

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 15<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2022

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2022

**“C849 PROJECT ZERO – UPDATE, RESOURCES, EVIDENCE AND REPORTING (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION) –**

The purpose of the report was to advise Cabinet of the key findings in the carbon data report submitted to Welsh Government, seek approval for proposals for the approach to the use of financial resources associated with tackling climate change and seek approval for proposals for reporting progress in delivering Project Zero.

The report detailed the issues emerging from the exercise undertaken in the Autumn of 2021 to report the Council’s carbon emissions as part of a national exercise by public sector organisations. This information was submitted to Welsh Government in October 2021 and the report detailed the levels of emissions across different Council activities and also aspects of the data that had proved more challenging to collect and where systems needed to be put in place to ensure more robust data.

The carbon emissions report was a major step forward in bringing together data from across the organisation and would be used by the Project Zero Board to inform the delivery of the Climate Change Challenge Plan.

The report also detailed proposals around the approach for the use of relevant capital and revenue budgets to support the delivery of Project Zero. Proposals for reporting arrangements for Project Zero were also included within the report.

The report also included a recommendation to amend the Council’s committee report template to ensure that every report reflected implications relating to climate change and also the nature emergency to support decision making and scrutiny.

Progress against some of the challenges within the Climate Change Challenge Plan were also detailed within the report, highlighting the significant work being undertaken across the Council to tackle climate change as part of Project Zero.

The Leader proposed that as part of Recommendation (7) that the report also be distributed to Town and Community Councils and Public Service Board and voluntary sector partners for their information, which was agreed.

The Deputy Leader referred to the original climate emergency motion referred to in Paragraph 1.1 of the report where bullet point (4) spoke about continuing to work with partners across the region. That morning she had been on a visit to Aberthaw Power Station which was intended to be purchased by the Cardiff Capital Region for

a renewal and sustainable energy hub. The power station had produced local and good quality jobs previously and it was hoped that similarly the new proposal would do the same as well as contributing to achieving a zero carbon status for the Vale of Glamorgan and the region as a whole. Her visit showed the progression of the policy over time.

The Leader said the proposal to purchase the site was something that the Regional Cabinet had agreed to take forward and was an important area for both the Vale of Glamorgan and the region. The site was ideally positioned with a railhead and connection to the national grid. The environment would also be protected via the conservation area.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein,

RESOLVED -

- (1) T H A T the key findings from the carbon data report submitted to Welsh Government be noted.
- (2) T H A T the proposals for the approach of the use of the relevant capital and revenue budgets to support Project Zero as set out in detail in the report be approved.
- (3) T H A T the proposed Project Zero reporting arrangements be approved.
- (4) T H A T the proposed amendment to the committee report template to include specific reference to implications for climate change and nature be approved.
- (5) T H A T the progress detailed in the report in relation to a number of the challenges within the Climate Change Challenge Plan be noted.
- (6) T H A T the report be referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for their consideration.
- (7) T H A T the report be distributed to all Elected Members, Town and Community Councils and Public Service Board and voluntary sector partners for their information.

#### Reasons for decisions

- (1) To enable Cabinet to consider the key findings from the carbon data report submitted to Welsh Government.
- (2) To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the proposals for the approach to the use of the relevant capital and revenue budgets to support Project Zero.

- (3) To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the proposed Project Zero reporting arrangements.
- (4) To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the proposed amendment to the committee report template to include specific reference to implications for climate change and nature.
- (5) To enable Cabinet to consider the progress in relation to a number of the challenges within the Climate Change Challenge Plan
- (6) To enable Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to consider how Project Zero is being taken forward.
- (7) To update all Elected Members, Town and Community Councils and Public Service Board and voluntary sector partners on the arrangements in place to deliver Project Zero.”

