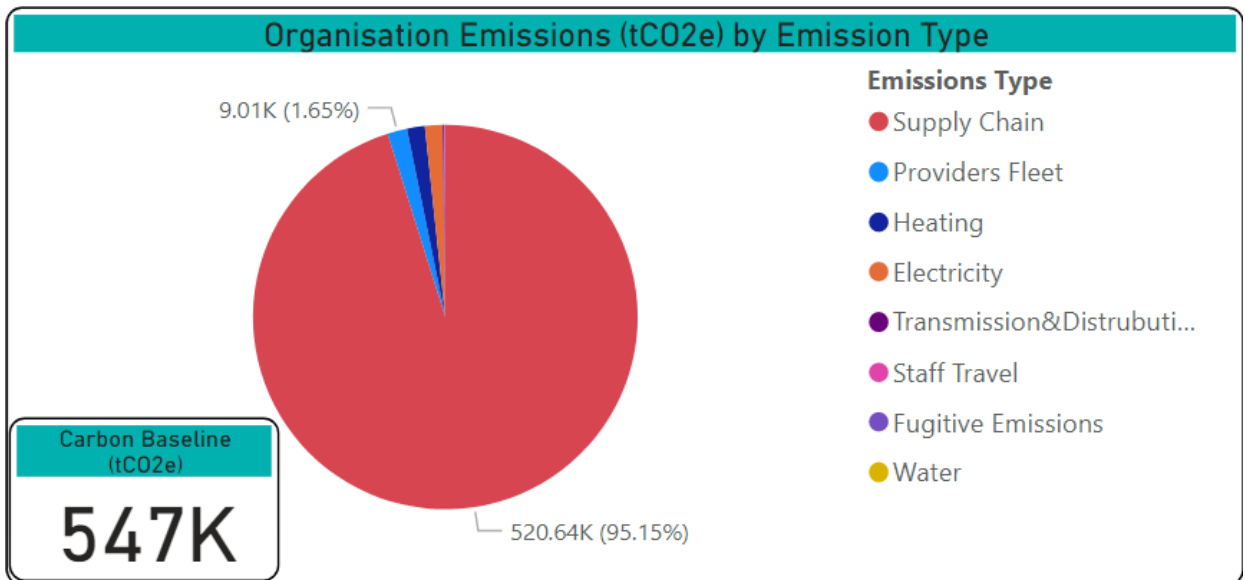


Figure 1 - The Council's organisational emissions by emissions type

1.5.2 The Council's supply chain equates to over 95% of the total emissions, at over 520,000 tCO₂e over the three-year period from 2018-21. This is also on an upward trend year on year, which is primarily due to the expansion of the Council's capital works programme, including infrastructure investments alongside the increased scale of regeneration and development activities across the borough; additionally, the impact of COVID19 and the

additional services that the Council has provided throughout this period may have also impacted the 2020/21 carbon emissions.

1.5.3 The BEIS categories in Figure 2 tell us that the majority of the Barnet supply chain emissions come from organisations related to 'Construction', 'Services to Buildings', 'Social Care', 'Waste Collection, Treatment and Disposal', and 'Employment Services'. These figures are estimates based on applying BEIS emissions conversion factors to the Council's finances and annual spend, so will include large capital projects such as Brent Cross.

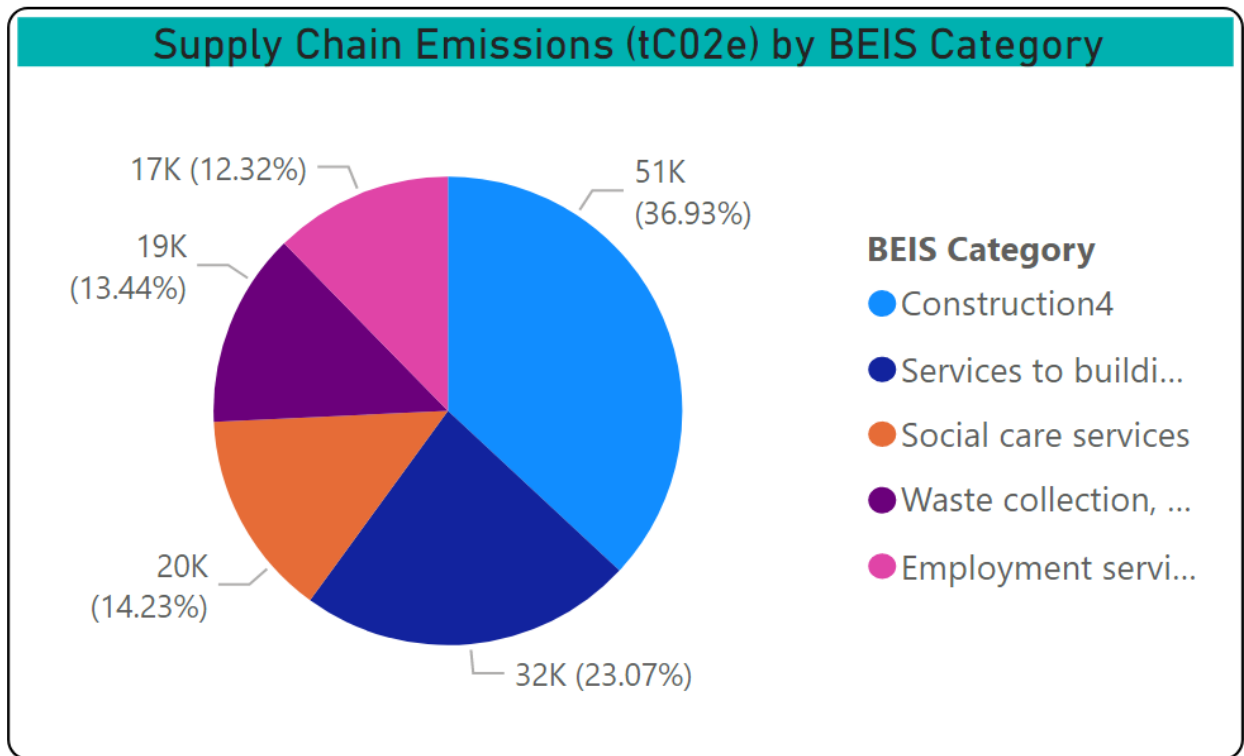


Figure 2 – the Council's supply chain emissions by BEIS category

1.5.4 The total Council emissions, excluding the supply chain, can be seen below in Figure 3. This shows that the majority of remaining emissions come from the operation of our buildings, through utilities purchasing, including heating, electricity and water. With transport also acting as a major contributor from both our fleet operations and staff business use.

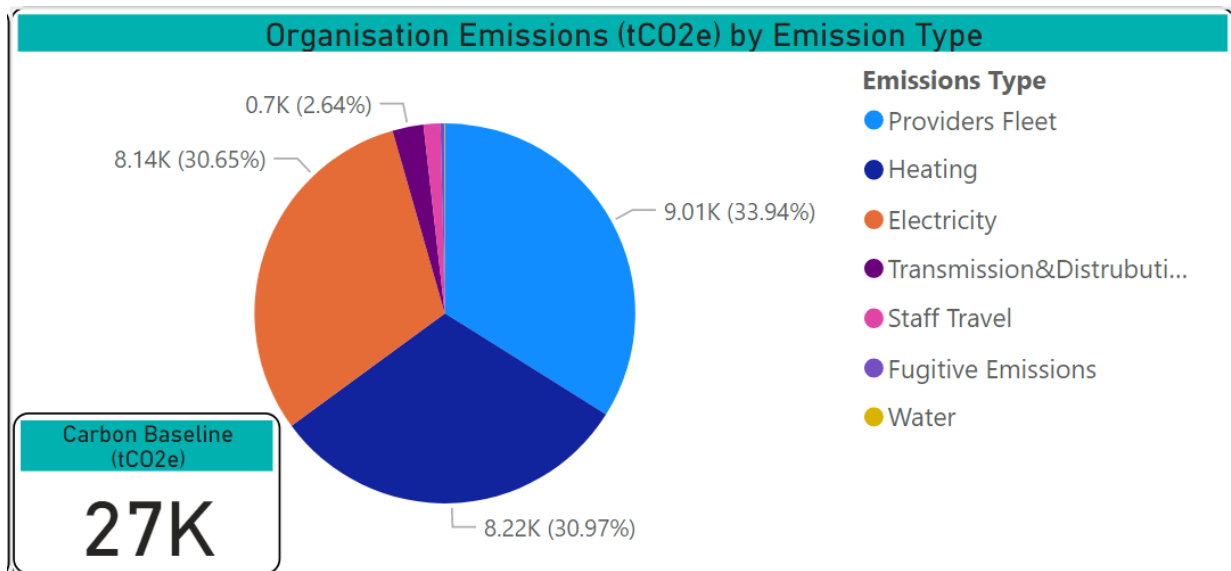


Figure 3 – The Council's emissions excluding supply chain

- 1.5.5 Utilities emissions have been tracked across 147 Council sites (including council offices and libraries) in relation to heating, lighting and a water supply; it also includes streetlighting. The total emissions across the three-year period was 16,000 tCO₂e, split evenly across electricity (8,100 tCO₂e) and gas (8,200 tCO₂e). Streetlighting was found to account for over two-thirds of the Council's electricity emissions; however, this has fallen significantly over the past few years due to the switchover to LED lighting across the Council's 26,000 streetlights; emissions have fallen from almost 5,000 tCO₂e in 2015/16 to under 1,300 tCO₂e in 2020/21.
- 1.5.6 Heating accounts for the majority of emissions from buildings, at over 8,000 tCO₂e compared with 1,000 tCO₂e produced by electricity. Several potential actions can be taken to reduce this, including retrofitting buildings to the highest energy efficiency standards and replacing current heating arrangements with low carbon solutions; some of these carbon reduction activities have already been initiated.
- 1.5.7 Fugitive emissions (for example methane or refrigerant gases), such as leakages from air conditioning units, are currently very low; however, these may increase over the coming years as we move away from conventional heating systems and towards alternatives, such as heat pumps which contain such gases, in a bid to decarbonise.
- 1.5.8 Additionally, transport is classed as one of the most carbon emitting activities, with the Council's fleet having a relatively high impact; the fleet includes a variety of vehicles including waste vehicles, such as recycling and waste collection vehicles, street sweepers, and passenger transport minibuses. The combined fuel use of the Council's fleet over the three-year period totals 3.54 million litres, which equates to approximately 9,000 tCO₂e. While diesel vehicles are the most fuel efficient, they are also one of the most carbon emitting.
- 1.5.9 When it becomes time for the Council's fleet vehicles to be replaced, sustainable alternatives will be considered; the latest fleet vehicles purchased are all Euro 6 standard, this ensures they are ULEZ compliant and have contributed to improving air quality. Currently the electric vehicle market for waste vehicles is embryonic, but it is our belief that by the next replacement cycle, even more sustainable vehicles will be available and affordable.

1.5.10 Travel by staff using their own vehicles for work (excluding travel to work) also makes up a proportion of the Council’s carbon baseline, which tells us that over the three-year period 1.3 million miles have been claimed for 414 vehicles – this equates to 380 tCO₂e. These claims have fallen over recent years with the advent of the pandemic, technology and flexible working, but it is yet to be seen if this trend will continue long term. While a range of vehicles have been claimed for, medium and large vehicles produce 70% of the total staff travel emissions. It is therefore important that smaller, or low emissions, vehicles are used wherever possible, alongside greater use of the Councils existing fleet of hybrid pool cars.

