



Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	14 September 2021
Subject:	Green Masterplan Progress

Summary:

This report provides a progress update on the Green Masterplan and outlines the initial progress towards the Council's targets to reach net zero carbon by 2050.

Actions Required:

The Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee is invited to review and comment on the progress of the Green Masterplan.

1. Background

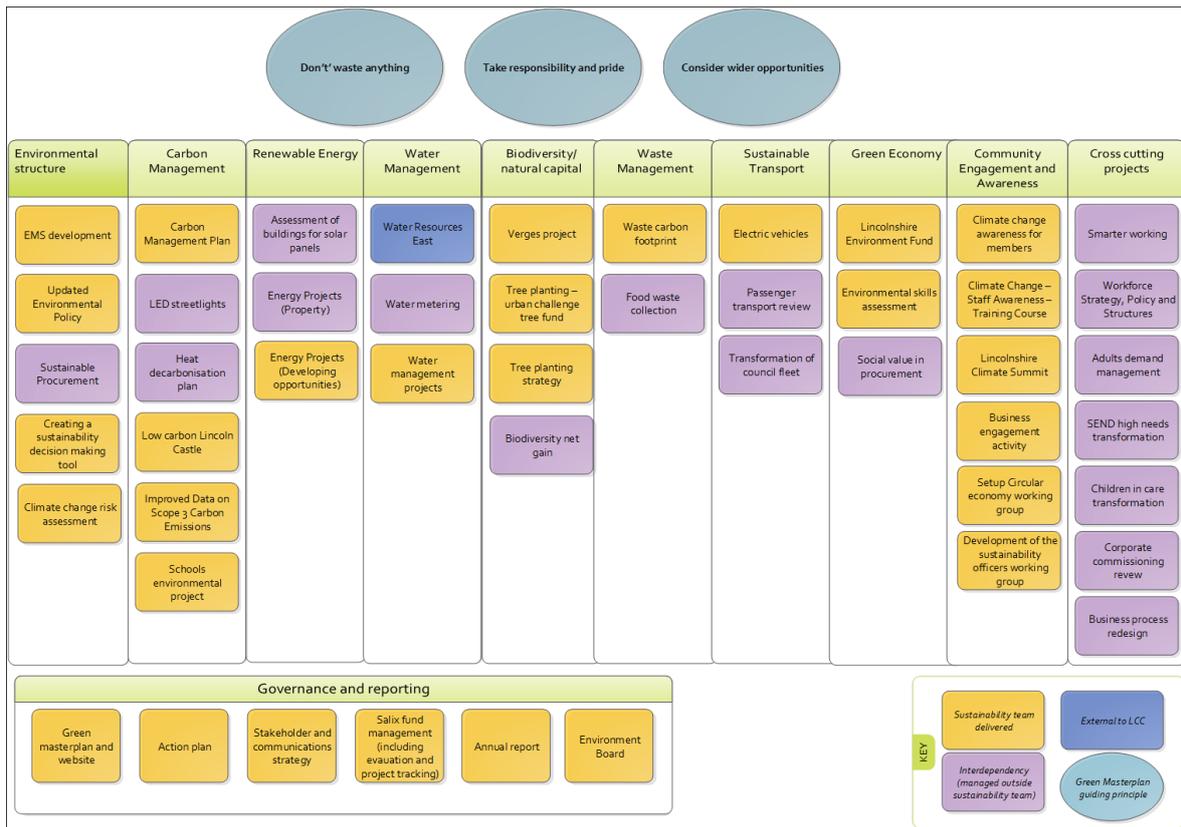
Lincolnshire County Council's Green Masterplan was approved by the full Council meeting in February 2021. The Masterplan sets out the principles of how the Council will progress towards the national objective of reaching zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Action Plan

Once the Masterplan and its principles were approved the next stage is to develop an action plan that actually starts to deliver some of the objectives of the Masterplan.

The action plan has now been developed – as seen in Figure 1. The Figure shows the range of projects that are being covered and shows how the Green Masterplan needs to work across the whole of the authority.

The diagram of the action plan is supported by a detailed plan of activities that will be delivered and regularly reviewed.