Attached as Appendix – Report to Cabinet: 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2022

Meeting of:	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Monday, 28 February 2022</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Corporate Performance and Resources Environment and Regeneration
Report Title:	Project Zero – Update, Resources, Evidence and Reporting
Purpose of Report:	To advise Cabinet of the key findings in the carbon data report submitted to Welsh Government, seek approval for proposals for the approach to the use of financial resources associated with tackling climate change and seek approval for proposals for reporting progress in delivering Project Zero.
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Rob Thomas, Chief Executive
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Due to the corporate nature of this report, no specific Ward Member consultation has been undertaken
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for decision by Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report details the issues emerging from the exercise undertaken in the Autumn of 2021 to report the Council’s carbon emissions as part of a national exercise by public sector organisations. This information was submitted to Welsh Government in October 2021 and this report details the levels of emissions across different council activities and also aspects of the data that have proved more challenging to collect and where systems need to be put in place to ensure more robust data.</li> <li>• The carbon emissions report is a major step forward in bringing together data from across the organisation and will be used by the Project Zero Board to inform the delivery of the Climate Change Challenge Plan.</li> <li>• This report also details proposals around the approach for the use of relevant capital and revenue budgets to support the delivery of Project Zero.</li> <li>• Proposals for reporting arrangements for Project Zero are also included within this report.</li> <li>• The report also includes a recommendation to amend the Council’s committee report template to ensure that every report reflects implications relating to climate change and also the nature emergency to support decision making and scrutiny.</li> </ul>	

- Progress against some of the challenges within the Climate Change Challenge Plan are also detailed within the report, highlighting the significant work being undertaken across the Council to tackle climate change as part of Project Zero.

## **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet notes the key findings from the carbon data report submitted to Welsh Government.
2. That Cabinet approves the proposals for the approach of the use of the relevant capital and revenue budgets to support Project Zero as set out in detail in this report.
3. That Cabinet approves the proposed Project Zero reporting arrangements.
4. That Cabinet approves the proposed amendment to the committee report template to include specific reference to implications for climate change and nature.
5. That Cabinet notes the progress detailed in this report in relation to a number of the challenges within the Climate Change Challenge Plan.
6. That Cabinet refers this report to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for their consideration.
7. That Cabinet endorses the proposal that this report is distributed to all elected Members for their information.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. To enable Cabinet to consider the key findings from the carbon data report submitted to Welsh Government.
2. To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the proposals for the approach to the use of the relevant capital and revenue budgets to support Project Zero.
3. To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the proposed Project Zero reporting arrangements.
4. To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the proposed amendment to the committee report template to include specific reference to implications for climate change and nature.
5. To enable Cabinet to consider the progress in relation to a number of the challenges within the Climate Change Challenge Plan
6. To enable Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to consider how Project Zero is being taken forward.
7. To update all elected Members on the arrangements in place to deliver Project Zero.

## **1. Background**

**1.1** At the Council meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2019 Council resolved (minute 209 refers):

(1) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council join with Welsh Government and other Councils across the UK in declaring a global 'climate emergency' in response to the findings of the IPCC report.

(2) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero before the Welsh Government target of 2030 and support the implementation of the Welsh Government's new Low Carbon Delivery Plan, to help achieve the Welsh Government's ambition for the public sector in Wales to be carbon neutral.

(3) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council make representations to the Welsh and UK Governments, as appropriate, to provide the necessary powers, resources and technical support to Local Authorities in Wales to help them successfully meet the 2030 target.

(4) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council continue to work with partners across the region to develop and implement best practice methods that can deliver carbon reductions and help limit global warming.

(5) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council work with local stakeholders including Councillors, residents, young people, businesses, and other relevant parties to develop a strategy in line with a target of net zero emissions by 2030 and explore ways to maximise local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as employment, health, agriculture, transport and the economy.

**1.2** Project Zero is the Council's response to the climate emergency. It brings together work already being undertaken and policies, strategies and plans already in place. It sets out the challenges we face and proposed activities to meet these challenges. It recognises the importance of working as a team across the Vale and that everyone has a role to play and a responsibility to think about our legacy for future generations.