1.6 Barnet as a place

1.6.1 The carbon emissions baseline provides us with insights into the current level and source of carbon emissions in Barnet. The total emissions for a one-year period across the geography of Barnet equates to 1.76 million tonnes of carbon emissions (tCO₂e); this would fill StoneX Stadium over 15,000 times.

1.6.2 Of these emissions, the largest emitter was stationary energy (primarily buildings) with 58% of the borough’s emissions. The remaining emissions are 35% from transportation, 4% from waste, and 3% from Industrial Processes and Products Used (IPPU) (primarily manufacturing). Further detail on these emissions is detailed in Figure 4.

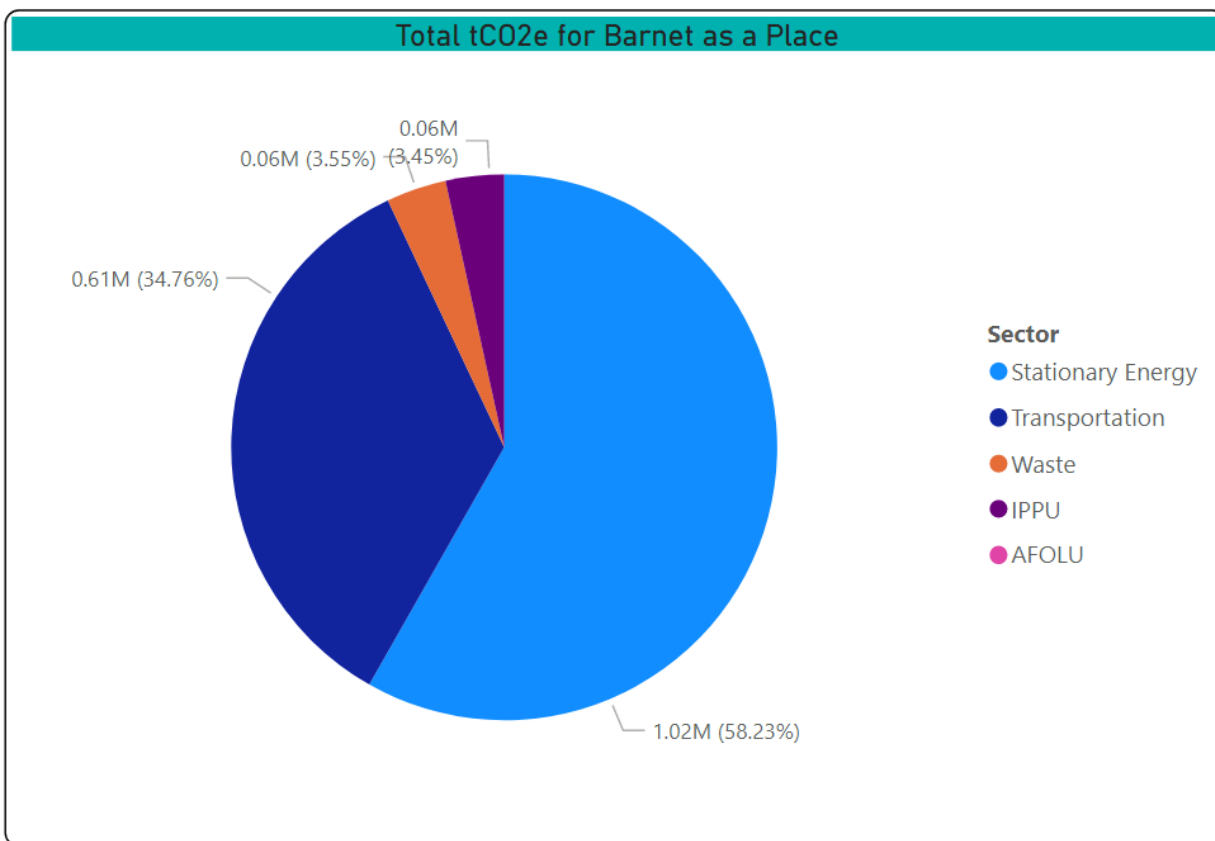


Figure 4 – Total boroughwide emissions

1.6.3 Two-thirds of Barnet’s stationary energy emissions is produced by residential buildings, with industrial and commercial buildings following at a much smaller percentage (Figure 5). Tackling residential emissions should therefore be a priority for the Council. In terms of transportation emissions, most are produced by on-road travel, followed by aviation.

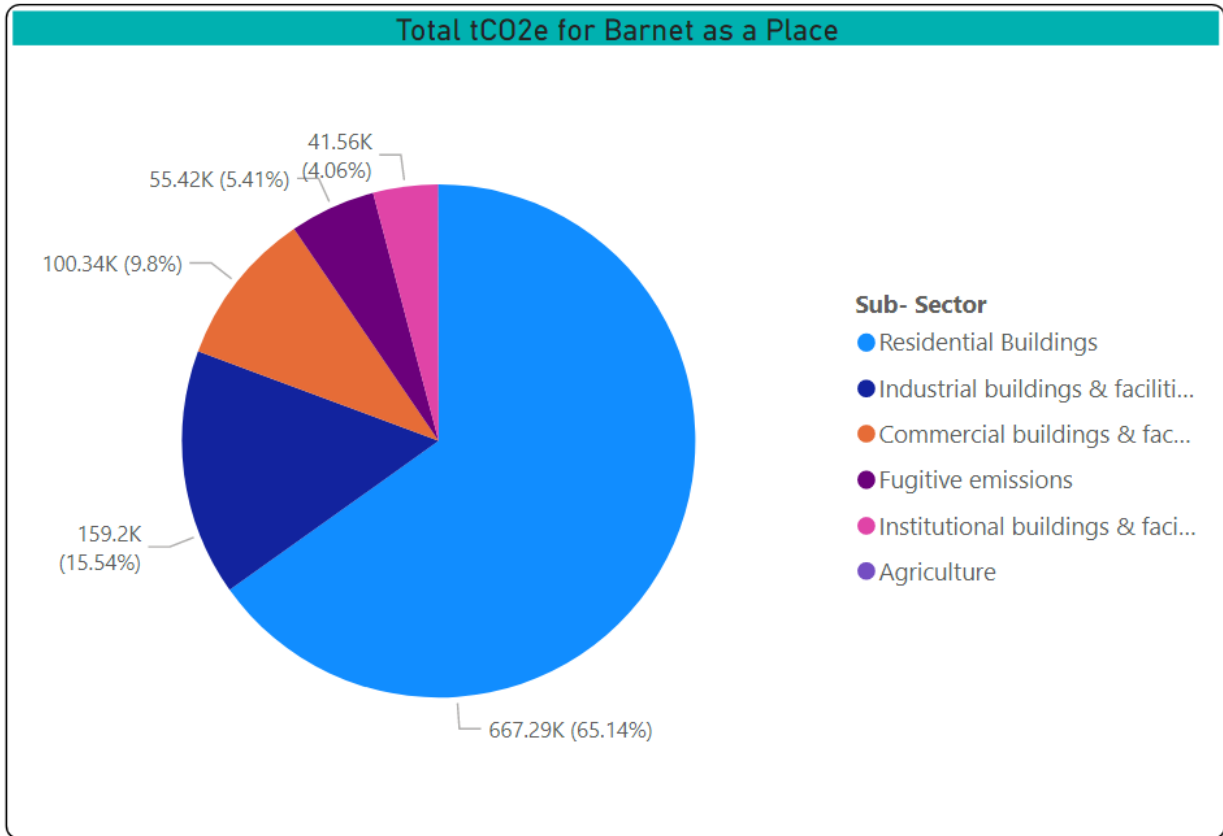


Figure 5 – Boroughwide stationary emissions by type

1.6.4 Carbon emissions are produced either directly (e.g. fuel combustion), indirectly (eg grid energy) or from other CO2 sources outside the borough (e.g. flights); across Barnet, 60% of emissions are produced directly.

1.7 Insights from the baseline

1.7.1 Following the production of the carbon baseline we have identified seven key areas that require a variety of interventions in the Council’s efforts for a more sustainable future. This is not an exhaustive list, but is designed to provide insight as to the areas which will require intervention and therefore which the Council can target in order to maximise the impact they can have on addressing sustainability within Barnet.

1.7.2 Due to the breadth of the issues identified by the carbon baseline, it is therefore important that the Sustainability Strategy is holistic and comprehensive in nature. However, by utilising a data led approach the most impactful and meaningful interventions can be prioritised; the carbon baseline highlights several key areas that warrant attention and action for both the Council and Barnet as a place.

Sustainable supply chain

1.7.3 As identified through the carbon baseline, the supply chain makes up the largest contribution to the Council’s carbon emissions. It is therefore imperative that the Council works with its supply chain to increase sustainability. This will require improving our access to data, embedding sustainability within the procurement process, and working collaboratively with existing partners and third parties.

1.7.4 Work is required to improve the data maturity of the Council’s supply chain. Better and more visible carbon emissions data will allow for more detailed and accurate analysis of supplier’s emissions; once this is done best practice can be identified in order to build a

more sustainable supply chain. The Council should ensure sustainability is properly considered and embedded within the procurement process. This can be done through embedding sustainability targets within major contracts, focusing particularly on those with the highest carbon impact, such as major works.

Sustainable partnering

- 1.7.5 In addition to working with the supply chain, the Council should look to partner with other organisations across both the public and private sector in order to facilitate a greater impact on shared environmental objectives. Partners may have greater access to the necessary networks, technologies, and infrastructure to support innovation and encourage knowledge sharing. Similarly, impactful change will require broader research and development, policy change, and technological innovation. It is therefore important that, alongside carbon reduction measures, the Council continues to engage with national and regional government to facilitate the required transformational changes.
- 1.7.6 The Council already has several successful local partnerships through forums such as the Barnet Partnership Board, Children and Young Peoples Partnership Board, and the Health and Wellbeing Board; as well as regional partnerships through the London Environment Directors Network (LEDNet) and the West London Alliance (WLA). It is therefore important that these partnerships are used effectively, in order to secure the open sharing of knowledge and expertise to achieve success.

Net zero property

- 1.7.7 The asset base and property portfolio make up the Council's largest directly controllable source of emissions. Over the past year most organisations, including the Council, have moved to more hybrid and dynamic modes of working, including working from home. Current lower occupancy levels make this a good time to start decarbonising the estate. Utilities from the Council's corporate estate are one of the top contributors to the organisations carbon emissions; additionally, they are under the Council's direct control, and the right technology is already available to mitigate many of the issues they pose.
- 1.7.8 While the Council already has substantial knowledge of much of the corporate estate, particularly the newer council office buildings, it is important that the Council gain a full understanding of the entire corporate estate, and the current efficiency measures in place, in order to fully define the appropriate target across the estate. Energy modelling can then help identify options, which will then need to be analysed further to determine the investment required and expected outcomes. Colindale has demonstrated how much more efficient a new build can be, as well as the potential for interventions such as retrofitting.
- 1.7.9 Additionally, while several energy saving and efficiency measures have already been put in place, there will always be significant emissions arising from the production of the energy used. Barnet's current energy mix, procured through the LASER Energy framework on behalf of the Council, schools and social housing, should be as sustainable as it can be. It is therefore important we explore renewable options when looking at the potential for energy production opportunities.