Carbon Baseline

The Council has good information on its own carbon emissions, but the data on the emissions from the rest of the county was limited. The Sustainability Team commissioned a consultancy (Bio-regional) to undertake a detailed assessment of carbon emissions from the whole of Lincolnshire.

The report estimated that the whole of the county generated 3.7 million tonnes of carbon in 2018/19. Figure Two shows the percentage of carbon emissions from each sector of the economy. The main source of emissions was from surface transport with just under 40% of emissions coming from this source. Housing was responsible for just over 30% of emissions. There will be considerable challenges in decarbonising these two sectors over the coming decades.

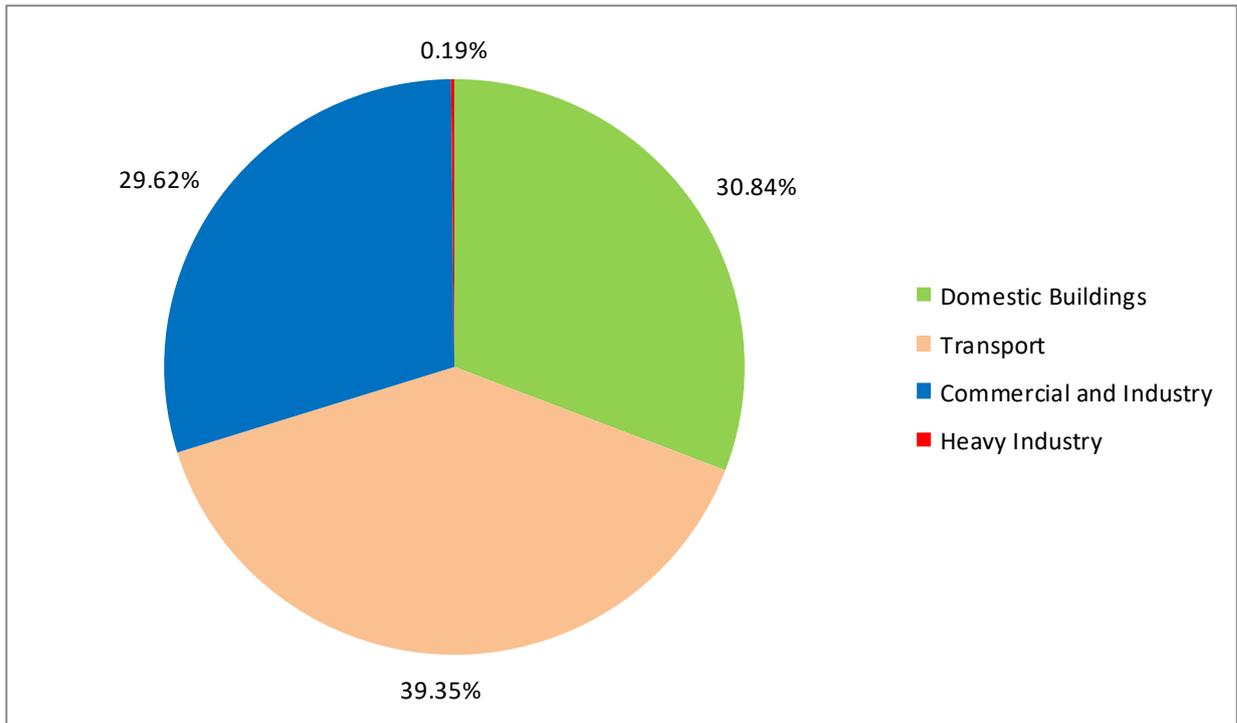


Figure Two: Sector carbon dioxide emissions in Lincolnshire (2018/19)

Climate Change Partnership

Climate change can only be successfully tackled by all elements of society working together to reduce their carbon emissions. Many organisations in the public and private sectors already have detailed action plans of what they will do to reduce their climate impacts. However, there are some businesses that have not yet addressed the issue. In order to remedy this Lincolnshire County Council is looking to step up its engagement with local businesses on climate change and environmental issues and to assist in delivering a community wide low carbon economy that meets the local and national targets of achieving zero carbon emissions by 2050. This will be achieved through the establishment of a Climate Change Partnership.

Carbon emissions from business: An analysis of the countywide carbon emissions in Lincolnshire has shown that the commercial and industrial sector is directly responsible for just under 30% of current emissions. This equated to 1.1 million tonnes of carbon emitted in the 2018/19 financial year.

