

## Rother District Council

**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 22 November 2021

**Title:** Carbon Baseline Approach for the Council's Activities

**Report of:** Director - Place and Climate Change

**Ward(s):** N/A

**Purpose of Report:** To update Members on the approach to be used to establish a Carbon Baseline for the Council's activities.

### Officer

**Recommendation(s):** It be **RESOLVED:** That:

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) Cabinet be requested to agree that the carbon baseline data should be set from the 2019/20 financial year and that data related to scopes 1, 2, and where possible, 3 be included in the baseline set.

---

## Introduction

1. In September 2020, the Rother Environment Strategy was adopted. One of the priorities is to become an 'Environmentally Friendly Council'. This report informs of the approach to be taken to establish a Carbon Baseline for the Council's activities to assist the Council in meeting its ambitious carbon zero target.

## Type of Emissions – Scopes 1,2 and 3

2. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol (<https://ghgprotocol.org/>) identifies three types of emissions, referred to as Scopes 1, 2 and 3 and are reported as carbon dioxide equivalents:

Category	Description	Explanation
Scope 1	Direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by Rother District Council.	Emissions from boilers within Council buildings and vehicles. Councils have direct control over these emissions.
Scope 2	Indirect emissions from the generation of energy purchased by Rother District Council.	Emissions from purchased electricity.
Scope 3	Indirect emissions that result from the other activities that occur in the supply chain of the Council's activities.	Emissions are not something that we directly control, they occur when we buy a product or service and emissions are produced elsewhere. They can be more difficult to determine accurately.

Table 1: Emission category

3. It is proposed to use a framework for the calculation of greenhouse gas used by the Council, such as the one developed by Local Partnerships/Local Government Association ([Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool - Local Partnerships](#)). The benefits of this include standardising how emissions are measured and reported to enable a consistent, sector-wide benchmark.
4. The reporting of carbon emissions is voluntary for public sector organisations. However, the ability to record, assess and report upon emissions will directly assist the Council in its transition to meeting its ambitious carbon zero target. Furthermore, a future change in regulations may mean compulsory reporting for all emission scope categories.

### **Council's Baseline**

5. It is recommended to use 2019/20 as the baseline year. Collecting data, where possible of direct emissions generated from the Council's own operations from an assessment of electricity, gas and water usage and business travel. It is intended to include the outsourced services of leisure, waste collection and grounds maintenance services within Scope 3, however, this will depend on the data available.
6. Carbon emissions generated by the tenants of assets within Council ownership where the responsibility for the payment of the utility bills lies with the tenant will be excluded from our asset baselining. These are included within districtwide emission calculations and their inclusion would be double counting.
7. Our approach to improve the energy efficiency of our Asset portfolio, will be reviewed within our Asset Management Plan, due to be finalised by December 2022. This will also contribute to the landlord requirements to meeting the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MESS) Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) in the future.
8. As noted in Table 1 above, Scope 3 emissions can be more difficult to calculate accurately. We will work to capture the data required from a review our activities within the Scope 3 categories and report on these emissions. As our data capture is refined and updated, we will amend our baseline where we can.
9. It is anticipated to have our baseline emissions for Scope 1, 2 and some Scope 3 activities no later than 31/03/2022. We intend to recruit a Climate Change Project Officer who will review the baseline data, further scope 3 activities, including data capture, and progress projects to reduce our carbon emissions.

### **Conclusion**

10. The emissions will be calculated using the agreed framework on an annual basis and be reported through the Environment Strategy update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee via our Climate Change Steering Group. It is important that the Council is aware of its own emissions to inform future policy decisions and to demonstrate progress towards carbon zero. Furthermore, it is imperative that the Council sets an example to the wider area by demonstrating what it is doing to achieve Net Zero.

11. This report sets our intended approach to be used to establish a Carbon Baseline for the Council's activities.
12. Members are requested to consider this approach and pass any recommendations for action to Cabinet for consideration.

### Financial Implications

13. Costs to undertake an energy/carbon efficiency review of the Council's Asset portfolio may be required. Additional resource may be required for improvements to the energy/carbon efficiency of buildings, including the installation of innovative technology to improve performance and future projects identified.

### Environmental Implications

14. Establishing a carbon baseline for the Council's activities will enable the Council to monitor progress against its ambitions to be carbon Net Zero by 2030.

Other Implications	Applies	Other Implications	Applies
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	No	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	No		

Chief Executive:	Malcolm Johnston
Report Contact Officer:	Nicola Mitchell
e-mail address:	nicola.mitchell@rother.gov.uk
Appendices:	None
Relevant previous Minutes:	C20/37: Consultation Report – Draft Rother District Council Environment Strategy (CB20/20).