



Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Michael Vincent, Leader of the Council, and Mark Billington, Director of Environment	Council	12 September 2024

Climate Change Strategy and Action Plans 2024 - 2035

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To present the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plans 2024 - 2035 and ask Members to adopt the strategy and associated action plan. A copy of the document is appended to this report.

2. Council priorities

2.1 A cleaner, greener and more sustainable place.

2.2 Reduce council and wider borough emissions by at least 78% by 2035, before reaching net zero by 2050.

3. Recommendation

3.1 To approve the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plans 2024 - 2035 as set out in Appendix A.

4. Background

4.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, noting the serious impacts of climate breakdown and committing to a series of actions. The Council's emissions reduction target was then updated in 2021 to include an interim target, reflecting the current Government targets.

4.2 The Climate Emergency declaration committed the Council to a range of actions, including:

- Ensuring all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with the Council target.
- Officers and departmental groups to work on a climate change action plan and regularly report on progress to the Council.

- Working with partners across Wyre to help deliver this goal.

4.3 Following the declaration, two action plans were agreed by the Council, which covered actions to reduce emissions within council operations and separately across the borough. However, following new guidance available from the Local Government Association and Climate Emergency UK, these were considered outdated and in need of a refresh.

4.4 Furthermore, the current review of the Local Plan also seeks to embed greater climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience into new development. To support strong planning policy requirements for climate change, the council needs to demonstrate to the Planning Inspectorate that strong climate action is being implemented corporately across all areas of the council, as well as planning. The Climate Change Strategy has been developed to demonstrate that strong climate action is indeed a council-wide policy. However, it is important to note that clarity on national planning policy by government regarding the extent that planning can address climate change through its Local Plan will also be required, alongside supporting evidence to ensure appropriate links are made within the Local Plan.

4.5 The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plans 2024 - 2035 have been developed to provide a clear foundation and direction of travel for ambitious climate action within the council, ensuring it is central to the Council's priorities. This has been created with assistance from council officers, input from the Overview and Scrutiny Climate Change Sub-Committee and public consultation held within January and February 2024.

5. Key issues and proposals

5.1 The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plans 2024 - 2035 is a strategic document which sets out the long-term plan of how the council will tackle climate change. This is split into two sections:

1. Background information regarding what climate change is and how it will affect Wyre, including key trends, costs to our community and impacts upon council services. This details how we currently contribute to climate change through the council and wider borough's carbon footprint. It also highlights the opportunities available to us from shifting away from a fossil fuel-based system to create a cleaner, healthier environment with clear co-benefits for the future.
2. Information on how the council will deliver our plan, detailing the challenges and successes so far. Eight key objectives are outlined, which reflect key sources of emissions that the council can effectively influence. A detailed action plan is included within each objective, as well as a summary of current work, barriers and

opportunities. Each action in the document details what we will do, how, when, measurements of success, current progress, details of any other external policies or support required, estimated costs, main leads for each project and a priority score from 1 to 9.

5.2 This is an ambitious strategy with a wide range of actions based on best practice and good examples. Detailed costs to deliver each of the actions in the strategy are unclear at this stage, owing to inflation and increasing the costs of materials. As such, project leads have indicated costs using a key detailed within the document. However, it is important to note that, whilst the council will endeavour to fund actions where possible through internal budgeting, financing these actions will be a significant challenge. Our budgetary constraints and limitations in our powers as a borough council mean we simply cannot deliver all aspects of the strategy without securing external funding, grants and support.

5.3 Actions within the strategy have also been prioritised using a key outlined within the document, which considers estimated carbon savings and whether this is a measurable impact. Those with higher carbon savings and a direct numerical impact upon the council's carbon footprint have been prioritised, to achieve the council's emissions target. This also prioritises key mitigation actions over uncertain offsetting schemes.

5.4 It is proposed that this is considered a working document, which will be reviewed and updated annually by the Climate Change team to reflect emerging technologies, guidance, policies and best practice. Actions will be progressed by an internal officer working group. An annual progress report will be reviewed by the Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee. Discontinued or amended actions will be kept in an action log to monitor changes. The 2035 end date corresponds to the emissions reduction target and signals the need for an updated strategy to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

6. Alternative options considered and rejected

6.1 Continuing to use the current action plans was not considered a suitable option as these require considerable refresh in light of emerging guidance and best practice.

6.2 Updating the action plans alone without an accompanying strategy was not considered strong enough to provide a clear stance on climate action within the council.

Financial, Legal/MO, and Climate Change implications	
Finance	Financial costs of actions within the strategy have been estimated using a key. Whilst the council will endeavour to fund actions where possible through internal budgeting, achieving all the actions within the strategy will require considerable financial costs that the council does not have

	the resources to meet. External grant funding opportunities and partnerships with key stakeholders will be required to fund these goals.
Legal/MO	Legal implications of individual actions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
Climate Change	The Climate Change Strategy and action plan will act as a clear foundation for ambitious action, enabling the Council to meet its target to reduce carbon emissions by 78% by 2035, before achieving net zero by 2050. The range of actions have a significant positive climate impact, and their delivery will help to protect Wyre from the worst impacts of climate change.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	✓
equality and diversity	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	✓
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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List of appendices

Appendix 1: Climate Change Strategy and Action Plans 2024 - 2035