**1.3** At the Council meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Council approved the Climate Change Challenge Plan (minute 296). The Plan details eighteen challenges framed around the need to demonstrate strong leadership, fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations and to make a difference now.

**1.4** The Challenge Plan reflects commitments in the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-25 which sets out the Council's four Well-being Objectives and how they will be delivered. The Corporate Plan includes a commitment to work to reduce the organisation's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 and to encourage others to follow the Council's lead as part of minimising the negative impact of our activities on the environment. The Corporate Plan is supported each year by an Annual Delivery Plan (ADP). The ADP for 2021-22 includes a number of activities that will contribute to work to tackle climate change and the draft ADP 22-23

encompasses the commitments in the Climate Change Challenge Plan as a key area of focus for all of the Council's service areas.

**1.5** At the Council meeting in July a motion was passed resolving to declare a Nature Emergency (Minute 289 refers) as follows:

- 1) Declare a nature emergency, in response to the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and National Biodiversity Network (NBN) reports and in recognition of the inextricable link between climate change and the loss of biodiversity.
- 2) Place biodiversity alongside climate change at the heart of decision making in the Vale of Glamorgan Council.
- 3) Welcome Welsh Government's support for the Convention on Biological Diversity post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
- 4) Engage with the anticipated Global Biodiversity Framework with clear goals and targets, following the convention in October, with an aim of achieving no net loss of biodiversity.
- 5) Make representations to the Welsh and UK Governments, as appropriate, to provide the necessary powers, resources and technical support to local authorities in Wales to help them successfully achieve this aim.
- 6) Continue to work with partners across the county, region and nationally to develop and implement best practice methods that can protect Wales' biodiversity.
- 7) Work with local stakeholders including Councillors, residents, young people, businesses and other relevant parties, to develop a strategy aligned with Project Zero with a target of no net loss of biodiversity that will also explore ways to maximise the local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as employment, health, agriculture, transport and the economy.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

**2.1** In October 2021 Cabinet considered a report on the governance arrangements for Project Zero and progress in establishing the Project Zero Board. This report provides an update on further progress including the communications plan and learning plans for Project Zero, evidence which will underpin the work of the Board, proposals for the approach to the use of financial resources to support Project Zero and reporting arrangements including amending the committee report template.

## Vale of Glamorgan Council Carbon Footprint

- 2.2** The Climate Change Challenge Plan includes the challenge – ‘Develop our evidence base and insight to understand more fully the potential impact and ‘costs’ of activities and to set meaningful targets towards reducing our negative impact on the environment.’ In response to the request from Welsh Government the Council undertook a foot printing exercise alongside other local authorities in Wales using a bespoke methodology developed for the public sector in Wales. The exercise included direct, indirect and scope three emissions (emissions derived from the goods and services we purchase). The methodology and data collation will be the subject of review for future data submissions.
- 2.3** Initial responses are being compiled from all participating public sector organisations and being interpreted by Welsh Government with a summary report and conclusions due early in 2022.
- 2.4** The financial year 2019/ 2020 was used as the baseline year for the data due to the abnormal activity related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.5** In the future the public sector will report on the previous years’ emissions in the summer / autumn to allow time for data to be collected and refined.
- 2.6** The Council’s direct and indirect (scope one and scope two) emissions relate to fuel combustion in Council owned buildings, the Council’s vehicle fleet and electricity used within buildings. Grid electricity accounted for 38% of the emissions within scopes one and two with gas accounting for 35% and fleet and travel accounting for 20%. However, it is important to note that in total these emissions only totalled less than 20% of the organisation’s overall emissions.
- 2.7** During the exercise it was noted that the largest proportion (80%) of the Council’s overall emissions, were from goods and services that the Council purchases and procurement activities (scope three emissions). This was mirrored across all public sectors who submitted responses. It is however accepted that the methodology used to calculate the scope three emissions (KGC02e per £ spent) needs to be reviewed by Welsh Government for future submissions in order to give a more accurate picture.
- 2.8** The Council’s ability to absorb and sequester carbon through its land holdings was also calculated in the exercise, using the method prescribed by Welsh Government. The Council’s estate was split into Settlements, Grassland, Forestland and Wetland using mapping data and aerial photography. The assets categorised as settlements (urban), being the largest category in size, were determined to “emit” carbon with the assets classed as Grassland (Parks) and Forestry “absorbed” carbon, meaning that overall the estate was determined to absorb Carbon of 709,000 KgCO<sup>2</sup>e per annum.