Fleet replacement programme

- 1.7.10 The Council's fleet is the second largest contributor of Council emissions. The current fleet is heavily reliant on diesel fuelled vehicles which, while cost effective, is less sustainable than low emissions alternatives. However, electrification offers the opportunity to make transportation more sustainable and improve residents' health and wellbeing. This will require significant investment in not only low emission vehicles, but also in ensuring there is the necessary infrastructure and grid capacity, as well as technological advancements

for large vehicles such as electric waste vehicles.

- 1.7.11 The recent ULEZ expansion expedited the need to upgrade much of the Council's fleet of waste vehicles, with another significant proportion due for replacement within 6-7 years. Additionally, the switch to more sustainable fleet options is expected to become more cost effective and financially viable as more electric vehicles are manufactured and the technology improves, for example upfront costs will decrease due to reduced battery costs and an increased variety of vehicles on the market. It is therefore likely that a replacement programme will become increasingly viable over the next decade.

Sustainable staff travel

- 1.7.12 It is important to consider employee travel behaviour, both for commuting to and from work, and also travel around the borough whilst at work. Over the past three years staff travel claimed under business mileage has remained static, with over 1.3 million miles claimed over the three-year period; yet the use of the Council owned hybrid pool cars remains relatively low. The recent consolidation of all Council services to Colindale, as well as the onset of the pandemic has meant that hybrid working has become business as usual for the Council, reducing staff commuting, and thus transport emissions.
- 1.7.13 Encouraging staff to make better use of pool cars will reduce the Council's impact on the environment and lower operating costs. However, we cannot rely solely on changing the vehicles that people drive. The uptake of low and zero emissions vehicles by staff, and how the current fleet of pool cars are managed needs to be considered, as well as encouraging car sharing. Alongside this, efforts to encourage the shift away from car usage and reduce the overall demand for travel across the borough are required, for example through improving public transport and active travel modes, as well as utilising technology so that where possible work can take place via video calls/phone calls rather than requiring staff to travel.

Make residential buildings more sustainable

- 1.7.14 The largest contributor to carbon emissions across the borough are the residential buildings. 75% of these emissions come from heating and water, which are mostly powered by fossil fuels; with the rest produced by lighting appliances and water, which are mostly powered by grid electricity. According to the Green Building Council, approximately 80% of the homes that will be occupied in 2050 in the UK have already been built; the majority of the challenge will therefore be in retrofitting the existing stock to meet future efficiency standards.
- 1.7.15 Although, as a local authority, Barnet Council has limited influence over privately owned homes and buildings, there is still the potential for action through signposting and supporting residents to access and utilise government schemes. Additionally, the Council has been successful in working to retrofit a proportion of its social housing, with the potential for further funding to arise to assist with similar action from private landlords and homeowners. It is therefore important we do as much as possible to ensure that both new and existing buildings are built to the highest efficiency standards. Also, where grid electricity is used, a key priority should be to explore sourcing it from renewable supplies and identifying ways to reduce demand.

Data management

- 1.7.16 While the carbon baseline provides a comprehensive overview of the emissions across the organisation and borough, it has also highlighted several other key areas where data is lacking. This is most notable within the housing and buildings realm, where significant work needs to be undertaken in order to holistically understand where our interventions need to

be targeted, as well as the level of work required to hit internal and national targets, for example those relating to EPC ratings.

1.7.17 Additionally, the carbon baseline highlighted the fact that, while not currently significant, fugitive emissions are going to play an increasingly important role in the Council and the boroughs journey to net zero. There is currently little data held on the fugitive emissions released by the Council and, as technology such as heat pumps usually do not require planning permission provided the planning conditions are met, there is even less knowledge on the figures for the private sector. It is therefore important we look to address this and build up a knowledge base that will allow us to assess the needs of the borough both now and for years to come.

1.8 **Strategy framework**

1.8.1 The Council has already undertaken several major pieces of work in order to improve the sustainability of the organisation and the borough. Officers have begun work on mapping out these projects, as well as other work that is being done through existing strategies and action plans; this will allow us to identify areas where action is required and therefore where the Council must look to focus its energy in order to chart a comprehensive route to net zero. It is therefore important that we look to conduct further analysis in order to gauge the extent to which these actions will enable us to meet net zero as a Council by 2030 and, as a borough, as soon as possible, as well as how they can be scaled up to meet these targets.

1.8.2 The carbon baseline has allowed us to recognise the areas which have the largest carbon impact and therefore take a data led approach to tackling these emissions and prioritising resources. In the new year we will look to implement an initial programme of actions; we will then follow this with a more detailed action plan and strategy in 2022.

1.8.3 This initial programme of actions will allow us to take advantage of significant grant opportunities that we expect to arise shortly, following COP26 and the Environment Act.

1.8.4 The following sections outline the key themes that will form the basis of the Sustainability Strategy, including areas related to both the Council and Barnet as a place. The themes will detail the actions already taken to tackle climate change, as well as a series of targets and actions to address the key findings of the carbon baseline. The ambitions of the strategy framework, detailed below, are all subject to funding, as well as feasibility and delivery plans. An executive summary and overview of the framework's ambitions is included in Appendix A.

1.9 **The Borough of Barnet – the Council's (place) leadership**

1.9.1 As identified in the carbon baseline it is important that we look to tackle, not only our own emissions as the Council, but also act as a leader in tackling emissions across the borough. The baseline identified several areas where action should be focused in order to hit net zero as quickly as possible, and within the given timeframes of national legislation. We are therefore proposing to target action around these areas, as detailed below.

Housing and buildings

1.9.2 The carbon baseline identifies that the majority of emissions within Barnet (58.23%) come from stationary energy sources, namely buildings, with almost two-thirds of this relating to residential buildings. The majority of the challenge will be about the need to retrofit the

existing building stock to meet future standards.

- 1.9.3 Only 41% of homes in Barnet are well insulated (at least EPC C-rated)², with the average expected to be EPC D-rated. Currently all privately rented dwellings must meet an EPC E-rating, but this will potentially rise to an EPC C-rating by 2028. There are currently no regulatory controls on private dwellings; however, reducing energy waste must be a priority to tackle both greenhouse gas emissions and help residents and businesses reduce their energy bills. The Council has a further role to help address and target incidences of fuel poverty, with almost one in ten households in Barnet living in fuel poverty³.
- 1.9.4 For buildings that are yet to be built, sustainable development is the cornerstone of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the London Plan and related guidance, alongside the Council's existing Local Plan and emerging draft Local Plan. These principles and associated policies are further supported by building regulations that collectively set the ground rules for energy efficiency both within new buildings and for improvement projects to existing buildings. As the Council's draft Local Plan is taken forward, through public examination in Spring 2022, its policies are expected to be rigorously assessed against net zero targets and commitments.
- 1.9.5 The wider construction industry is moving towards net zero developments, both for construction processes and the whole life operation of new buildings. Furthermore, while there is currently a cost differential between the standard approaches to construction and building to net zero standards, this is rapidly decreasing; it is especially starting to change as the perception of risk associated with the financing of development schemes changes. Yet equally the global cost of construction materials has significantly increased in recent years which is placing further pressure on the viability of construction. The Council will continue to take a holistic view of development viability and local priorities.
- 1.9.6 As was noted at Council on 19 October 2021, we are already taking significant actions to address energy inefficiency, including:
- Green Homes Grant: through the West London consortium the Council secured funding of over £1m towards the cost of retrofitting social housing in Barnet. This will include the installation of energy saving and carbon reduction measures such as external and cavity wall insulation, underfloor insulation, and heating controls.
 - Brent Cross Town: the new Brent Cross Town development is committed to achieving net zero carbon by 2030, through low carbon construction, renewable power, circular economy principles and carbon offsetting. It will empower residents and businesses to make their own low carbon lifestyle choices through the creation of a 15 minute town, meaning that all amenities and services are within 15 minutes travel for residents by foot.
 - Growth Strategy 2020-2030: Barnet's Growth Strategy sets out 'Guiding Principles' for delivering growth and development within the borough, including ensuring that development is sustainable. This followed consultation feedback highlighting a desire from residents for the Council to do more to address climate change.
- 1.9.7 While it is clear that significant action is already being taken, a more comprehensive approach needs to be embedded to ensure the Council can achieve its net zero targets. Such work will need to ensure that both new and existing residential buildings are made as efficient as possible. We are therefore proposing to introduce a number of new

² [Live tables on Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

³ [Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2018 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

workstreams, including:

Local Plan and other planning documents

The issue of construction emissions and sustainable design practices is increasingly prescient in light of the recent consultation responses to the draft Local Plan, which made significant reference to climate change. We will commit to providing a further submission to the inspector that will set out the net zero targets and framework proposed in this report. Where appropriate, draft policy text will be strengthened to reflect commitments set out in this report, the proposed actions of the Council, and government announcements associated with COP26 and their Net Zero Strategy.

The updated local development scheme has set out the Council's intentions to review planning guidance documents, including for sustainable design and construction. Additionally, proposals to the Council's own housing and infrastructure capital investment programmes will focus on a more rapid transition to net zero. Such leadership will enable the Council to apply greater influence within the local development sector. Updates to other supporting documents, such as the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), may be required to reflect the cost implications of revised commitments to sustainability in construction.

Retrofit Barnet's social housing stock to an average of EPC B by 2030, and net zero as soon as possible

We have already undertaken improvements to the energy efficiency of our social housing through funding secured under the Green Homes Grant. However, it is important that we continue to increase the pace of action to improve the efficiency and sustainability of the Council's own housing stock to kickstart retrofitting activity in the borough. Additional benefits secured through this process include helping to address fuel poverty, improving health and air quality, and providing green jobs and opportunities for local businesses to innovate.

There is a need to establish a stronger dataset relating to the energy performance of the current Council housing stock, including how energy is used within that stock and what would be required to upgrade the whole stock to meet emerging and future energy performance standards. While the existing programme was set to fully assess the stock over a period of five years, officers are currently considering ways to secure required data for planning for the upgrade of the stock over the coming year.

Through the Retrofit London Housing Action Plan⁴, and the joint ambitions of the Transport and Environment Committee (TEC), and London Environment Directors Network (LEDNet)⁵, Barnet has joined with all London boroughs in the bold ambition of working to retrofit London's building stock to an average level of EPC B by 2030. As a Council we are committing to ensure that all of Barnet's social housing will not just be retrofitted to an average level of EPC B by 2030, but we will seek to understand how the Council can get to whole life net zero as soon as possible after that.

We recognise that this commitment will bring with it significant financial challenges, both in terms of the identification of the energy efficiency issues and necessary measures required to rectify them, but also in terms of capital spend. However, this

⁴ [Retrofit London Housing Action Plan | London Councils](#)

⁵ [London Councils Housing Forum Executive Meeting](#)

change is both necessary and important, it is therefore logical and prudent that we look to undertake this shift as soon as possible so that we will be able to reap the rewards of reduced energy bills for years to come. Moreover, as has already been shown through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, the government has made a commitment to supporting this agenda through grant funding, a commitment we expect to increase with emerging changes to funding and financing. There may then still be some match funding requirements, and additional funding gaps to fill to complete this energy efficiency programme, but this remaining funding will need to be found through future reviews of the HRA Business Plan and the Council's future capital programme.

