

17 September 2020

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Ben Plummer ☎ 508965
Title	Colchester Borough Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions 2019/20		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report sets out the Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions recorded for financial year 2019/20. It also outlines how emissions reductions will be managed going forward with the introduction of a Carbon Management Plan for 2020-2023.

1.2 Some summary points from the report are:

- The emission sources within the Council's target to become carbon neutral include: gas and electricity consumption from Council operated buildings (including sheltered housing stock), fleet, commuting, water use, business travel and waste production.
- Notable changes in emissions were seen for both electricity consumption and waste production in 19/20 compared to 2018/19. For electricity consumption, the decrease in emissions is influenced by the decarbonisation of the electricity Grid. For waste production, emissions increased because waste data was collected from more Council buildings in 19/20.
- For scope 3 emissions (indirect), the majority of emission sources did not change in 19/20 relative to 18/19 with the exception of procured goods and services. This is because the type and value of contracts the Council procured in 19/20 were different from those in 18/19.
- The Council plans to measure its emissions going forward with help from the Carbon Trust to create a new Carbon Management Plan (CMP). The scope of the CMP will be a three-year plan, instead of the previous 5 years. This is recommended as technology and investment through the central UK government will provide new opportunities for the Council to reduce its emissions. The plan will also look towards 2030, setting key milestones and a pathway for carbon reduction between now and 2030. Options on emissions offsetting will also be included to demonstrate how CBC could offset its emissions locally.

2. Recommended Decision

2.1 The panel note the contents of the report and feedback any comments about the process of managing the Council's emissions in the future.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 The report is for information only.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 Not applicable

5. Background Information

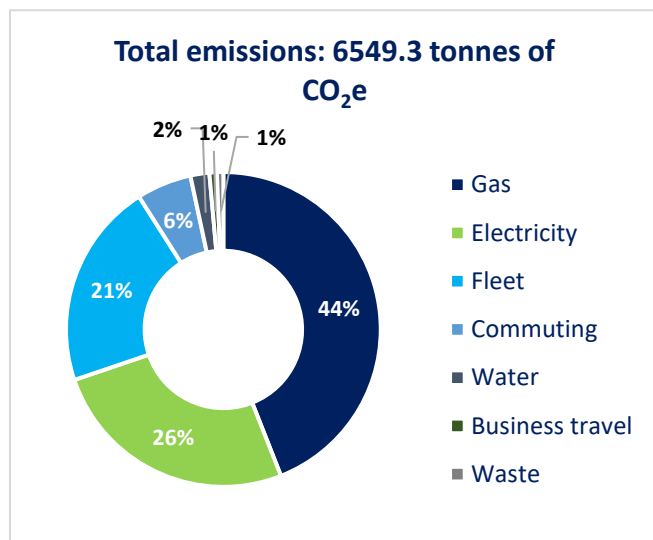
5.1 The Council records emissions according to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol which are broken down into three 'scopes'. A breakdown of these scopes is provided below:

- Scope 1: Emissions resulting from the burning of fuels, such as those used for heating in Council buildings or for fuel consumption in vehicles.
- Scope 2: Emissions associated with electricity consumption from Council buildings and vehicle usage (where these are EVs or hybrids).
- Scope 3: Emissions associated with operations not directly in the Council's control. These include emissions from business travel, commuting, waste production, water consumption, procured goods and services, leased buildings, investments and upstream fuel and energy activities.

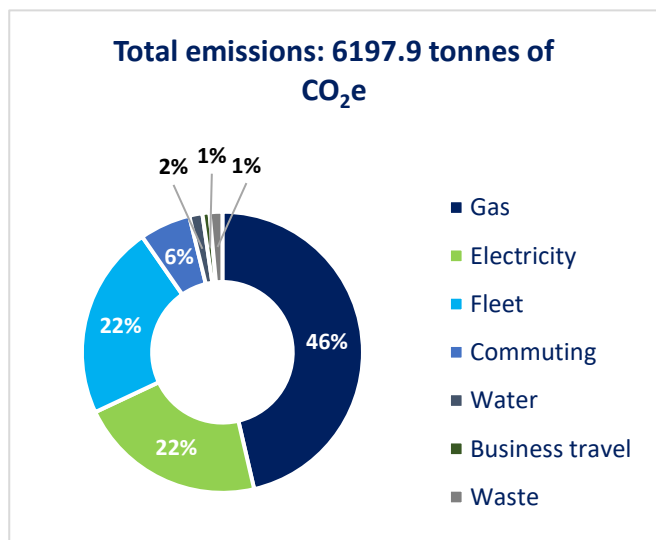
5.2 The Council has set a target for its operations to become carbon neutral by 2030. This encompasses various emission sources, including scope 1, scope 2 and elements of scope 3 emissions. This report will look at the individual emission sources included in the Council's 'carbon neutral target' and the scope 3 emissions.