- 2.9** In addition the Council has been awarded £60k through the UK Government Communities Resilience Fund and this funding is being used to determine a baseline position for the Vale of Glamorgan area as a whole and identify key areas that the Council can assist residents, businesses and the community in reaching the net zero target of 2050.
- 2.10** Both of these exercises will strengthen the evidence base and enable the Council to better understand where to focus resource and activity in terms of the changes the Council can make and what it can encourage others to do.

### **Proposals for Identified Project Zero Funding**

- 2.11** The Council has a number of earmarked reserves that can be utilised to support the delivery of Project Zero as set out below:
- **Green Infrastructure and Climate Change Reserve** £650k - There are currently no commitments for this reserve.
  - **Project Zero Reserve** £500k - There are currently no commitments for this reserve.
  - **Energy Management Fund** £263k (The majority of this fund is the recyclable Salix fund but there is also an additional sum that has been generated through energy management rebates).
  - **Carbon Vehicles Reserve** £215k - This will need to be utilised to achieve electric fleet/pool car targets.
- 2.12** It is proposed that the sum set aside in the Green Infrastructure and Climate Change Reserve should be identified as a capital reserve and ringfenced as match funding for grant funded infrastructure schemes that help to deliver step change towards the 2030 zero target.
- 2.13** The Project Zero Reserve should be utilised to fund costs that are revenue in nature such as to procure expert advice, analysis and to fund feasibility and due diligence costs that are required to leverage grant funding or to enable the delivery of schemes in partnership with other organisations and this recognises the need to build knowledge and expertise in this sector.
- 2.14** It is proposed that the Project Zero Reserve can be utilised to support revenue costs subject to approval by the Project Zero Board in consultation with the Head of Finance.
- 2.15** Given the capital nature of the Green Infrastructure and Climate Change Reserve it is proposed that schemes utilising the match funding will also utilise funding from other sources and will therefore require Cabinet or Council approval.
- 2.16** In addition to the Project Zero reserve, the Project Zero Board may also utilise a ringfenced budget of £204k that sits under the Policy budget heading. In the short to medium term it is recommended that this sum is utilised to fund low

level revenue initiatives, small grant schemes or revenue contribution to capital for schemes that do not satisfy the Salix payback criteria. It is proposed that any remaining sum will be transferred into the Project Zero reserve at year end. It is proposed that usage of this revenue budget is monitored and approved by the Project Zero board in consultation with the Head of Finance.