New build housing developed on behalf of the Council to be built to at least EPC B, using sustainable methods where possible

New build social housing will be built to at least EPC B. The potential for using cross laminated timber (CLT) to assist the buildings in acting as a carbon sink for those aspects of the development programme that it would not be possible to decarbonise will be explored. The government's Net Zero Strategy aims to support action in the construction sector by improving resource efficiency, in particular highlighting the role of material substitution to timber as a way of reducing embodied carbon – and this is likely to be promoted through the provision of financial support and increased research activity⁶.

Work with development partners to ensure housing developments are net zero by 2030

We will work with our existing development partners to ensure they are working towards the highest building standards. Through the development of Brent Cross Town, which will be net zero carbon by 2030 as well as creating the UK's largest 15 minute town, we have seen the potential for sustainable growth within the borough. It is important that we look to continue to hold all developers to high standards to ensure developments in the borough move rapidly towards whole life net zero carbon by 2030.

New build council commissions from 2025 to be planned for net zero

It is important that we look to codify our ambition to ensure that all future council new build commissions target the highest sustainability standards. Construction activity brings with it huge emissions that we will look to minimise and offset the impact of through the lifetime of the building. We are therefore setting the aspirational target for any new LBB and future The Barnet Group commissions after 2025 to be planned as net zero. This will require significant work in terms of assessing the scale of the challenge and mapping out a journey to ensure this commitment can be delivered.

Assist residents within private sector housing to make their homes more sustainable

While the Council has greater direct authority over social housing, within the privately owned sector, and especially where such properties are rented, an influencing role will be key to encouraging and supporting residents to make the required material changes to support energy efficiency and renewable energy installations within their own properties. The government's Net Zero Strategy highlights the importance of maximising opportunities to improve energy performance of owner occupier homes by

⁶ [Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener - October 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101222/net-zero-strategy-build-back-greener-october-2021.pdf)

working with owners to help them understand and access ways of improving the quality of their homes.

Additionally, since 1 April 2020, under the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015, it is unlawful for landlords to let, or continue to let, properties with an EPC rating below E, without a valid exemption in place. These Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) are expected to be increased further, and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy recently undertook a formal consultation on further raising the energy performance of privately rented homes to EPC Band C for new tenancies from 2025, and all tenancies from 2028. The introduction of the proposed new Additional Licensing Scheme, recently out for public consultation, will support the Council's Private Sector Housing Team in promoting landlord compliance with energy standards, and ensure healthy and safe conditions for all tenants.

The success of efforts to decarbonisation private residences will be largely reliant on factors outside the Council's control, such as BEIS' efforts to further decarbonise the grid. However, funding has previously been made available through the Green Homes Grant, which for a short period allowed residents to apply for funding to make energy improvements to their home, as well as the new Boiler Upgrade Scheme, which offers homeowners up to £5,000 to install low carbon heating systems in place of existing gas or oil heating. The government has promised that further green finance will be provided in order to make these wholesale retrofits more accessible. The Council could help to promote and strengthen delivery programmes by securing appropriate partners to assist residents and businesses in accessing future grants.

It is also important that we look to educate residents and inform them of the changes that will be required to hit the government's, and the borough's, net zero target dates. We will therefore also look to highlight best practice where possible; in order to do this, we will publish and publicise a comprehensive guide explaining how residents will be able to green their own home, this will highlight the different age of typical homes within the borough, bringing in elements of heat pumps, insulation and double glazing.

Additionally, we will explore options such as the use of a show home, as has been successful elsewhere, to highlight the sustainable improvements that are possible, and how they can be implemented, and communicate any demand side measures that can be used to help residents reduce their energy bills and dependence on grid energy.

Commission projects to improve and collate organisational and boroughwide data

While the carbon baseline provides a comprehensive overview of the emissions across the organisation and borough, it has highlighted several key areas relating to housing and building where data is both crucial and currently lacking. This is most notable in relation to:

- Energy performance (EPC) ratings for Council housing, and the cost of retrofit.
- Energy performance (EPC) ratings and their correlation with the private rented sector to understand the extent to which minimum standards are being met.
- Energy performance (EPC) ratings for the Council's corporate estate and the cost to effectively retrofit the wide range of buildings used for a variety of purposes.
- Fugitive emissions, both relating to the Council but also the borough as a whole

- Data to support effective uptake within the privately owned sector, to enhance the targeting and effective utilisation of grant funding.

We will therefore commission projects and, where necessary, procure specialist resources in order to gain a fuller understanding of the boroughwide picture and where best to target interventions to maximise our return on investment.

Make schools more sustainable

The Council has already explored many ways in which our schools can become more sustainable and decarbonise, predominantly through the retrofitting of energy efficiency measures; this is increasingly prescient due to the age of a lot of the school buildings across the borough. Through the annual school modernisation programme, the Council is prioritising the replacement of single glazed windows with double glazing to reduce heat loss, and any works to replace school roofs will automatically include the provision of additional insulation. In addition, all modular buildings that have been replaced since 2012 have been replaced with sustainable buildings fitted with solar PV.

Additionally, the catering provider for our schools, ISS, has taken several sustainable steps. Within schools all disposable cutlery, plates and cups are biodegradable, and their food suppliers use local ingredients wherever possible. ISS were winners of the Waste-Zero awards for their reduction in wasted food in 2020, and their main food supplier, Bidfood, aims to be achieve scope 1 and 2 net zero by 2030.

Furthermore, over the past couple of years all schools in Barnet have been reviewing and revising their curriculum. Some schools already had Eco-Councils (a representative group of pupils looking at the environmental issues that are pertinent to their school), but these have been refreshed and extended due to COP26 and the need to decarbonise. Moreover, good practice in schools is being shared in meetings and forums and a survey is being undertaken to evaluate the extent of the work within each school.

We will continue to work with schools to ensure their buildings are as sustainable as possible. This will predominantly be done by playing a coordinating role in facilitating schools to apply for government funding, with a particular focus on those buildings which remain under Council control; this will include investigating the inclusion of energy generation, including solar PV.

Transport

- 1.9.8 Transportation makes up over a third of boroughwide emissions, as well as a major part of the Councils internal emissions, through the fleet usage and staff travel. Additionally, nationally, transport is the largest emitting sector of the UK greenhouse gas emissions and, whereas other sources are decreasing, emissions from transport continue to increase. The Department for Transport's 'Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge' report in January 2020 sets out the challenges facing the sector⁷.
- 1.9.9 Barnet's Long Term Transport Strategy 2020-2041, adopted by Environment Committee in October 2020, sets out Barnet's vision for transport over the next two decades, as well as its response to the Mayors Transport Strategy. It includes strategic goals and high-level actions for achieving this vision, including proposals for encouraging the use of active

⁷ [Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/86422/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf)

travel mode shares, as well as making car travel and the movement of freight around the borough more sustainable. Noted below are several projects to make transport more sustainable:

- Electric vehicle charge point programme: Barnet has an ambitious electric vehicle charge point programme, which has installed over 150 charge points to date based on resident request, as well as freestanding town centre units and community charging hubs in car parks across the borough. Additionally, officers have recently been successful in securing a sum of £3,549,600 for the installation of around 500 on-street charge points, in roads where it has been identified that an alternative solution is required due to the street lighting column not being available for this purpose.
- Experimental road resurfacing: the Council has experimented with innovative new techniques with the aim of reducing waste, including trialling a new road surface that uses over 240 recycled tyres, removing the amount of waste going to landfill
- School streets: Barnet has implemented a number of school streets, with the aim of creating a safer environment for pupils to walk and cycle to school, and to deal with the high traffic volumes around schools at certain times of the day; the schemes work to reduce traffic volume and improve air quality.
- School travel planning: All schools are encouraged to have an updated School Travel Plan, which promotes sustainable methods of transport. It promotes walking, cycling, car sharing and public transport use and aims to reduce the number of car journeys to and from schools. The Council also has a Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy for children and young people, which aims to develop sustainable travel and transport infrastructure, improve Barnet's environment, increase health of children and improve transport safety.
- Cycle schemes: implemented a largely segregated, commuter focused, cycle lane along the A1000. This provides a safer north-south sustainable transport link from Finchley Town Centre to the borough with LB Haringey that, working with Haringey we hope will form part of an extended route across both boroughs. We are closely monitoring the effectiveness of the cycle lane with the view to making a decision on its future in the new year. We have also commenced a study on the provision of a leisure focused cycle route parallel to the A5, utilising the developing green spaces within the parks to the east of the A5, connecting these and other leisure, commercial and residential destinations. This will form part of the developing Barnet Loop⁸.

Electric vehicle charge points

The Barnet electric vehicle charge point programme is one of many positive steps Barnet has already made in decarbonising residential transport and supporting more sustainable travel methods. However, it is important that we continue to increase the rollout of charge points across the borough in order to support a more sustainable future for our residents and support them in adapting to the expanded Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ). Barnet already benefits from high electric vehicle ownership as can be seen below⁹.

⁸ [Committee Report \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)

⁹ [All vehicles \(VEH01\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Borough	2021 Q2	2021 Q1
Hillingdon	4,737	3,978
Barnet	4,452	4,146
Westminster	4,019	3,626
Ealing	3,777	3,305
Wandsworth	2,990	2,453

Although currently making up just 1.8% of all new vehicle registrations in the UK, projections indicate that there will be well over 100,000 Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEVs) on London roads by 2025. It is forecasted that this demand will only continue to grow in the period leading up to 2030, when new petrol and diesel vehicles will no longer be available; the National Grid's Future Energy Scenarios¹⁰ forecasts that there could be up to 128,450 electric vehicles in Barnet by 2030, with 45% of these residents not benefitting from off-street parking. It is important that we continue to deliver electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support this shift and prepare for the future demand that will be placed on our charging network. We will therefore shortly be bringing forward our first Electric Vehicle Strategy which will detail the anticipated growth of our charging network, as well as the variety of charging options that the Council will consider to ensure that there is a network that not only caters to the needs of residents, through the installation of a variety of charging methods and speeds, but is also financially viable and offers value for money. Following this, we will continue to install a comprehensive network of charge points, containing a range of charging solutions, that will support the borough in being fully battery electric vehicle (BEV) by 2030.

The main focus of Barnet's electric vehicle charge point programme has been, and will continue to be, lamp column mounted charge points due to their reliability and cost effectiveness. However, they are not suitable for all locations, including where the lamp column is located at the back of the footway. It is therefore important that we look at other ways in which we can provide suitable residential charging solutions, without creating cumbersome and often unnecessary street clutter. Consequently, officers have explored the EV market to identify a potentially decluttered charge point solution. A grant application was submitted to the Office of Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEV) to support an ambitious trial project of this type of charging technology for the purpose of installing around 500 on-street charge points. Through this process Barnet has been successful in securing a sum of £3,549,600, which is 75% of the cost of the project and the maximum sum available under the grant – this is also by far the largest OZEV award made to date.

