

**Meeting:** Overview and Scrutiny Board/Cabinet      **Date:** 11 March 2026

**Wards affected:** All

**Report Title:** Annual Review of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** N/A

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 To provide an update to the Overview and Scrutiny Board on the Torbay Council Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2024-2026. The Climate Change Action Plan outlines actions to reduce carbon dioxide emissions across Torbay Council's operations and services. To date, good progress has been made delivering key priority actions.
- 1.2 For information an update is also provided on the Torbay Climate Partnership's Greener Way for Our Bay Action Plan. This Action Plan outline actions to reduce carbon emissions across Torbay.

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1. To provide an update on the Torbay Council Climate Change Action Plan 2024-2026. This Action Plan is vital in meeting the Community and Corporate Plan's continued commitment to tackle the Climate Emergency.

## 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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- 3.1. To note the good progress being made to deliver the CCAP and that more work will be required to work towards meeting the 2030 net zero carbon council<sup>1</sup> target and the 2050<sup>2</sup> zero carbon Torbay<sup>OBJ</sup> target.

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<sup>1</sup> Scope 1 and 2 emissions only (these include emissions from heating and powering our buildings and operations and Torbay Council fleet emissions). It excludes emissions from our supply chain and out-sourced services

<sup>2</sup> Territorial emissions (area-wide) and including emissions from homes, businesses, transport, land use and waste

## 4. Appendices

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None

## 5. Background Documents

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- [The Torbay Council Climate Action Plan](#)
- [Greener Way For Our Bay Framework and Action Plan](#)

## Supporting Information

### 6. Introduction

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6.1 On 12 February 2025 this Board reviewed the draft Torbay Council Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2024 – 2026. On 18 February 2025 Cabinet approved the Torbay Council Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2024 – 2026. This plan included a two-phased approach to delivering key priority actions. This paper focusses on these priority actions only.

#### Phase 1- CCAP

6.2 The table below provides a summary of the progress to date to deliver phase 1 actions of the CCAP. Once fully approved/implemented, in total the estimated savings to be made through these projects is 471 tonnes of Carbon (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) per annum / £447,442 off Energy bill per annum.

Actions – Phase 1	Winter 2025 update	RAG status	Annual Carbon & Energy Savings
Install a new streetlighting control management system and LED lighting.	Business Case Approved by Cabinet and Full Council in December 2025. Delivery to commence March 2026 onwards	On track	230 tCO2e / £292,291 per annum
Embedding the new impact assessment into the Capital and Growth Board business case templates/wider processes.	Tool developed and being piloted.	On track	N/A
Procurement (Embed carbon and sustainability accounting into the early stages of procurement and commissioning Including IT).	Draft new strategy in development. Established thresholds requiring different levels of carbon reduction in contracts based on contract values. Templates and guidance are being developed that support contract managers and suppliers to understand the requirements of the Strategy. Anticipated implementation date is 01/04/2026, subject to sign off by key Directors.	On track	N/A
Decarbonise Sherwell Valley Primary School.	Secured Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme round 4 funding. Procurement has just commenced for the heat pumps that are replacing the end-of-life gas boilers. Financial savings £2,287 cost savings / 33 tCO2e savings per annum  A 30kw solar PV to complete the decarbonisation is included in the EEPV programme – see below.	On track	Estimated financial savings £9,360 cost savings / 38 tCO2e savings per annum

Decarbonise the Brixham Harbour estate.	<p>Geothermal Bore Hole assessment was undertaken to explore heating and or cooling the redevelopment of Brixham Harbour area. This assessment showed that such a scheme is unviable. Funding now needed to explore seawater-source heat pump heating solutions.</p> <p>147kw Solar PV, chiller heat recovery and other energy efficiency solutions for the existing harbour site are included in the EEPV programme below. Financial savings £46,105 / 75 tCO2e savings per annum.</p>	Concern	Estimated financial savings £46,105 / 75 tCO2e savings per annum.
Decarbonise the Tor Hill House building.	<p>LED lighting scheme complete. Estimated financial savings £28,821 and 22 tCO2e saving per annum.</p> <p>Approved funding to install 43 KW solar PV array. Estimated financial savings £9,498 and 8 tCO2e savings per annum.</p>	On track	30 tCO2e / £38,319 savings per annum
Recruiting an Energy Officer.	Post vacant. Failed to recruit a suitably experienced person. PiP restructure is an opportunity to reconsider options.	Concern	N/A
Undertake feasibility studies / whole building assessments including Solar PV on ten of the councils' buildings within the estate. Any propositions which provide a viable return on investment will be developed into business cases and will seek funding through	Feasibility studies complete and a new Energy Efficiency and PV programme has been developed. The EEPV Outline Business Case was approved at the Capital and Growth Board. This is a £1.1m Energy Efficiency and PV programme. A Full Business Case for the programme is now in development. This programme, once implemented, is estimated to save the Council £114,545 and 178 tCO2 annually.	On track	178 tCO2e / financial savings £114,545 per annum