- 2.17** In the longer term the scale of the challenge to meet Project Zero by 2030 is such that the £204k sum is likely to be required to fund capital financing costs of Prudential Borrowing required as part of a capital scheme and approval of this capital scheme and associated borrowing will be required by Council.
- 2.18** In addition to these sums the Council has been awarded £60k as outlined in paragraph 2.9 of this report to establish a baseline position for the Vale of Glamorgan as a whole as part of the strategy to meet the 2050 target.
- 2.19** The Council has also accessed funding from Salix for a number of years including for the scheme to introduce LED lights across the Council's asset base of street lights and will continue to utilise this approach to deliver schemes proposed as part of the 2022/23-2026/27 Capital Programme Proposals as part of the Llanfair Zero Carbon Scheme and Rondel House Roof Replacement Scheme.
- 2.20** The Housing Business Plan incorporates ambitious proposals to improve energy efficiency in the existing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) housing stock initially through addressing the fabric of the existing housing stock which helps to reduce the potential for tenants to enter into fuel poverty and trialling renewable energy heating technologies (air-source heat pumps) to gain a greater understanding of how they impact the end user. There are plans to introduce a Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2 which is likely to have increased standards around carbon reduction and building safety. At present the business plan identifies £74.65m over the next 30 years dedicated towards directly responding to decarbonisation, although other renewal programmes are also seeking to achieve high levels of energy efficiency, such as external wall insulation, which is identified within internal and external improvement schemes.
- 2.21** As part of the New Development of the Housing Business Plan the Business Plan proposals reflect the rapidly changing standards associated with affordable housing development in Wales. Such as the use of sustainable building materials, energy efficient electric heating and hot water systems solar photovoltaic panels (PV) and improved energy efficient windows and doors, as well as decentralised Mechanical Extract Ventilation (dMEV) to improve air quality and remove moisture from the home. To minimise the wastage of water, we are fitting low flow sanitary ware, a shallower bath, and diffusers on tap fittings, as well as rainwater harvesting systems. We ensure that there is low air leakage from the fabric of the building. Many of these technologies have been designed into new schemes at the former Colcot Health Clinic, Barry, Hayeswood Road, Barry, phase 2 of Clos Holm View, Barry and at St Cyres Road, Penarth.

- 2.22** Welsh Government has identified as part of its indicative budgets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 additional capital funding of £20m in each year ringfenced for decarbonisation across Wales and additional Schools' Asset Renewal Capital Funding awarded in 2021/22 clearly identifies a need to prioritise decarbonisation and sustainable practices as part of the delivery of the programme.
- 2.23** The £215k held in the Carbon Vehicles Reserve will be retained while further internal discussions take place regarding a decision being taken on pool car requirements moving forward. There is a budget of £32k in the 2021/22 Capital Programme for the installation of vehicle charging infrastructure at the Civic offices and Alps Depot which is due to be complete by the end of 2021/22 financial year.
- 2.24** The Council has been working with the Welsh Government Energy Service, Carbon Trust and Energy Saving Trust to evaluate the integration of electric vehicles into the pool car fleet and the best methods and specifications for the charging infrastructure. The report's conclusions and recommendations show that electric vehicles can be used to pick up over 90% of the Council's pool car journeys if implemented correctly. Other than the savings in CO<sub>2</sub> and fuel costs, the switch to EV is driven by Welsh Government policy. The Council has a duty under the current Welsh Government Carbon reduction Plan Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Plan which states: "All new cars and light goods vehicles in the Public Sector fleet are ultra-low emission by 2025 and where practicably possible, all heavy goods are ultra-low emission by 2030".
- 2.25** A grant made available by Energy Services Wales (through Welsh Government) to cover the difference in cost between a diesel and electric vehicle has been made available to the Council recently, following an application, with spend and delivery of vehicles needing to be complete by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. This has accelerated the transition process. The grant amount available means the Council will only need to spend £175,083.00 of the ring fenced reserve to purchase 12 electric vehicles which will sit within the pool car fleet. This will be added to the Capital Programme once an award letter has been received.
- 2.26** These 12 vehicles, Hyundai e-Kona's, will replace at least 12 of the current diesel vehicles. An additional usage study will determine if more diesel vehicles can be removed from the fleet in quarter one of 2022/23.
- 2.27** In addition to the Review of the LDP the Council is also exploring opportunities to build on planning policies via Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to assist with decarbonisation and potentially raise additional sums through S106 contributions from developers. Examples include: Biodiversity and Development; Parking Standards; Renewable Energy; Travel Plans; and Trees, Woodland, Hedgerows and Development SPG.