Work with TfL and other partners to bring forward investment in orbital travel

The Long Term Transport Strategy 2020-2041 highlights the importance of improving orbital travel across the borough. Orbital journeys in Barnet by public transport are currently very difficult, with existing bus routes often slow and unreliable, due to the poor bus service and routes offered in Barnet compared to inner London boroughs. An efficient orbital service would link key town centres across the borough, as well as future infrastructure such as Crossrail 2 and West London Orbital. It would also reduce the reliance on the car of many residents, consequently reducing carbon emissions and

¹⁰ [download \(nationalgrideso.com\)](https://www.nationalgrideso.com/)

improving air quality across the borough. It is therefore important that, once funding is restored, we look the lobby TfL, as well as central and regional government sources for the increased investment required to make the orbital travel envisioned in the Long Term Transport Strategy a reality. We are currently at early stages of work with TfL to produce a feasibility study for orbital bus connections.

School streets

Since the start of the pandemic a priority area for Barnet has been in making our streets safer and cleaner, particularly on the roads around our schools, in order to facilitate walking and cycling. This will improve the overall health of our children and young people, reduce the impact of school travel on climate change, and improve the air quality of the borough. We will therefore continue to make use of available funding to install school streets wherever possible and appropriate across the borough.

Active travel

Alongside the more concrete steps taken above, it is important that we also look to make tangible changes and improvements to the ways in which residents travel around the borough. Through the implementation of the Long Term Transport Strategy, we have gone some way to improving the available opportunities for active travel around the borough, for example through supporting cycling and walking through the schemes listed above.

However, it is important that we continue to promote active travel opportunities within Barnet. Among other proposals, this will include continuing to implement the Barnet Loop, a 17-mile recreational active travel loop around the borough which will link town centres, leisure facilities and transport hubs. We have also recently begun work on a proposal to install step free access at Mill Hill Broadway, this will improve the accessibility and inclusivity of the station and active travel.

Car clubs

Car clubs are a pay as you drive system providing access to cars for registered members, who can book cars from a variety of locations across the borough. This provides benefits for both users and society more generally. They are often cheaper and more convenient than private car ownership, and also mean a reduced number of vehicles on the Barnet highway. Moreover, car club provision is highlighted in the Long Term Transport Strategy for the benefits it will have on achieving our vision for the future of transport in the borough.

While there are already car clubs operating within many of Barnet's developments, there is not currently an on-street solution for residents. We will therefore introduce an, at least partially, electric vehicle car club operator in coordination with the wider parking review and Electric Vehicle Strategy. We will work to ensure that this car club is comprised entirely of low or zero emissions vehicles by 2025.

Renewable Energy and Waste

1.9.10 London's linear economy is unsustainable, with around seven million tonnes of waste coming from London's homes, public buildings and businesses each year; only 41% of which is currently recycled. The recent Environment Act, and Resources and Waste

Strategy will shape how and what councils collect, and recycling and waste in the future. This includes determining future performance measures, moving away from weight-based measures, providing consistency among local authorities in what should be collected for recycling, and placing additional responsibility on those who produce the materials which go on to become waste. This will consequently drive producers to reduce the materials which become waste. The government is also considering the implementation of a Deposit Return Scheme to encourage recycling on the go. It has been carrying out consultation on all these matters. We will be reviewing our waste policies and practices following the passage of the Environment Act and the publication associated legislation.

1.9.11 The proportion of our electricity produced by renewable energy has increased hugely over the past decade to around a third; however more must be done – only 8% of total heating and cooling demand is currently derived from renewable sources¹¹. Much of this additional renewable energy will come from offshore wind, supported by the government’s ambition to quadruple the amount the country produces to 40GW by 2030.

1.9.12 We have already achieved much through the implementation of:

- LED street lighting: We have undertaken a wholesale change in streetlighting, converting the entire network to LED lighting. This will result in a drop in our lighting related emissions from almost 5,000 tCO₂e in 2015/16 to under 1,300 tCO₂e in 2020/21, as well as significant cost savings over the next decade.
- Existing waste policies: in 2018 Barnet agreed a new set of recycling and waste policies, these were developed to maximise waste prevention and recycling, and to improve the street scene. Barnet’s Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP) sets out key actions for cutting waste and boosting recycling for the period 2018-22. The RRP is used to drive and promote local activity that will also play an important role in helping to achieve the Mayor’s London-wide targets. These policies and the RRP will need to be reviewed following the publication and adoption of the Environment Act and associated legislation.
- North London Heat and Power Project (NLHPP): development has recently begun on the NLHPP, a ten-year £1.2 billion project to build an Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) and associated development. The current Energy from Waste Facility has served North London for 45 years and has diverted 21 million tonnes of waste from landfill but is coming to the end of its life; it is the oldest facility of its type in Europe. The new ERF will generate around 70 megawatts of electricity, enough to power around 127,000 homes, and will provide heat and hot water to at least 20,000 local homes and businesses. The facility will help convert up to 700,000 tonnes of waste per annum, to energy from the seven North London boroughs.

1.9.13 However, it is important that Barnet continues to show leadership in this area and commits to meeting the government’s ambitions in terms of increasing the role renewables can play in meeting our energy needs.

Solar panels

In the Road to Zero Strategy, Central Government set out that all new cars and vans should be effectively zero emission by 2040. Making sure the electricity system is ready to meet the future demand created by electric vehicles will be vital if we are to achieve this. We are developing a proposal to install and generate electricity from solar panels

¹¹ [Digest of UK Energy Statistics \(DUKES\): renewable sources of energy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/digest-of-uk-energy-statistics-dukess-renewable-sources-of-energy)

utilising opportunities within LBB's real estate portfolio, while providing increased capacity and access to EV charge points on LBB's estates supports the Central Government strategy. Additionally, new build projects often incorporate solar panels and low carbon technology which have included a number of school projects and the Oakleigh Road Depot – in addition, net zero buildings have also been utilised in school modular projects where practical. We will therefore commit to taking the opportunities for energy generation across the corporate estate, including the installation of solar panels across LBB's existing real estate portfolio, as well as including solar panels where possible on any new development run by Barnet. We will also continue to explore alternative opportunities and methods of energy generation across the borough where feasible.

District heating networks

Decarbonising heating and cooling is a central part of the government's Net Zero Strategy and must also be integral to Barnet's strategy to reach net zero, heat networks can play an important role in achieving this. They are a proven, cost-effective way of providing reliable, efficient, low carbon heat to a large number of residents, by utilising energy released as heat from a range of energy sources and connecting to energy consumers through a system of highly insulated pipes. The geographic opportunities for low carbon heat network deployment across London and the country as a whole can be found in BEIS' 'Opportunity areas for district heating networks in the UK' study¹².

While Barnet does not currently make wide use of district heating, BEIS' analysis highlights the potential for its growth across London. It is therefore important that we look at the potential for its implementation, particularly within our new developments where it will be easier to integrate. We will therefore begin work to explore the viability of the implementation of such schemes, including gaining a better understanding of the cost to the Council, and the proposed financial and environmental benefits to residents, as well as the efficacy of a wider rollout of district heating.

Business, skills and partner organisations

- 1.9.14 In our role as an influencer and leader of place it is important that we not only look to work with residents to ensure they can be more sustainable, but also explore ways in which we can encourage Barnet businesses and partner organisations to improve and act more sustainably. A significant proportion of our boroughwide emissions will be produced through the operation of businesses across the borough. Of our stationary energy emissions, 15% comes from the operation of industrial buildings and almost 10% comes from the commercial use of buildings; similarly, the significant emissions come from the movement of transport around the borough, with a significant proportion of this attributed to freight and logistical travel.
- 1.9.15 The role of business and industry is given particular consideration in the government's Net Zero Strategy¹³, which aims to decarbonise industry in line with the wider net zero goals, while similarly attracting inward investment, future proofing businesses, and securing high wage, high skill jobs. It will seek to support industry in switching to cleaner fuels, help them improve their resource and energy efficiency, and drive decarbonisation through carbon

¹² [Research and analysis overview: Opportunity areas for district heating networks in the UK: second National Comprehensive Assessment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

¹³ [Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener - October 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

pricing.

1.9.16 There is already some work being undertaken in this area, both in terms of Barnet as a borough and an organisation, including

- E-cargo bikes: we have recently secured external funding to trial the implementation of e-cargo bikes within some of Barnet's town centres. This will enable small businesses to make easy last mile deliveries in an affordable and sustainable way. Additionally, with the help of Mayor of London Air Quality funding, the Council is offering local businesses a 50% discount on their first month using the new cargo bikes.
- Addressing wasted food: the recent winners of the 2021 Entrepreneurial Barnet competition, Bulkify, have developed an app which allows people to buy discounted quality, sustainable food by grouping purchases. This increases the access to sustainable food sources, as well as reducing unnecessary travel across the borough. Additionally, the Barnet Food Hub has grown over recent years and works to reduce wasted food and build resilience within the circular economy.
- Sustainable temporary classrooms for bulge classes: temporary school classrooms have been built with the target of being net zero, including comprehensive insulation and solar panels.
- Green skills: We have continued to engage with education and skills providers to ensure that children and young people across the borough are equipped with the correct skills to make use of the jobs of the future, as well as retraining and upskilling to existing workforce where necessary

1.9.17 It is also important that we continue to work alongside partners to deliver environmental and sustainability outcomes. This will include directly engaging with businesses and promoting the work of our partner organisations, including external organisations such as West London Business and the Federation of Small Businesses, as well as the borough's schools and further educations facilities.

- Better Futures: the Better Futures programme aims to make London a beacon of cleantech, low carbon and resource efficient industry, as well as rewarding carbon cutting businesses. As part of this WLB are providing coordination, corporate engagement and workspace support to businesses across West London.
- Race to Zero: the UK government and UN Race to Zero campaign aims to encourage local businesses to set Science Based Targets for when and how they will achieve net zero carbon emissions. WLB and FSB are supporting this through promotion and providing access to resources, tools and information to help small businesses prepare for change, go green, and become more sustainable.
- Federation of Small Businesses resources: the FSB has a number of resources to assist small businesses in taking their first steps to becoming a net zero business, including advice on how to calculate their carbon footprint, sustainable procurement, cutting vehicle use, and carbon offsetting.

1.9.18 We will work to support and promote the work of our partner organisations and small businesses within the borough, including working alongside West London Business and the Federation of Small Businesses to ensure that all Barnet businesses have access to

the necessary information and support required to develop and implement their own net zero plans. Similarly, it is important that we continue to look for new ways to build resilience within Barnet businesses and support them in becoming more sustainable.

Library of things

We will work to install and implement a library of things within a Barnet town centre to help reduce consumption emissions; this will be used as a trial to support the expansion of further schemes. A library of things acts much like a regular library, but rather than borrowing books, it offers residents the opportunity to borrow items that would otherwise rarely be used, such as drills, sound systems and sewing machines. Installing a library of things within a Barnet town centre would make it easy for residents to borrow the household items they need, while saving money and reducing waste. This will help to reduce consumption emissions and waste – in Crystal Place the scheme has saved almost 16,000kg of waste from going to landfill.