Carbon Neutral Target

2018/19



2019/20



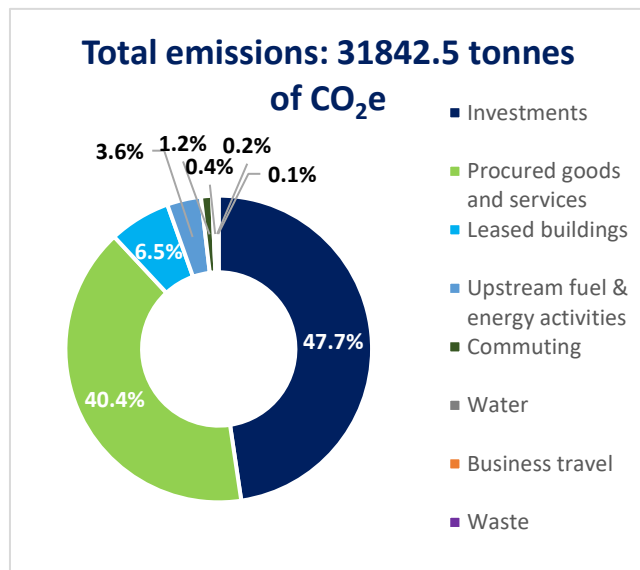
Emission source	Emissions in 2018/19 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)
Gas	2884
Electricity	1687.3
Fleet	1387.9
Commuting	369.5
Water	127.4
Business travel	49.8
Waste	43.4
Total	6549.3

Emission source	Emissions in 2019/20 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)
Gas	2874
Electricity	1340.8
Fleet	1384.6
Commuting	363.2
Water	93.5
Business travel	50.9
Waste	90.9
Total	6197.9

- 5.3 The above diagrams compare the Council's emission sources included in the carbon neutral target between 2018/19 and 2019/20. Compared to the 2018/19 baseline, emissions have decreased by 224 tonnes of CO₂e. This has predominantly been produced by a reduction in emissions associated with electricity usage in Council operations. Part of this will have been contributed by the continued 'decarbonisation' or 'greening' of the electricity grid.
- 5.4 The other notable change since 2018/19 is the increase in emissions from the Council's waste production. This is predominantly because more waste production data was sourced in 2019/20 compared to 2018/19. Additional data this year was sourced from the Town Hall, Greenstead Housing Office, Lion Walk Day Centre and two of the Council's car parks.
- 5.5 The three biggest contributors to overall emissions are those associated with gas and electricity consumption in Council buildings and fuel usage in the fleet. Note: Council buildings refers to those which the Council owns and operates out of such as Rowan House, Town Hall etc. It also refers to the gas and electricity consumption used in the sheltered housing stock, as the Council agreed to include emission figures from these in the carbon neutral target, even though the Council is not directly responsible for these emissions. The emissions from the rest of the Council's housing stock is accounted for in its Scope 3 emission footprint.