- 2.28** There is likely to be an additional cost to deliver the ambitious 2030 target and a cost pressure for £250k was submitted as a late bid as part of the 2022/23 Revenue Budget Process. This would potentially fund posts within the Resources Directorate to support the energy data work, programme management and analysis. Despite the more positive than anticipated settlement received, a significant gap in funding remains and £100k has been allocated into 2022/23, recognising the importance of resourcing Project Zero and the Budget Working Group have profiled the balance of the pressure (£150k) into 2023/24.

### **Proposed Reporting Arrangements**

- 2.29** Progress in delivering Project Zero will be reported through the Project Zero Board to the Reshaping Board, Cabinet and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. It is proposed that progress is reported through Cabinet and Committees three times a year in June, October and February. These reports will detail progress against the Project Zero challenges and commitments as well as work around communications and community engagement, developing the evidence base, training and budget updates including the work being undertaken around carbon costing as it develops.
- 2.30** In addition to these specific Project Zero reports it is proposed that all committee reports should detail implications for climate change and also the nature emergency. It is proposed that an additional section be added to the committee report template as section 4, 'Climate Change and Nature Implications'. This would follow on from the section on the five ways of working and our Well-being Objectives and lead on to the section on Resources and Legal Considerations which would become section 5. Sections 3 and 4 would therefore provide the opportunity for all committee reports to fully consider the Well-being of Future Generations Act, climate change and our natural resources demonstrating the ambition of this Council to fully consider the needs of current and future generations as part of its decision making.
- 2.31** It is proposed that the new report template would be used for all committee reports from the beginning of June at the start of the new cycle of committee meetings following the Annual Meeting.
- 2.32** Below is an example of what would be included in this report in a section on climate change and nature implications.

#### **4. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

This report provides an update on work being undertaken as part of Project Zero which is the Council's response to the declared climate emergency. Many Project Zero activities also contribute to our response to the nature emergency. This report provides information regarding our carbon data emissions and how we are using this information to plan our work e.g. looking at procurement and the supply chain and how we can reduce emissions.

The report also details the different funding streams which can contribute to the delivery of Project Zero and delivery of the Climate Change Challenge Plan.

The report also details work being undertaken with regard to communications and training which will underpin the wide range of activities needed to tackle climate change and protect our natural resources. Where possible these activities are being integrated to ensure consistent and clear messaging to staff and the public. Work is progressing to tackle the Council's carbon emissions but we also have a role in working with partners and the community to reduce our overall emissions, to develop a better understanding of our impact on the environment and how we can change our behaviour.

This report also details some of the specific projects being undertaken including the review of the LDP and development of the Waste Management Strategy but also transport improvements and innovative energy projects. These will all help to reduce our emissions and provide tangible examples of the difference we can make.

The inclusion of a section in all committee report on climate change and nature implications ensures that these are being considered as part of the development of projects and strategies and that the implications are articulated clearly for members and the public.

## **Communications Plan**

- 2.33** Two of the challenges in the Climate Change Challenge Plan focus on communications and engagement. Work has been undertaken to develop a communications programme which will help raise awareness and encourage behaviour change within the organisation and externally. This will include seasonal campaigns, Project Zero branding on relevant communications releases, staff profiles and the development of the Project Zero webpages.
- 2.34** Project Zero branding which can be used for physical assets (such as information signs) has been designed with QR codes which will take people to relevant web pages. A set of social media assets is being developed using the same branding. Work is also progressing to develop a series of videos explaining the carbon emissions data detailed earlier in this report.
- 2.35** Work will also continue to provide forums and mechanisms for staff to get involved and shape the Council's work on climate change. Officers are continuing to link in with community groups to assist with climate change activities and to highlight what the Council is doing but also to encourage communities to develop local projects. The next round of Strong Communities Funding will highlight the importance of action to tackle the climate and nature emergencies.

## Learning Plan

- 2.36** Work has also been undertaken to start developing a learning programme recognising the varying needs and levels of knowledge across the organisation. The learning programme will include a mix of approaches including online training resources, carbon literacy training for more senior officers, learning cafes enabling discussion of different issues, Management Development sessions and a training needs analysis for some officers/posts.

