

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**ECONOMY, RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**28th February 2022**

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for Climate Change

**REPORT TITLE:** Climate Change Update

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**REPORT FOR:** Information / Discussion

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**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To update Members on progress with the implementation of the Council's Climate Change and decarbonisation agenda and key work areas.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 In September 2020, Powys County Council agreed a cross-party motion on climate change which declared a climate emergency and committed to reducing carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 (Appendix 1 – Climate Change Declaration).
- 2.2 A Cross Party working group on climate change has been established to provide advice and directional guidance on climate change and the carbon reduction agenda.

**3. Climate Change Strategy**

- 3.1 The Council's Climate Change strategy has recently been finalised for approval (Appendix 2). The draft strategy was formally launched for public consultation in November 2021. Feedback received has been used to prepare a final document and is summarised in Appendix 3.
- 3.2 The document sets out the Council's vision and aims for action on climate change and its ambition for the future, and focuses on 5 key areas:
1. Buildings
  2. Mobility and transport
  3. Procurement
  4. Land use and Agriculture
  5. Council and governance

- 3.3 The strategy provides a framework for direct action by Powys County Council and will help guide collaboration with partners and influence stakeholders across the county. It will be taken forward through the development of delivery plans which will be subject to further engagement.
- 3.4 An internal Climate Change Programme Board has been established to support and oversee the implementation of the Climate Change Strategy. This consists of the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and senior officers. The Programme Board will provide strategic direction and support and act as advocates across the organization and with stakeholder for the Climate Change Strategy and its delivery.

#### **4. Council Carbon Accounts**

- 4.1 In May 2021, Welsh Government published the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon Reporting Guide. The guide provides a standard set of instructions for use by Welsh public bodies, to estimate baseline emissions, identify priority sources and to monitor progress towards meeting the target ambition of a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. This will help enable consistency and comparisons at a national level and across Wales.
- 4.2 For the purposes of the Welsh Net Zero reporting, emission sources are divided into scopes which have been used to support the operational boundary setting process and covers both direct and indirect emissions. Broadly, these fall into three categories, operational emissions, supply chain emissions and land use. The Council's carbon accounts cover the period 2019-20 (baseline) and 2020-21 (first year). Currently there are some limitations and minor gaps in available data which can be addressed going forward.
- 4.3 The first-year accounts (2020-21) compared to the baseline (2019-2020) shows a 13.5% reduction in operational emissions (Appendix 4). This is mainly from business mileage (6%), electricity (5%), and natural gas (2%). There is a common factor to all three of these: the shift to remote working and the wider impact of Covid. Offices have been closed and a shift to remote working made. Business mileage (2020-21) is less than half that of 2019, saving 4.8m vehicle km (57%). Electricity and natural gas savings combined (2021) provide a similar saving to business mileage.
- 4.4 Clearly the impact of Covid has resulted in some temporary reductions in emissions and additional effort will be needed to maintain this trajectory. New ways of working and energy efficiency opportunities will be central components in reducing the Council's emission going forward. The Council is delivering a range of energy efficiency programmes which will contribute to this. These include PV panels in schools; LED projects in corporate buildings; the 90% complete transition of street lighting to LED; electrification of our fleet including refuse collection vehicles and street

sweepers which all offer potential carbon savings. The Council's indirect emissions will be larger than direct ones and areas such as procurement will be key to achieving the net zero target.

## **5. Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points**

5.1 The Council has already installed 16 x fast 22kw public charging points in 8 different car park locations around the county to help residents and visitors in the transition to electric vehicles. This initial phase was supported by a grant from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) and Council investment.

5.2 Following an award from Welsh Government's ultra-low emissions vehicle transformation fund, the Council is now expanding its network into a further 5 car park locations, with 9 x fast 22kw public charging points being installed. This should be completed by end of April 2022 which will then bring the Council's EV charging locations up to 13 sites and a total of 25 charging points.

5.3 Council EV charging points are currently located at:

- Church St. Car Park, Welshpool
- Back Lane Car park, Newtown
- Maengwyn St. Car Park, Machynlleth
- Mount St. Car Park, Llanidloes
- Hereford St. Car Park, Presteigne
- High St. Car Park, Llandrindod Wells
- The Groe Car Park, Builth Wells
- The Watton Car Park, Brecon

5.4 Additional locations to be included are:

- Bowling Green Lane Car Park, Knighton
- Beaufort St. Car Park, Crickhowell
- Heol Eglwys Car Park, Ystradgynlais
- Dark Lane Car Park, Rhayader
- Oxford St. Car Park, Hay-on-Wye

5.5 The Council is liaising with Transport for Wales who are installing rapid charging points on behalf of Welsh Government. Rapid charging points will be installed in the following Council car parks in the coming months:

- Beaufort St. Car Park, Crickhowell
- Church St. Car Park, Welshpool
- Back Lane Car Park, Newtown
- Maengwyn St. Car Park, Machynlleth