Green skills

In order to deliver on many of the schemes outlined throughout this report, we will need to continue to work to strengthen our education sector, particularly the skilling and reskilling of green skills; this work will be required to facilitate programmes such as retrofitting and the installation of electric vehicles charge points. It is also important that we look to build resilience within the borough's workforce through upskilling to prepare for future changes within the job market. If we do not do so there is a risk that existing employment opportunities will be put under threat. Additionally, the government's Net Zero Strategy aims to support the creation of up to 54,000 jobs in green industry; to ensure that Barnet is able to make the most of this job creation, it is important that we continue to look at ways in which residents can be supported in preparing for the jobs of the future. We will:

- Continue to monitor the skills gaps highlighted by employers to inform future plans. The current gaps reported nationally include heat pump installation, installation of external wall insulation and other building upgrades for energy efficiency, and electric vehicle charge point installation.
- Work with and encourage local training providers, including further education providers, such as Barnet and Southgate College, and independent training providers to develop courses; for example, employers across multiple sectors have expressed the need to create more short, bootcamp style, courses. Barnet and Southgate College have already established a Sector-Based Work Academy in external wall insulation.
- Maintain a focus on future growth areas, including greenspace management and bike repair.
- Actively engage with, and support the setting up of, an Academy Hub, supported by the GLA, for green skills in West London.

Natural environment and biodiversity

1.9.19 Barnet has a well-deserved reputation for being one of London's greenest boroughs, with significant green belt open space, highly regarded parks, wetlands including the Darlands Wetlands, and 20-30% tree cover. We have an important role to play in protecting and enhancing the borough's biodiversity, helping London to respond to the changing climate,

and helping to mitigate and reduce carbon production through green infrastructure and offsetting. It is important we continue to have a natural environment that enhances biodiversity, provides significant protection against flooding and which helps to mitigate overheating in London. Trees also play an important role in removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it as carbon.

- Tree planting: Barnet's Tree Policy 2017-22 outlines the role of trees within the borough, including the costs and benefits of different trees, as well as a targeted approach to street tree planting. The Tree Policy aims to contribute to the biodiversity of the borough and ensure Barnet is a leader in tree planting in London by committing to planting 900 trees a year for the duration of the policy. We have also recently focused on woodland creation, with the implementation of two tiny forest schemes which will be planted over this winter; we will review their efficacy in the new year, which will inform future woodland creation schemes.
- Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) membership: GiGL works to mobilise, curate and share data on London's natural environment. Our membership will allow us to make informed decisions in policy and practice, and will inform the creation of a Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Silk Stream Flood and Resilience Innovation (SSFRI) project: Together with Harrow we have secured £6m to reduce river and surface water flooding in the Silk Stream catchment area; the project aims to build nature based and sustainable schemes within the area.

1.9.20 We still need to do more to help build resilience and do what we can to offset the emissions already being produced within the borough

Biodiversity Action Plan and ecology

It is important that we continue to build upon Barnet's reputation as a green borough by maximising the available opportunities to improve and enhance the green infrastructure of the borough and develop a stronger link to biodiversity and ecological improvement. Through developing an ecologist service and Biodiversity Action Plan it will allow us to better protect and restore biological systems across the borough, particularly those which may have been affected by the borough's growth and development.

Gain a better understanding of the borough's canopy cover

The Mayor of London's Environment Strategy and Barnet's draft Local Plan commit to increasing London's green cover, making over half of London green and increasing canopy cover by 10% by 2050. If we are to hit these targets it is important that we first gain a better understanding of the canopy cover that already exists within the borough, not just that from street trees, and where we need to focus action. We will therefore conduct a Treeconomics iTree study to gain an in depth understanding of a ward level breakdown of the total canopy cover across the borough. This will allow us to better focus interventions and planting, as well as inform the refresh of the Barnet Tree Policy.

Implement appropriate 'greening' and biodiversity improvements

To help tackle the problem of emissions arising from housing and buildings within the borough, and their implications for urban heating, it will be important to not only consider

the energy efficiency of buildings, but also look much more closely at the way the landscaping of both public and private outdoor spaces are designed, to support tree and shrub planting, alongside a wide variety of measures to support and enhance biodiversity. New developments in particular will need to meet a minimum of a 10% uplift in biodiversity as a result of development, this will be especially challenging for smaller sites to achieve without innovation around the approach to such sites.

There are many tools at our disposal when looking at this, including Urban Greening Factor (UGF) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements. UGF is a tool to evaluate the quality and quantity of urban greening, it enables major developments to demonstrate how they have included urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design. BNG delivers measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Following the adoption of the full requirements of the Environment Act, we will work to integrate both urban greening and biodiversity net gain into the planning and design process and consider site specific constraints and opportunities, including the potential to link onsite greening into the wider green infrastructure network.

Improve water management within Barnet

It is important that we not only look to tackle climate change, but also mitigate against many of the detrimental effects it will have on the borough, such as an increased risk of flooding. We will therefore commit to delivering a boroughwide study to provide a baseline of nature based sustainable drainage opportunities for flood risk management to enable targeted delivery of flood risk management and wider benefits; as well as developing a better understanding of our drainage assets on ordinary watercourses through surveying and mapping. It is equally important that we embed water management within other council functions, including through reviewing and improving processes, informing stronger flood risk policies to deliver quality and timely responses on planning consultations, and encouraging the delivery of sustainable drainage measures delivering multiple benefits.

Communication activity

- 1.9.21 It is also key that we look to engage residents and businesses along the way. We have therefore recently published a series of sustainability webpages which lays out the work the Council is already undertaking to ensure the borough is more sustainable, as detailed in this report, as well as information on the work being taken to produce the Sustainability Strategy and advice for residents on how they can become more sustainable in their own life.
- 1.9.22 The launch of the webpages was supported by a communications plan, which highlighted the information that could be found on the webpages and the wider work being undertaken by the Council to ensure a sustainable future for the borough. The communications plan also links to the wider national picture, and specifically the work being undertaken by the Government at COP26 and within the recently launched Net Zero Strategy. It is also important that we look to continue to communicate and engage with those groups with a particular interest in this area, such as the many residents with a focus on this area and engaging with children and young people through schools.
- 1.9.23 Moreover, a statement from the Leader of the Council has been published on the website. This outlines the ambition of the Council in developing a Sustainability Strategy that will

contribute to the government meeting, or even exceeding, their net zero targets.

1.9.24 It is vital that we continue to support residents in making sustainable changes within their own lives and catalyse the shift towards a net zero future. As highlighted in this report, we have already done much to assist residents in making this shift, from building a comprehensive network of electric vehicle charge points to signposting a number of government grants. These schemes will make tangible differences in improving the lives of residents and businesses across the borough, through improving air quality, reducing the reliance on fossil fuels, such as oil and gas, and building resilience within the natural environment.

1.9.25 We will therefore continue to communicate with residents, to not only make them aware of the work of the Council, but also so that they can feed in and contribute to the development of the Sustainability Strategy. An overview of the communications and engagement that will be undertaken throughout the development of the strategy can be seen below.

Immediate communications, following Policy & Resources Committee

- Communications will be undertaken to share the ambitions and commitments noted within this framework. We will also continue to communicate the sustainability actions already undertaken by the Council. This will utilise existing communications channels, such as press releases, social media, and Barnet First magazine articles.
- Barnet's sustainability webpages will be updated to reflect the development of the strategy, as well as providing further information including a summary of the Council's sustainability commitments (as noted in this report and Appendix A) and some frequently asked questions. We will also improve signposting to ensure residents are able to make use local and government resources to reduce carbon emissions and become more sustainable within their own lives.

Engagement and communications, January – March 2022 (prior to the pre-election period)

- Public engagement with residents to provide them with the opportunity to help shape the development of the Sustainability Strategy and test the content of this framework; this will include events with a representative group of residents and sessions with young people.

Consultation, engagement and communications, May 2022 – strategy adoption by P&R Committee

- Officers will conduct a public consultation to gather feedback and inform the development of the Sustainability Strategy.
- Communications to highlight and signpost to the public consultation will be undertaken via a number of channels. We will continue to highlight the sustainability actions already undertaken by the Council, as well as the adoption, and subsequent implementation, of the strategy. This will be undertaken via communications channels such as social media and Barnet First magazine articles.

1.10 **Barnet as an organisation**

1.10.1 The carbon baseline identified that 547,000 tCO₂e were produced by the Council over a three-year period, at an average of 182,333 tCO₂e each year, with the majority of these arising from goods and services we procure. We are therefore proposing the actions below to address our own emissions, with a focus on our largest emitter – our supply chain.

Supply chain

1.10.2 Barnet's carbon baseline identified the Council's supply chain as the single largest contributor to the organisation's emissions, with over 95% of carbon emissions being attributed to it. It is therefore important that, when looking to reduce our own emissions, we first look at our supply chain as a matter of priority. Through working to reduce our existing supply chain, as well as embedding sustainable procurement practices to reduce the emissions of future contracts, we will be able to drive a greater carbon return on investment than action in other areas. While there is still more work to be done, the Council has begun to act on embedding sustainability into its supply chain through policy, such as:

- **Social Value Policy:** Barnet's Social Value Policy is due to be adopted at this meeting as a separate agenda item; it will lay out how Barnet will seek to secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits through its procurement activities. The underpinning terms of measurement include improved biodiversity and air quality measures as potential offers from contracting partners.

1.10.3 While the Social Value Policy will bring positive outcomes across the borough, including in the sustainability realm, it is important that we continue to do more to integrate sustainability considerations into everything we procure. We are therefore suggesting the workstreams below for implementation over the next year.

Sustainable procurement policy

Over the next six months, the Council will be updating its Procurement Strategy to reflect changes in approach around service delivery requirements, social value and its aspirations on net zero. This will reflect requirements that sustainability be integral to future procurement and commitments to sustainability will be a key plank of prospective bidders' submissions. The updated strategy is timetabled to be presented to a future P&R Committee in line with the Sustainability Strategy. All future procurements from this date will have sustainability considerations embedded within them. When reviewing contracts, to drive efficiency, we will initially focus on works contracts for above Public Contracts Regulation threshold tenders. The intention is that upon the successful delivery for these works contracts, this will then be rolled out to lower value works and finally all procurement exercises.

Initial work will need to be undertaken to understand the potential value of updating the Procurement Strategy for procurement activities, including looking at examples of other boroughs where such a policy as worked and learning from good practice, as well as gaining a better understanding of the scope of the work and the resource required in producing a policy. Procurement and Finance teams will need to jointly lead on the work to ensure the policy complements existing procurement policy and practice, as well as the new Social Value Policy.

Data collection and monitoring of our supply chain

Through the production of the carbon baseline, we have been able to gain a deeper understanding of our supply chain and where our emissions come from; however, it has also highlighted areas where this information is lacking and where more can be done to make the data collection easier, and the data collected more thorough and complete. With this in mind, it is important that we review our financial management systems in order to ensure that the categorisation and classification of spend is easy to monitor and consistent with other data sets used by the Council, such as the BEIS standard conversion factors used to calculate the borough's supply chain emissions. This will be done in line with the Strategic Contract Review process, the current contract expires in September 2023.

Council operations

1.10.4 Excluding the Barnet supply chain, the Council produced total scope 1 and 2 emissions of 27,000 tCO₂e over the three-year period measure. This is not a large proportion in the context of the wider borough emissions, however it is still significant, not only in terms of fulfilling our role as a leader of place and acting as an exemplar for residents, but also because they are the emissions over which we exercise the greatest control. We have already done much to reduce these emissions through significant investment and capital programme works, as identified below, but more must still be done in order to hit net zero within the agreed timeframe.