## Challenge Plan Progress

- 2.37** In addition to the work outlined above significant progress has been made across many aspects of the Challenge Plan. The above activities will contribute to all 18 challenges and contribute to commitments around improved engagement, communications, influence and evidence which all sit under the theme of 'demonstrating strong leadership'.
- 2.38** Progress is also being made against a number of challenges that sit under the theme 'fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations'. Achieving net zero status cuts across all elements of place making; not just through how homes and buildings are designed and constructed, but also by ensuring new development is in places where it is or can be well served by low carbon transport links like public transport, cycling and walking as well as renewable and low carbon energy.
- 2.39** As part of the review of the Local Development Plan, the Council will be focused on how growth and climate change mitigation can co-exist. For example where should new development be located, and what the likely patterns of movement will be are all critical in ensuring the best chances of reducing the carbon footprint of growth, remembering that travel makes up a high percentage of carbon emissions when undertaking whole lifecycle carbon modelling of development planning.
- 2.40** Land use planning is crucial to the net zero pathway in many other aspects too, as it is not just concerned with buildings, spaces and the net outputs of carbon, but place making, circular economics, waste and development which can effectively stimulate markets, especially those engaged in clean tech, renewable energy etc. It can also give certainty to a wider range of other businesses and can be a lever to stimulate local economic growth.
- 2.41** As part of the review of the Local Development Plan consultation has recently been undertaken on the draft Review Report and Delivery Agreement. As detailed above, new and revised Supplementary Planning Guidance will also support work on climate change. Work is also progressing on the development of the Green Infrastructure Plan with consultation planned for the Summer. The Waste Management Business Plan will be presented to Cabinet and will deliver the

aspirations of the 10 year Waste Management Strategy. Work around active travel continues with schemes across the Vale funded through Welsh Government grants. As part of the Cardiff Capital Region activities, electric vehicle charging points are being installed in car parks, for taxis and on some streets, improving the infrastructure and encouraging behaviour change.

- 2.42** Work is also under way in the Energy team to develop a scope for the consideration of the development of a Local Area Energy Plan and other proposals around renewable energy.
- 2.43** The Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) Cabinet has also agreed an energy strategy, which will assist in creating the conditions for the region to transition into a carbon-neutral region whilst assisting with future economic growth for the region which aims to use low-carbon energy as an enabler of economic regeneration, increasing regional income whilst maintaining guardianship of the environment through a focus on clean growth. As part of the strategy to deliver this vision, the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) Cabinet have agreed to work in collaboration with various other stakeholders in submitting an expression of interest on behalf of the CCR in purchasing the former Aberthaw Power Station site.
- 2.44** Such a purchase is wholly aligned with both the CCR Levelling-Up Investment Prospectus and the aforementioned CCR Regional Energy Strategy. With the purchase process currently ongoing, commercial sensitivities prohibit any detailed disclosure of the proposal until an agreement is reached by the CCR Regional Cabinet and all other interested parties.
- 2.45** The rationale for the interest in Aberthaw includes the fact that the site has the potential to be redeveloped with a compatible use, such as a site for alternative power generation or digital infrastructure. This opportunity, which will remediate a decommissioned power station, will also provide the ideal conditions for innovative physical commercial and industrial land use, with capacity for a business park with smaller units to attract significant private investments into the area. It will also provide much-needed jobs and training opportunities, helping local businesses and communities to prosper in a post-pandemic setting, and help ensure a commitment to a green future for the people of Wales.
- 2.46** The Climate Change Challenge Plan also includes a number of challenges under the theme 'to make a difference now.' The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme continues to be a flagship programme with significant investment to build schools that are fit for the future and that are setting the standard in Wales, showing what is possible. As part of the Council house building programme the Council is building new homes to meet housing need and that are built to a high standard in terms of energy performance and the materials used. This includes 12 eco-friendly flats which will be built on Winston Road in Barry. The flats will be built using sustainable methods and feature energy efficient heating, solar panels, and rainwater harvesting.