## Phase 2 - CCAP

### 6.3 Phase 2 of the CCAP includes:

- To maximise carbon savings and to help the Council and SWISCo save money on their fuel bills. Including:
  - Working with SWISCo, explore how to begin the transition of both the Council's and SWISCo's fleets to EV alternatives, whilst improving the optimisation of the fleet and improving the management of the fleet moving forward.
  - Explore how council staff travel when out on council business and explore developing a series of actions to reduce the carbon emissions and costs arising from staff travel.

6.4 Work has just begun on these phase 2 actions as above.

### Progress towards the Council's Net Zero Carbon Target

6.5 Since 2019/20, the Council has seen a 18% reduction in total carbon emissions, reducing from 5408 to 4452 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e). To meet the Council's 2030 net zero carbon target<sup>13</sup>, the Council will need to save or off set (only as last resort) just under 3,265 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e). To date we are nearly halfway to achieving this target – see graph below.

6.6 The Council has saved an estimated 1,037 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (see chart 1 below). Based on the estimated savings from the prioritised actions outlined above, this will further reduce the Council's carbon emissions by 471 tonnes by the end of the 2027/28 financial year (14% of the total). Combined, the current savings and estimated savings will save ~46% of the savings required to meet the Council's net zero target. This leaves 1,756 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (54%) for the Council to find and save (or ~439 tonnes of carbon per annum over the next four financial years)

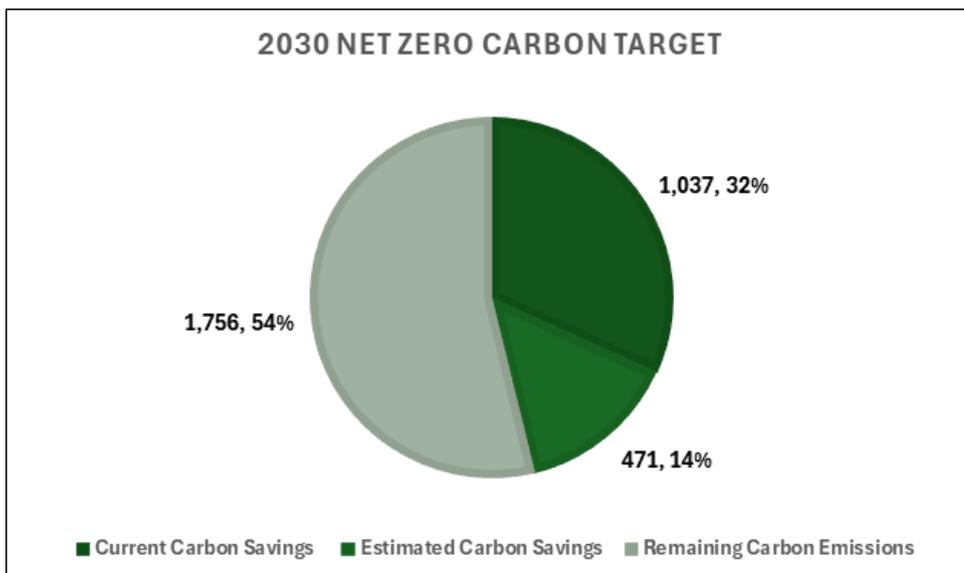


Chart 1. Council's progress towards its 2030 Net Zero Carbon Target

6.7 To save the remaining 54% of emissions will require accelerated actions and further renewable energy and energy efficiency feasibility studies to assess where we can generate our own renewable energy and improve the energy efficiency of our buildings. Reducing our gas consumption will be crucial in reducing these carbon emissions. This will mean exploring opportunities for low carbon/hybrid forms of heating and replacing end of life gas boilers. Added to this, when Torbay Council

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<sup>3</sup> Net zero carbon by 2030 requires the Council's carbon emissions to be reduced as much as possible, where residual emissions remain by 2030, the Council can off-set these residual emissions through accredited/local carbon offsetting schemes.

vehicles reach their end of life, they should be replaced with electric vehicles/low emission alternatives.