## **6. Council Housing Stock**

- 6.1 The Green Powys programme is designed to increase fuel efficiency and reduce fuel poverty for tenants of the Council and make tangible improvements to the wider environment, with a particular emphasis on increasing planting of trees, shrubberies and other actions to promote biodiversity, encourage appreciation of the natural world and give a greener feel to our communities.
- 6.2 For 2022-2023, Welsh Government asked all local authority landlords to estimate the costs of 'decarbonisation' of all municipal homes. Estimating such a figure is challenging, because of many factors outside the control of the Council or households themselves. For example, the way energy is produced and supplied to homes may make a major contribution towards 'decarbonisation' – the roll out of hydrogen availability produced by electrolysis using green electricity generated by wind, solar and nuclear power and increased grid capacity to supply more green electricity directly to homes. The increased use of recycled, long-life materials and products and components sourced locally within Wales and Great Britain, reducing environmental transport costs, may also contribute towards a more environmentally friendly – and economically beneficial - approach to the construction and refurbishment of homes.
- 6.3 The current estimates for the lifecycles of components such as heat pumps and solar panel inverters and the currently higher maintenance costs of the new technologies being promoted as making a contribution to 'decarbonisation', when balanced against the long life of such improvements as additional insulation mean that a prudent approach of spreading the initial costs over ten years has been adopted. This allows scope for replacement systems, where necessary, to be funded from 2033-2034 onwards and to account for any additional maintenance costs of more complex heating, ventilation and water management systems.
- 6.4 To address high energy costs, special attention is to be paid to those Council-owned homes that have an Energy Performance Certificate rating of 'E', 'F' or 'G'. A 'whole house' approach – called 'Project E, F, G' - is to be developed during 2022-2023 for work to start during 2023-2024 to reduce the need for energy in these properties, reducing the cost of living for those living in these homes as well as improving environmental sustainability. Funding for these properties will be prioritised within existing programme.
- 6.5 The Council has taken part in the initial phases of the Welsh Government's Optimised Retrofit initiative. Powys engaged with the Sero pilot project to develop a methodology to make sure that whole-house solutions to increase the environmental efficiency of homes are specified and introduced in a way that does not disadvantage residents or counteract each other.

6.6 The Council is paying particular attention to how it can efficiently and effectively replace gas-fired boilers with ones than can easily be converted to use hydrogen.

## **7. Data Analysis**

7.1 The Council's Business Intelligence Team have compiled information on recent research and data relating to the impact of climate change at a Powys and Wales level. This is summarised in Appendix 5.

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## Appendix 1 – Climate Change Motion

At Full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 the following motion was supported by the Council:

1. Join with other councils across Wales in declaring and recognising that there is a Climate Emergency
2. That this council will endeavour to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero, in line with the Welsh Government target of 2030 and, call upon the Welsh Government and UK Government to provide adequate support and resources to achieve this target to support the implementation of Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales (March 2019) to make Powys County Council a net zero carbon local authority by 2030.
3. Request the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Regulatory Services lead on Climate Change mitigation and continue to actively engage with all members and stakeholders by:
  - A. working with the established cross-party working group and,
  - B. establishing a Powys-wide multi-stakeholder group, to develop a baseline picture @2020 and bring forward a strategy and action plan @2021 for a truly sustainable Powys.
4. That this council, with the assistance of the appropriate portfolio holder, newly appointed climate change officer and climate change working group, builds on the achievements to date and develops a working strategy and associated action plans to achieve this target.
5. That this council reviews all relevant policies, strategies and plans, to include its corporate plan and local development plan, to support the achievement of the above targets.
6. That this council promotes and publishes best working practices in limiting global warming whilst encouraging residents and businesses to take their own suitable actions to also reduce their carbon emissions in line with the Welsh Government target of 2030.
7. That this council, together with appropriate support and resources from the Welsh Government and UK Government, works with partners, other local authorities and organisations to help develop and implement best working practices, to publicise this declaration of a climate emergency, limit global warming and enable effective carbon reductions and transition to a green Powys economy.
8. Support our MPs to ensure the Local Electricity Bill succeeds in an Adjournment Debate to encourage and enable the local supply of electricity and facilitate more resilient Powys communities.

**APPENDIX 2**

# **Powys Climate Change Strategy**

**A Strategy for Climate change-**

**Net positive Powys**

**2021-2030**



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## Foreword

**We are facing a climate emergency. As a Council we need to act now to reduce direct and indirect carbon emissions to net zero. We also need to prepare and adapt to deal with the future impacts of climate change by ensuring that as a County, we become climate resilient.**

To achieve this, over the next decade, we will radically rethink how we live, work, learn, play and invest in the county. We also need action, not only on a local level but regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Powys County Council in collaboration with our partners are proud to lead this transition. Working collaboratively with communities, partners, and other organisations, we will together meet the challenge of climate change and have the 'future that we choose'.