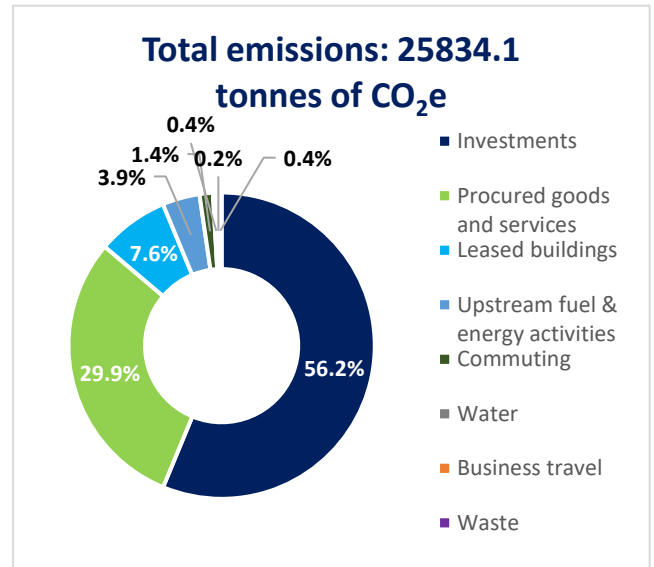
Scope 3 emissions

2018/19



Emission source	Emissions in 2018/19 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)
Investments	15173.2
Procured goods and services	12868.7
Leased buildings	2068.1
Upstream fuel & energy activities	1142.4
Commuting	369.5
Water	127.4
Business travel	49.8
Waste	43.4
Total	31842.5

2019/20



Emission source	Emissions in 2019/20 (tonnes of CO ₂ e)
Investments	14529.8
Procured goods and services	7735.4
Leased buildings	1951.8
Upstream fuel & energy activities	1018.6
Commuting	363.2
Water	93.5
Business travel	50.9
Waste	90.9
Total	25834.1

- 5.6 The 'scope 3' emissions that the Council measures are recorded in the diagrams and tables above, comparing emissions for 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- 5.7 The Council measured 'scope 3' emissions for the first time this year, and therefore many of the figures in both diagrams are based on estimates and assumptions, in the absence of better data being available.
- 5.8 The biggest contributors to scope 3 emissions are primarily investments and procured goods and services. Investments refers to emissions from the two companies the Council owns, Colchester Commercial Holdings Limited and Colchester Borough Homes CBH. The majority of emissions in the investments category is associated with CBH, primarily the housing stock (14,106 tonnes of CO₂e). Procured goods and services refers to the emissions associated with delivering key Council contracts for works and projects. The emissions estimate for this is taken by working out the emissions associated with the top ten contracts the Council has within a year based on their monetary value.

- 5.9 The main reason scope 3 emissions decreased between 2018/19 and 2019/20 was due to a decline in emissions associated with procured goods and services. The reason for this decline is because the value of the top ten contracts in 2019/20 was lower than in 2018/19 and because the contract types involved were less 'carbon intensive'. This demonstrates the variability that can occur with measuring scope 3 emissions, especially whilst the data the emissions are based on is still mainly estimated.
- 5.10 However, estimating scope 3 emissions has enabled the Council to understand the size of these emissions, and that action will have to be taken to reduce these. This has already been recognised with the housing improvement programme spending of £4.4m being approved to contribute to decarbonising the Council's housing stock.

Carbon Management Plan 2021-2023

- 5.11 The Council recognised the need to cost, estimate emission reductions and assign timescales to actions and projects going forward. This will be actioned through the creation of the Carbon Management Plan 2021-23, which will be led by the Carbon Trust as the Council has done in the past.
- 5.12 The Council recognises that the next Carbon Management Plan (CMP) will need to be for a shorter time period (3 years) compared to the previous 5-year plan. This plan will need to be adaptive and shorter in timescale to accommodate the changing technology and funding context as well as the Council's use of assets going forward. The CMP will include a section for between 2023-2030 to highlight broad areas of focus for the Council and a trajectory it should look at to reach its carbon neutral target by 2030. Critically, the CMP will look to set key milestones for reducing carbon emissions between now and 2030 to ensure we stay aligned to a suitable trajectory for reducing emissions.
- 5.13 Emissions offsetting will be included within the report to provide local options for doing this and highlight any best practice from other councils.
- 5.14 A clear Terms of Reference is being developed after conversations with Carbon Trust on how other councils have approached the need for adaptability and flexibility in planning. We will report back to the Environment and Sustainability Panel on 28th January 2021 with the full proposal for how the CMP will work including its detailed scope and timescales for action.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 There are no equality, diversity and human rights implications of the report.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 This report directly links to the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 theme of 'Tackling the Climate Challenge and Sustainability'.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 There are no consultation considerations.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 There are no publicity considerations.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 There are no financial implications at the current stage. However, working with the Carbon Trust to develop a Carbon Management Plan will involve a cost that is currently being estimated.

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no community safety implications.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no health and safety implications.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 There are no risk management implications.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 This report documents changes in emissions associated with Council operations and activities. The production of a new Carbon Management Plan will help the Council to plan out how to reduce the emissions from its operations over time, setting key milestones along the way.