- 6.8 A new CCAP will be developed by end of 2026 to outline our priority actions for the next 2 years. This draft will seek approval from this Board and Cabinet in late 2026/pre-election 2027.

## Greener Way for Our Bay Action Plan

- 6.9 In addition to the above work, and to meet the Community and Corporate Plan's climate emergency commitments, work is also happening across Torbay. The Greener Way For Our Bay Framework and Action Plan (GWFOB FAP) was developed by the Torbay Climate Partnership and endorsed by the Place Leadership Board in September 2024.
- 6.10 The Framework sets a direction for the long haul, with a series of short-term action plans to guide Torbay through incremental steps towards the 2050 net-zero carbon target<sup>4</sup>. The Action Plan contains actions to be delivered by a range of partners, not just the Council. The full document is [here](#).
- 6.11 A summary of some of the progress delivered to date is below:
- Various projects that provide energy saving advice and measures to least 388 homes to help create warmer homes and save an estimated £38,000 off resident's energy bills
  - Supported over 200 businesses through the Make it Net Zero Torbay which has helped businesses save money. One company reduced their energy bills by 68%.
  - Stagecoach introduced 56 new electric buses which will also help reduce local noise and air pollution and improve customer experience.
  - 4 new public charging points installed across Torbay, and more coming
  - New Local Transport Plan adopted
  - New Draft Regulation 18 Local Plan for Torbay out for public consultation including net zero and climate resilient design and construction standards
  - In partnership with Torbay Communities, 10 climate-related community engagement sessions to bolster awareness and more local action
  - With a various partners, a range of climate action and support for schools including planting two new Miyawaki forests, three rainwater gardens and classroom activities. All of which also help reduce localised flooding.
- 6.12 Overall Torbay total territorial greenhouse gas emissions, reported as kilo tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (kt CO<sub>2</sub>e), have fallen from 728.0 kt to 386.6 kt CO<sub>2</sub>e between 2008 – 2023. This is a reduction of 341.4 kt CO<sub>2</sub>e. This equates to just under 47% reduction in emissions, and an annual reduction of ~4% over the period. Per capita- emissions have also nearly halved from 5.51 tonnes to 2.77 t CO<sub>2</sub>e/person. This data is the most up to date

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<sup>4</sup> Net zero carbon by 2050 requires Torbay's territorial carbon emissions to be reduced as much as possible, where residual emissions remain by 2050, these can be off-set through accredited/local carbon offsetting schemes

data supplied from central government. Any emission savings made through the projects above in 2024 and 2025 are yet to be seen.

- 6.13 Whilst it must be acknowledged that a range of actions are planned by the UK Government that will, between now and 2050, accelerate carbon reduction nationally and locally, more action will be required. While the UK has made progress, the path to meeting the national net zero target (which is broken down into smaller incremental carbon budgets) is currently off-track from 2033 – 2050 (source: Government’s independent advisors the Climate Change Committee). It will require a substantial acceleration and strengthening of climate policies nationally, and it will be vital, locally, we plan for this and help our communities to better understand and prepare for forthcoming changes. The next GWFOB Action Plan, due to be developed in 2027, will continue to review national work and coordinate and accelerate local action.

## 7. Options under consideration

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- 7.1 N/A

## 8. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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- 8.1. This report focusses on CCAP updates. Based on detailed feasibility reports commissioned in 2025, we estimate that in total the savings to be made through the projects in para 6.2 above will save an estimated 471 tonnes of Carbon (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) per annum / £447,442 off Energy bill per annum (savings will be made across various corporate energy budgets and also schools budgets). These savings will be made once the projects have been installed and commissioned. The streetlighting project is already in delivery. Sherwell Valley School’s decarbonisation project will be delivered in the summer 2026. We are actively seeking approval for the Energy Efficiency and PV (EPPV) Programme (including measures for Brixham Harbour) from the Climate Initiative Programme Board and Capital and Growth Board in May 2026. The Outline Business Case has already been approved. Subject to approval, work is likely to be delivered from June 2026 – end of March 2028.
- 8.2. All future projects in Phase 2 of the CCAP are subject to a robust business case and approval via the Climate Initiative Programme Board (and Capital Growth Board where required).

## 9. Legal Implications

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- 9.1. There are no legal implications.

## 10. Engagement and Consultation

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- 10.1. The CCAP is developed and delivered by the Climate Change Officer Group which includes officers from across climate emergency, transport, procurement, property services, SWISCo and many others. A communication plan has also been developed to promote and inform staff and residents on the work included in the CCAP and GWFOB.