Examples from elsewhere: as part of the research for how business could be engaged on carbon emission reductions, examples from elsewhere were studied. Several local authorities around the country have established climate change partnerships to facilitate their engagement with the wider community on climate change and other related environmental issues. Examples include the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership, Sheffield Climate Alliance, Zero Carbon Cumbria and Carbon Neutral Cornwall. These partnerships typically include the county and district councils (or equivalent) and include partners from

other organisations such as the Environment Agency, local water company, local universities, business groups and businesses active in the local area.

Climate Change Partnership Projects: The Climate Partnership can build on these established links through Business Lincolnshire to engage with firms on wider environmental issues.

A good way to have a wide impact in a short space of time is to introduce a number of small-scale trial projects that can be quickly reviewed and promoted to other similar businesses if they produce carbon savings. A wide range of trial projects were proposed, including the following:

- **Carbon Pledge:** A simple pledge will allow business to demonstrate an initial commitment to reducing their carbon emissions.
- **Environmental Accreditation:** Support for businesses to prove their environmental credentials. There are a number of existing accreditation schemes which can help businesses to develop an environmental management system – such as Investors in the Environment.
- **Business Resilience Support:** In some locations the impact of climate change are more apparent than in others. Businesses in these locations need to give thought to how they would carry on trading in the event of flooding, heat waves, other extreme weather, etc. A simple business resilience guide would assist with this.
- **Environmental Skills Review:** The Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has funded a review of the environmental sector in the county and this has highlighted some skill shortages in specific sectors – such as the retro-fitting of domestic properties. There are opportunities to work with the further education sector to address these shortages.
- **Small scale grant support:** A grant support scheme to introduce environmental improvements was considered. This could be used to add PV solar panels, energy efficiency improvements or EV charging points.
- **Electric Vehicle Support:** The number of electric vehicles in use is growing rapidly and the sale of purely petrol and diesel fuelled vehicles are being stopped from 2030. Businesses need think about getting their firm EV ready. A guide will be produced, which is based on the experience of other businesses.
- **Biodiversity for business:** some business premises have the potential to have great biodiversity value. This project would look at installing small scale interventions to increase the biodiversity value of the site – these could include bird boxes, planting areas, trees, etc.
- **Greening supply chains:** this trial project would work with businesses to look at the climate impact of their supply chains and how it can be reduced.

Tree Planting

The Council has an objective (which was announced in the 2020/21 budget) to plant a tree for every resident in the county. This equates to 750,000 trees. Due to its agricultural nature, Lincolnshire has one of the lowest levels of tree cover in the country – around 4% compared to a national tree cover rate of 13%.

A very basic estimate of the cost of planting this number of trees would be in the region of £4 million – including tree costs, tree guards, planting costs and maintenance costs.

The Council does own a significant amount of farmland in the County Estate, but almost all of this land is unsuitable for tree planting, being grade one agricultural land. The approach being taken is to plant "the right tree, in the right place".

There was a clear need to identify funding to pay for tree planting and sites where trees can be planted. The Council has submitted a funding application to the Local Authorities Treescapes Fund to fund a large-scale planting programme around the county. As part of the preparation work for this, the Sustainability Team has contacted each district and parish council in Lincolnshire to determine if they have land that could be suitable for tree planting. This has identified a large number of suitable planting sites – including a large site next to the Nettleham Police Headquarters, which will be suitable for large scale tree planting.

If the Treescapes Fund application is successful, the planting will take place between November 2021 and March 2022. There will still be the need for additional planting to meet the target to plant a tree for every resident. To ensure this is tackled in a consistent manner, a new Tree Strategy for Lincolnshire will be produced and brought to this Committee in late 2021. In addition, the Sustainability Team will work with the district councils and Greater Lincolnshire partners to improve co-operation on tree planting. We will look to set up a Lincolnshire Tree Forum and to access large scale funding pots – such as the Northern Forest and the England Woodland Creation Offer.

2. Conclusion

Members of the Committee are invited to review and provide comment on the progress of the Green Masterplan.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not applicable.

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Dan Clayton, Sustainability Manager- Environment, who can be contacted on 07825 607157 or by e-mail at Dan.Clayton@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

This page is intentionally left blank