- RE:FIT project: installed energy saving measures on the corporate estate, such as libraries and council offices, including the town hall. Measures include boiler optimisers, LED lighting and solar photovoltaic panels. The CO₂ savings of this project are estimated at 139 tCO₂e per year.
- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS): the Council is currently finalising the PSDS project, which is a £1.38m grant to work towards decarbonising some of the Council's buildings. Energy saving measures include installing heat pumps, solar photovoltaic panels, battery storage, LED light and Central Management Systems (CMS); this will also result in a reduction in gas use in favour of electricity, a greener alternative. The project is expected to lead to savings of 288 tCO₂e per year, as well as financial savings due to reduced energy costs for the buildings.
- ULEZ compliant fleet: over the past few years we have undertaken changes to ensure the entire Barnet fleet is more sustainable and fits the tighter emissions standards brought in with the expansion of the Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ). This included investing £15m in ensuring our waste vehicles are more fuel efficient and with lower emissions – this brings with it improvements in carbon emissions and air quality.
- Carbon Reduction Commitment: under the Council's reporting for the Carbon Reduction Commitment, the CO₂ emissions based principally on the corporate non-education estate reduced by 59% between 2014/15 – 2018/19. This has been the result of a number of factors including a reduction in emissions associated with grid electricity generation, and reduction in the corporate estate and construction.
- Reduction in the corporate estate: over the past few years we have successfully reduced the carbon emissions from our estate through the use of more modern buildings (e.g. Oakleigh Depot). We have also recently exited Barnet House and fully

moved services across to our new council office building in Colindale; this has had the effect of both reducing the number of corporate offices we use, while also moving into a more energy efficient building. For example, by no longer operating from Barnet House we have been able to save approximately 500 tCO₂e per year.

1.10.5 As stated above, despite the comparatively minor scope 1 and 2 emissions¹⁴ produced by the Council, it is important in our role as a leader of place that we look to act and hit the proposed target of net zero by 2030. We are therefore proposing the below workstreams.

Net zero buildings by 2030

Excluding supply chain emissions, as noted previously Barnet's largest source of emissions comes from the corporate estate through its use of utilities such as heating, as well as electricity, water and fugitive emissions. While much has already been done to ensure that our corporate estate is more energy efficient, through better insulation and the use of cleaner methods of heating, more must be done. We are therefore committing to ensuring that all of the buildings on our corporate estate are operational net zero by 2030. This change will require significant investment from the Council in terms of both retrofitting and further renewable energy generation investments. Regulatory changes will shift the Council's ability to sign new leases for the corporate estate where buildings do not meet a minimum energy performance threshold, and therefore a targeted approach within appropriate timeframes will be required to maximise opportunities and ensure income from the estate is not affected by the emerging standards highlighted in the Corporate Asset Management Plan in September 2021. The Council will therefore explore retrofitting operational and commercially let Barnet owned buildings up to EPC B, in order to significantly reduce emissions.

Renewable energy

The Council's energy is currently sourced through a framework contract, which supplies the Barnet corporate estate, as well as several other public sector buildings within Barnet, such as schools, libraries and community centres, with a 'grid mix' of electricity and gas – meaning the fuel sources are currently not 100% REGO renewable. We will therefore explore the possibility of switching suppliers and move to a green tariff for this energy procurement; this will clearly signal the Council's ambition to promote change across the organisation and the borough.

Although this will not mean that the energy consumed by the Council will necessarily be renewable, as it will still be dispatched by the National Grid, it will encourage the uptake of further green energy within the national supply as a green energy tariff means the designated supplier will need to match the energy used by the Council with renewable energy, which it will then feed back into the National Grid. The greater the demand for green energy tariffs, the faster the percentage of green energy in the national supply will increase.

Officers will begin work on exploring the feasibility and scoping out a business case for the project following Committee approval, with the commitment of switching sources by the beginning of financial year 2023/24 at the latest.

¹⁴ Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy. Scope 3 emissions are all indirect emissions (not included in scope 2) that occur in the Council's value chain.

Fully electric fleet by 2030

Through the replacement of our waste vehicles with ULEZ compliant alternatives we have gone some way to reducing the emissions of our fleet, leading to an improvement in air quality across the borough. However, our fleet emissions still make up approximately a third (33.94%) of the Council's total scope 1 and 2 emissions (emissions excluding our supply chain). If we are to hit net zero by 2030, it is important that we prioritise looking at decarbonising our transport and increasing the usage of zero and low emissions vehicles.

There is not currently the required technology available in order to facilitate a wholesale switch to a zero emissions fleet, but technology in this sector is changing and improving rapidly, with the use of electric vehicles becoming increasingly viable. The large recycling and waste collection fleet is next due for renewal in 2028, by which time electric, or at least plug-in hybrid, options are likely to be available on the market. We will therefore, where possible and subject to the emergence of the required electrical infrastructure and technology, replace our fleet with zero or low emissions vehicles, with the ambition of achieving a net zero fleet by 2030.

However, for many of our smaller fleet vehicles, alternatives already exist; we will therefore begin the process of switching to low or zero emissions vehicles for much of the Council fleet in advance of the 2030 target.

Additionally, a significant hurdle will be in ensuring that charging is possible and cost effective. We will therefore work with UKPN to ensure that, where necessary, there is the available grid capacity in place to facilitate charging.

The cost implications of the fleet replacement programme will be factored into the Council's capital programme.

Sustainable staff travel

As was highlighted in the carbon baseline, 1.3 million business miles were claimed over the past three years, which does not include the additional emissions arising from commuting to and from work. It is therefore important that we look to support staff to make sustainable changes where possible, in an effort to reduce the contribution transport makes to our carbon emissions. We will continue to explore efforts to make staff travel more sustainable, including through the promotion of hybrid working, and of the Council's hybrid pool cars, and exploring the opportunities for carsharing and parking charges at the Colindale office.

Responsible investment and sustainability of staff pensions

The impact of climate change is a major risk that requires active management to reduce carbon exposures and offers opportunities to invest in new technologies that will enhance the sustainability of the fund. Our belief that well managed companies will generate superior returns encapsulates all aspects of environmental, social and governance issues; in addition to reducing carbon emissions, we will seek out good social and governance practices when selecting investments. Actions taken in 2021 include transitioning the equity portfolio to low emission investments and committing funds to renewable energy. In advance of setting decarbonisation targets the fund will work with appointed fund managers to measure the carbon footprint of the fund during

2022 and to map the extent to which current investments are net zero aligned. These findings will be published and updated on an annual basis.

Refocus treasury management

We can further influence our sustainability objectives through our investments and treasury management. As a responsible investor, the Council should be committed to considering environmental, social and governance issues. While the first priorities of the treasury must remain security, liquidity and yield, we will also have a particular focus on taking action against climate change and pursuing activities that have a positive social impact. With these priorities kept in place, steps will be taken to:

- Ensure an understanding of the degree to which investments may contribute towards climate change – this may take the form of measuring the carbon footprint or similar measures.
- Identify and understand the extent to which investments are exposed to risks driven by climate change.
- Keep abreast of new investment opportunities that have regard to ethical investing and climate change.
- Understand the ESG policies of funds when considering new investment opportunities.

1.11 Finance and resourcing

1.11.1 In order to implement the workstreams included in this report, we will continue to apply for additional funding and grants as they arise, such as Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3, the emerging Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and the Sustainable Warmth Competition. We will also continue to look at invest to save opportunities, innovative green funding models and, where possible, maximise carbon and financial return on investment. It is expected that further funding will be made available in light of the Environment Act 2021 and other government legislation and policies. As we further develop this programme of work and prepare the Strategy, we will fully consider the resourcing requirements and, where necessary, the engagement of specialist expertise required to facilitate this work. Any funding for specific proposals will be explored in the forthcoming Sustainability Strategy and will be sought in accordance with the existing budgetary approval frameworks.

1.11.2 The resources required to deliver upon the commitments proposed in this report haven't, in their entirety, been factored into the MTFS as, for the most part, there is an expectation that some of this funding will be made available by national and regional governments, as well as other third parties.

2. Reasons for recommendations

2.1 Recommendation 1: as was highlighted by the Prime Minister at the opening of COP26, the evidence for manmade climate change is now overwhelming, with the need to take action becoming ever more urgent. This sentiment was echoed in the Leader of Barnet Council's recently released statement on sustainability, which made clear the Council's ambition of being at the forefront of London's programme to tackle climate change, and playing its part in supporting the government's commitment of being net zero by 2050. While we have already taken action in this area, it is important that we continue to show leadership and navigate a route to becoming a net zero borough.

- 2.2 Recommendation 1: additionally, by setting the ambitious net zero target of 2030 as an organisation, and as soon as possible after this for the borough, it will allow the Council to promote and enhance its role as being an exemplar in better managing our resources and delivering our services sustainably, as well as working with residents and businesses to help them also play their part in tackling climate change.
- 2.3 Recommendation 2: this report provides an overview of the holistic carbon baseline produced by Ernst & Young, on behalf of the Council. It provides an overview of how the baseline was produced, the findings and insights developed in the process, a summary of the baseline, and an articulation of ways in which the Council could move forward in reducing its carbon impact.
- 2.4 Recommendation 3: the Council has already taken significant steps to ensure the borough is more sustainable for residents now, as well as future generations to come. Most notably, this has been done through the securing of major government grants, as well as working with other Councils to deliver shared investment programmes. However, more must be done to ensure that we meet the government's ambitious net zero targets, both as an organisation and as a borough.
- 2.5 Recommendation 3: in the lead up to COP26, the Council implemented a communication campaign, aimed at highlighting the work the Council is already doing and raising awareness of the wider national picture. This campaign included posters and social media posts, as well as the release of sustainability webpages and a statement from the Leader of the Council.
- 2.6 Recommendation 4: as explained above, this initial Sustainability Strategy Framework is designed to lay the groundwork for, and form the basis of, the Council's Sustainability Strategy. It proposes immediate actions to address climate change, assist the Council in meeting its net zero targets, and ensure the Council is able to make the best use of the available government funding. It is important that the Council maintains its sustainability momentum, as well as demonstrate to residents and businesses its wider intention in terms of developing an ambitious programme of actions. It is therefore recommended that Committee approve this Strategy Framework.
- 2.7 Recommendation 5: the Sustainability Strategy Framework outlined above would allow the Council to make use of the momentum created by COP26 and the government's Net Zero Strategy, as well as make immediate improvements to the borough and the Council's carbon footprint. While the majority of the work at present will consist of utilising existing resources, some additional resources may be required to explore the scope of the work and analyse the projected costs and benefits. It is therefore recommended that Committee delegate the Executive Director of Resources the authority to make progress towards the objectives of the Sustainability Strategy Framework, as set out in this paper, and in line with previous, related decisions of this Committee, in advance of the formal adoption of the full detailed Sustainability Strategy in 2022.
- 2.8 Recommendation 5: areas of activity which may need to be undertaken include bidding for external funding, and spending in line with the objectives of this funding; repurposing existing delegated budgets in both Environment and Growth and Corporate; and advancing corporate resources in line with financial regulation and the objectives set out in the framework in this paper.
- 2.9 Recommendation 5: this will not only allow us to demonstrate our commitment to the programme of work, but also allow time for scoping work, and comprehensive feasibility

and delivery studies to be produced, which will enable the mapping and prioritising of sustainability investments to chart the required path the net zero for the Council, in advance of the formal adoption of the Strategy.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 Recommendation 1: Committee could choose to not set a net zero target date for the organisation or the borough; however, this is not recommended. The government's Net Zero Strategy makes clear that tackling climate change will require a coordinated approach, working across local and national government, and with businesses and civil society organisations¹⁵. If we are to decarbonise as a society then it is important that we continue to set ambitious targets in order to drive and facilitate the innovation required.
- 3.2 Recommendation 4: Committee could choose to not approve the Sustainability Strategy Framework. This would not be recommended as it would not allow Committee to set the direction of travel in advance of the Strategy. The approval of the strategy framework and the implementation of the immediate set of actions and targets is important if Barnet is to fulfil its ambition of being the leading London borough in relation to sustainability.
- 3.3 Recommendation 5: Committee could choose to not approve the programme of works – this is not recommended. If Barnet is to fulfil its obligations with regard to recent legislation, make the most of emerging grant funding, and achieve its Net Zero ambitions, it is important that the sustainability programme is resourced to enable the production of an ambitious and comprehensive Sustainability Strategy.