## 11. Procurement Implications

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11.1 All actions will adhere to the Council's current procedures. To date, Procurement colleagues have supported the successful procurement of the streetlighting and EEPV projects above.

## 12. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

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12.1. This action plan plays a vital part in delivering the on-going commitment to tackle the climate emergency (Community and Corporate Plan 2024 – 2040). A Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change Impact Assessment has been carried out. The Action Plan will have a positive impact on our naturally inspiring Bay and efforts to tackle climate change, especially:

- Reduce Greenhouse Gases, mainly Carbon Dioxide, that arise from across the Council's operations and services. The Action Plan includes a range of actions across the estate and fleet + other to achieve this.
- Reduce energy consumption across the council estate and fleet. There are actions to explore roof top mounted solar schemes and to install low carbon heat pumps.
- Embed sustainable procurement and commissioning practices. This Action Plan includes actions to work with our procurement and commissioning teams to embed sustainable procurement and commissioning practices The Action Plan also includes actions to achieve this within the Council's capital programme and major regenerations schemes.

## 13. Associated Risks

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13.1. At this stage delivery of the CCAP is on track. Many of the actions within the plan have no inherent risks.

13.2 Based on the estimated savings from the prioritised actions outlined above (see para 6.6), there is always a risk that the estimated savings and actual savings are lower due to operational issues or occupant behaviour. We will work closely with our contractors and occupants of buildings/vehicles to minimise this risk.

13.3 As outlined in para 6.6, the Council will need to find an estimated 1,756 tCO<sub>2</sub>e to meet its 2030 target. This is ~439 tonnes of carbon per annum over the next four financial years. Since 2019/20, the Council has seen a 18% reduction in total carbon emissions. The new CCAP to be developed will need to identify how this gap can be filled and additional resources secured to deliver the pace required by 2030

## 14. Equality Impact Assessment

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
<b>This assessment is for the Climate Change Action Plan only.</b>				
Age	<p>18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old.</p> <p>55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old.</p> <p>27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.</p>	<p>Installing a new streetlighting control management system and LED lighting: Consideration needs to be given to ensuring that areas are well illuminated to ensure safety for all ages.</p>	<p>Mitigation actions are identified in the approved business case.</p>	<p>SWISCo Streetlighting team</p>
Carers	<p>At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these provided 50 hours or more of care.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts identified.</p>		
Disability	<p>In the 2021 Census, 23.8% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities</p>	<p>No adverse impacts identified.</p>		

	<p>were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.</p>			
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth. This proportion is similar to the Southwest and is lower than England.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts identified.</p>		
<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p>Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts identified.</p>		
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>Over the period 2010 to 2021, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 63.7 per 1,000) than England (60.2) and the South West (58.4). There has been a notable fall in the numbers of live births since the middle of the last decade across all geographical areas.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts identified.</p>		

Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the South West and England. Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.	No adverse impacts identified.		
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	No adverse impacts identified.		
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	Installing a new streetlighting control management system and LED lighting: Consideration needs to be given to ensuring that areas are well illuminated to ensure safety for all sexes.	Mitigation actions are identified in the approved business case.	SWISCo Streetlighting team
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, 3.4% of those in Torbay aged over 16 identified their sexuality as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or, used another term to describe their sexual orientation.	No adverse impacts identified.		
Armed Forces Community	In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they	No adverse impacts identified.		

	had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9 per cent of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.			
<b>Additional considerations</b>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)		No adverse impacts identified.		
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)		No adverse impacts identified.		
Human Rights impacts		No adverse impacts identified.		
Child Friendly	Torbay Council is a Child Friendly Council, and all staff and Councillors are Corporate Parents and have a responsibility towards cared for and care experienced children and young people.	No adverse impacts identified.		

## 15. Cumulative Council Impact

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- 15.1. The impact from actions that will lead to the implementation of new assets such as solar panels, heat pumps or upgrades to our streetlighting could, whilst being implemented, have some impact upon our council and SWISCo operations. However, these impacts will be mitigated to ensure that these works are undertaken with necessary decantation strategies in place to enable operational continuity.
- 15.2. All the actions have been deemed deliverable by officers with the two-year plan and will fall within the existing work programmes.

## 16. Cumulative Community Impacts

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- 16.1 The community impacts of the CCAP are minimal given this is an internal council action plan, however where examples such as the upgrading of streetlighting may impact the operations of services, the necessary actions will be taken to minimise impact.