- 2.47** In response to the recent exercise to gather and better understand our emissions data, work has begun to identify opportunities for making changes to how and what we procure. The Council's data and that of other Councils has highlighted this as an area where further work is needed to improve the quality of the data but it is clear that changes will need to be made if the Council is to be net zero by 2030.
- 2.48** A more detailed progress report on the challenges and commitments in the Climate Challenge Plan and initiatives referenced above will be presented to Cabinet in July.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about sustainable development. The Act sets out a 'sustainable development principle' which specifies that the public bodies listed in the Act must act in a manner which seeks to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In meeting their sustainability duty, each body must set objectives that highlight the work the body will undertake to contribute to meeting the seven Well-being Goals for Wales.
- 3.2** The activities set out in this report will contribute to the national well-being goals and help ensure we have a resilient Wales. The five ways of working will be embedded throughout Project Zero as we will be working collaboratively through the PSB and with other partners. It is recognised that this is a long-term project, but that action needs to be taken now and that prevention will be a critical element to this work. Involvement of the community in order for them to shape our activities and to understand the need for change will be fundamental to us making a difference through our activities and we will be integrating work on this agenda across the Council ensuring this is seen as the responsibility of all Directorates and staff.

## **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 4.1** The financial considerations associated with this report are highlighted within the body of the report above.

### **Employment**

- 4.2** There are no specific employment implications arising as a direct result of this report. The report highlights the progress being made to communicate with the

Council's staff and elected members and to ensure training and skills reflect the Project Zero commitments.

#### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.3** There are no direct legal implications arising from the activities detailed within this report, but activities undertaken in response to the climate change emergency will be consistent with duties under the Environment Act and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- 4.4** The feedback gathered during the consultation on the draft plan has informed Project Zero and equality impact assessments will be undertaken for different activities within Project Zero as necessary. These assessments will reflect the consultation findings and other relevant engagement and data.

## **5. Background Papers**

Council Notice of Motion 29 July 2019 - Minute 209

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Council/2019/19-07-29/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Council/2019/19-07-29/Minutes.pdf)

Cabinet Report 23 March 2020 Minute C280 - Responding to the Climate Emergency

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-03-23/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-03-23/Minutes.pdf)

Vale of Glamorgan Council Corporate Plan April 2020

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/achieving\\_our\\_vision/Corporate-Plan.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/achieving_our_vision/Corporate-Plan.aspx)

Vale of Glamorgan Council Coronavirus Recovery Strategy Cabinet 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-09-21/Coronavirus-Recovery-Strategy.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-09-21/Coronavirus-Recovery-Strategy.pdf)

Cabinet Report 2nd November 2020 Minute C357 - Developing a Climate Change Action Plan

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-11-02/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-11-02/Minutes.pdf)

Cabinet Report 25 January 2021 Minute C451 – Vale Public Services Board Climate Emergency Charter

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-01-25/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-01-25/Minutes.pdf)

Cabinet Report 22 March 2021 Minute C526 – Project Zero - Draft Climate Change Challenge Plan

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-03-22/Minutes-of-21-03-22.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-03-22/Minutes-of-21-03-22.pdf)

Welsh Government - Welsh Sector net zero reporting guide 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

[https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-05/welsh-public-sector-net-zero-reporting-guide\\_1.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-05/welsh-public-sector-net-zero-reporting-guide_1.pdf)

Council Minutes 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 (289 and 296) - Notice of Motion – Declaration of Nature Emergency and Project Zero – Draft Climate Change Challenge Plan

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Council/2021/21-07-26/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Council/2021/21-07-26/Minutes.pdf)

Cabinet Report 25<sup>th</sup> October 2021 Minute – Project Zero – Delivering the Climate Change Challenge Plan

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-10-25/Project-Zero-Climate-Change-Challenge-Plan.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-10-25/Project-Zero-Climate-Change-Challenge-Plan.pdf)