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 If the Committee is minded to approve the recommendations in this report, then the Council will start to progress by undertaking feasibility studies and considering the implementation of the proposals noted in the Strategy Framework above. Officers will continue to engage with stakeholders to chart the Council's route to net zero, engaging with specialist resources where required, and draft a Sustainability Strategy which takes a data led approach to achieving net zero

5. Implications of decision

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 sets out four priorities for the Council, they are:
- Clean, safe and well run – a place where our streets are clean and anti-social behaviour is dealt with so residents feel safe. Providing good quality, customer friendly services in all that we do.
 - Family friendly – creating a Family Friendly Barnet, enabling opportunities for our children and young people to achieve their best.
 - Healthy – a place with fantastic facilities for all ages, enabling people to live happy and health lives.
 - Thriving – a place fit for future, where all residents, businesses and visitors benefit from improved sustainable infrastructure & opportunity.
- 5.1.2 The Sustainability Strategy Framework contributes to all four priorities of the Barnet Plan, but in particular will deliver against the Thriving priority.

¹⁵ [Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener - October 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97222/net-zero-strategy-build-back-greener-october-2021.pdf)

5.1.3 The Sustainability Strategy Framework will support the delivery of outcomes from adopted Council strategies, including the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the Growth Strategy, the Long Term Transport Strategy, the Local Plan, and the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 Finance & Value for Money: the issues of funding and implementation of any proposals noted within this report will be considered further in the Sustainability Strategy, and feasibility studies and delivery plans, which will follow the approval of this report. These will include estimated costs, including staffing costs, and potential sources of funding. There are a range of funding opportunities, including CIL and s106, in addition to the grant funding that the government is expected to make available. The Council has already secured a number of external funding sources and grants, as outlined in this report; however, we will explore the resource requirements further throughout the development of the Sustainability Strategy.

5.2.2 Procurement: any procurement proposals identified within this report in support of strategy delivery will be subject to procurement in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Additional procurement requirements arising from the development of the strategy will be authorised in accordance with value and as appropriate under the delegated authority of the Executive Director of Resources, subject to the approval of this report; the full cost of this will be analysed further following approval of this report, and will be detailed in the forthcoming Sustainability Strategy which will be brought back to this committee for approval.

5.2.3 Staffing: key stakeholders have been considered as part of the creation of this report, and will be engaged as part of the development of the strategy and for each proposal's delivery/feasibility study. Resources will be required post approval of this report, to develop the proposals, manage projects and support with the development of the strategy. This will be undertaken via delegation to the Executive Director of Resources as noted in Recommendation 5 of this report. Specialist resources may also be required to provide support for the development of the strategy, for example support with public engagement and to help further develop the proposals. The funding and resource requirements will continue to be considered throughout the development of the Sustainability Strategy.

5.2.4 IT: at this time there are no implications

5.2.5 Property: the implications of proposals regarding property as noted within this report will need to be considered further in the development of the Sustainability Strategy, and associated feasibility studies and delivery plans, which will follow the approval of this report.

5.2.6 Sustainability: the report specifically notes the positive impact on Sustainability. The implications of individual proposals noted within this report will be considered further in the development of the Sustainability Strategy, and feasibility studies and delivery plans, which will follow the approval of this report.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

National legislation

- 5.3.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 introduced a legally binding target for the UK to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050 compared to a 1990 baseline. In June 2019, the target was updated to reach net zero by 2050. In April 2021, the UK government committed to reducing emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels. The Environmental Act 2021 gained Royal Assent on 9th November 2021 with an aim to develop similar legally binding targets for biodiversity, air quality, water, and waste.
- 5.3.2 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a general duty on the Council to conserve and enhance biodiversity and it must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistent with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective. After that consideration the authority must (unless it concludes there is no new action it can properly take), determine such policies and specific objectives as it considers appropriate for taking action to further the general biodiversity objective, and take such action as it considers appropriate, in the light of those policies and objectives, to further that objective.
- 5.3.3 The Localism Act 2011 includes a 'general power of competence' which gives local authorities the legal capacity to do anything that an individual can do that is not specifically prohibited
- 5.3.4 In London, the Mayor is required to prepare and publish a London Environment Strategy by the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (as amended).

International legislation

- 5.3.5 The Paris Agreement set the international target to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C with the aim of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The IPCC's follow up report stated that this requires a global reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 45% by 2030¹⁶.
- 5.3.6 Legal challenges to governmental policies on carbon management have been made in the European Court of Human Rights, particularly by Dutch environmental pressure groups, relying on provisions in the European Convention on Human Rights which are given effect to in UK domestic law by the Human Rights Act 1998, particularly the provisions relating to the right to life, private and family rights, and the right to effective remedies. The European Court on Human Rights has consistently rejected the proposition that the European Convention on Human Rights confers general rights to environmental protection (*Kyrtatos v Greece* and *Fadeyeva v Russia*). The Dutch Supreme Court has, however, found that the state is responsible for excessive emissions, triggering positive emissions reduction obligations, based on the provisions in the European Convention on Human Rights relating to right to life and privacy and family life. Such a position has not yet been established in the UK, although it has been found that the establishment of a direct 'causal nexus' between a 'real and immediate threat' to individual rights may trigger a positive obligation on a state to take action (*Osman v UK*).

Council constitution

- 5.3.7 The Council's Constitution, Article 7 Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, sets out the functions of the Policy and Resources Committee:

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-becomes-first-major-economy-to-pass-net-zero-emissions-law>

1. To be responsible for:

- Strategic policy, finance and corporate risk management including recommending: Capital and Revenue Budget; Medium Term Financial Strategy; and Corporate Plan to Full Council

5.3.8 The subject matter of this report falls within the terms of reference of this Committee

5.4 **Insight**

5.4.1 The production of the Strategy Framework has been informed by the Carbon Baseline which includes data and insights into the emissions of the Council, as well as a high-level overview of the boroughwide emissions of Barnet as a place. Data has been provided internally by the Council as well as using publicly available external data sources such as BEIS conversion factors to analyse scope 3 (supply chain) emissions, and BEIS Scatter for boroughwide data. An overview of the Carbon Baseline is included above section 1.4-1.6.

5.5 **Social Value**

5.5.1 The Council must take into account the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 to consider how what is to be procured might improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area and how it might act to secure such improvement in conducting procurement. Environmental wellbeing is a core part of social value considerations and the Sustainability Strategy Framework will seek to maximise the sustainability impact of the forthcoming Social Value Policy.

5.6 **Risk Management**

5.6.1 The Council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. Managing risk will be an essential part of programme management and will be considered in the development of the Sustainability Strategy. Risk will also be considered at the feasibility stage for specific projects.

5.6.2 There is a risk that there will be resistance from the community with regards to some of the proposals included in this report. However, the Council will allow for ongoing community and stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the Sustainability Strategy and the delivery of these projects.

5.7 **Equalities and Diversity**

5.7.1 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the decision making of the Council. Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The Equality Act 2010 and the Public-Sector Equality Duty require elected Members to satisfy themselves that equality considerations are integrated into day-to-day business and that all proposals emerging from the business planning process have taken into consideration the impact, if any, on any protected group and what mitigating factors can be put in place. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The statutory grounds of the public sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

5.7.2 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant

protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5.7.3 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

5.7.4 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

5.7.5 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Tackle prejudice, and
- Promote understanding.

5.7.6 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

5.7.7 This is set out in the Council's Equalities Policy together with our strategic Equalities Objective - as set out in the Corporate Plan - that citizens will be treated equally with understanding and respect; have equal opportunities and receive quality services provided to best value principles.

5.7.8 Progress against the performance measures we use is published on our website at: www.barnet.gov.uk/info/200041/equality_and_diversity/224/equality_and_diversity

5.7.9 We are in the process of producing an Equalities Impact Assessment, which will be presented to Committee with the Sustainability Strategy. Each proposal will consider equalities and be cognisant of the fact that some protected characteristics could be affected more than others. Due to the breadth of issues and projects covered in this report, it is not possible to provide all the necessary impacts and information at this time. As appropriate, individual Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken as the proposals are developed.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

- 5.8.1 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the Council. The outcomes and priorities in the refreshed Corporate Plan, Barnet 2024, reflect the Council's commitment to the Corporate Parenting duty to ensure the most vulnerable are protected and the needs of children are considered in everything that the Council does. To this end, great attention has been paid to the needs of children in care and care leavers when approaching business planning, to ensure decisions are made through the lens of what a reasonable parent would do for their own child.
- 5.8.2 Climate change will hold greater implications for children and young people, and future generations than it does current adults residing in Barnet. Our surveys of children and young people highlight the strength of feeling they have around climate action. The Corporate Parenting Principles have been considered in the development of this report and will continue to be considered in the development of the strategy; they will also be considered in the development of the Equalities Impact Assessment.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.9.1 The Council has recently published a series of sustainability webpages which lay out the work the Council is already taking to ensure the borough is more sustainable, as well as information on the work being taken to produce the Sustainability Strategy and advice for residents on how they can become more sustainable in their own life.
- 5.9.2 The launch of the webpages was supported by a Communications Plan, which highlighted the information that could be found on the webpages and the wider work being undertaken by the Council to ensure a sustainable future for the borough.
- 5.9.3 Engagement with officers from across the Council has been undertaken to inform the work undertaken to date. Initial engagement was carried out with some partners and key stakeholders, and the Council has been involved in boroughwide discussions regarding sustainability. In addition, discussions were had with the Barnet Youth Board in October 2021 and enabled initial insights of young people about Sustainability and Climate Change to be gathered and to inform the communications campaign and this report.
- 5.9.4 A full public consultation will be undertaken in 2022 to inform the development of the Sustainability Strategy. Further information of the communications and engagement activity that will be undertaken throughout the development of the strategy can be found in section 1.9.26.

5.10 Environmental Impact

- 5.10.1 The proposals included in this report aim to improve the sustainability of Barnet's environment, and will have wide ranging environmental impacts which should provide a net positive impact. The potential benefits of the proposals are detailed throughout the report, and their environmental impact will be assessed on a project-by-project basis when conducting feasibility studies and delivery plans.

6. Background papers

- 6.1 Update on Barnet Sustainability Strategy – Environment Committee, 11 March 2021
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s64151/Sustainability%20Strategy%20Update.pdf>