With a clear position on the need for transformative action, the strategy sets the framework for Powys Council to take action, building on Powys successes and challenges to date. This strategy sets the vision for where we need to be in 2030 and how we aim to achieve our goal of being net carbon zero by 2030. By achieving this goal, we believe that Powys will contribute to:

- Making Climate Change everyone's business.
- Tackling the climate emergency, we all face.
- Cutting emissions by at least 95% in Wales by 2050 and delivering on our statutory duty as a local authority to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience of ecosystems as outlined in Environment (Wales) Act 2016.
- Making the public sector in Wales net carbon zero by 2030, as outlined in Welsh Government's Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales delivery plan.

Although we are facing a climate emergency and the challenges and actions required by every individual will not be easy, we will also see this as an exciting opportunity to address the challenge through the delivery of warm homes, reducing inequalities, creating more places for our children to play, cleaner air, jobs and opportunities for all.

We recognise that achieving our vision will not be easy. The Council will need to show strong leadership to create opportunities for all to participate in the delivery and benefits of this change.

## Introduction

On September the 24th 2020 Powys County Council declared a climate emergency and agreed to a cross-party motion on climate change. This declaration showed the commitment and ambition Powys County Council has to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero, in line with the Welsh public sector target of 2030. This document builds on that declaration. By formally declaring the emergency, the Council are saying that the work that we are doing to tackle climate change needs to grow and speed up.

Powys council in collaboration with our partners is uniquely placed to lead the challenge of climate change, as it is recognised that we have a democratic mandate for action, proximity to citizens and a key strategic role in leading public, private and voluntary sector partners. As so, Powys Council and our partners are proud to lead this transition. Working collaboratively with our partners and influencing communities, and other organisations, we will together meet the challenge of climate change and have the 'future that we choose' set out our shared vision in this strategy. We also believe we have a responsibility as one of the largest local employers to lead by example, and support the behaviour change needed.

Climate Change is close to home for many in Powys. We are already seeing increased extreme weather, especially flooding. With Covid, we have recently seen the need to act on science to address this emergency. Our recovery from covid provides us an opportunity to build back better, to have a green recovery. In Wales the public sector has an ambition to not simply meet net zero by 2050 as the whole economy must, or by 2040 as many in the private sector but to take global responsibility seriously, we are looking to be net zero in the public sector by 2030. This is an ambitious aim and for good reason.

**Acting on climate change saves lives.** Action required needs to consider reducing our impact (mitigation) on the climate and therefore the damages we will see and responding to the risks (adaptation) of climate change to build climate stability and resilience.

We have already been on a long journey, making changes to support climate action plus delivering numerous projects that have already reduced our impact on the environment, however the current level of action is not enough to meet the challenges that we are faced with and the goals that we want to achieve. **Now is the time to increase awareness, change behaviours, join forces, and increase the pace of action.**

We recognise the challenges and impacts of Climate change are different for citizens across Powys. 'We' as individuals; as a county need to unite and take action to tackle this climate emergency that we are facing, working alongside regional, and national stakeholders.

A key step change in this transition is behaviour, behaviour of individuals, communities, and businesses. Powys is unlikely to meet its vision and targets for reducing carbon emissions without a greater emphasis on behaviours which in turn will result in action and sustainability.

## Why act on climate change?

*The worlds temperature is rising because of human activity, and climate change now threatens every aspect of life. Climate and ecological change is the globally defining challenge of our time. It impacts all living things on Earth, including you and me. Left unchecked, humans and nature will experience catastrophic warming with worsening droughts, greater sea level rise and mass extinction of species.*

***We face a huge challenge, but there are solutions.***

**Ambitious action on climate change saves lives.** Climate change is a significant global issue with local impacts for everyone. Powys has already experienced extreme weather events including flooding and storm damage. These and other extreme events are also experienced globally and are making the news around the world.

Although we are already experiencing the negative impacts of climate change, we can still decide what our future looks like. Our actions today impact on both current and future generations. **The urgency is clear.**

Powys communities have received national recognition for their ability to rally together, especially at a time of crisis. In the challenges that Covid-19 has brought, we have seen the positive results of communities working together. We are capable of meeting challenges. Together we can restore our climate and rise to the challenge.

Some changes are already happening, though not at the pace and scale that will meet our carbon commitments. Both the pace and scale of change must be increased on this collective journey to securing a sustainable future for the next generation. Funding for the transition to net zero by local authorities is something the Welsh Government is currently investigating. Appropriate funding is relied upon to meet the scale and pace of change that is required to get to net zero by 2030.

The impacts of climate change for the future are dependent on the choices we make now. The next chapter of our collective journey on responding to climate change is one about what future we choose, by working together we can meet this even greater challenge.

## Impacts of climate change

The rise in global temperature is causing our climate and our planet to change.

### The impacts of climate change are:

- Hotter drier summers
- Warmer wetter winters
- More extreme weather events
- Sea level rise

### The impacts of climate change cause:

- More drought and wildfire
- Stronger storms
- More heat waves
- Flooding
- Damaged corals
- Less snow and ice and the thawing of the permafrost
- Changes in plant life cycles
- Changes to animal migration and life cycles

Before we set out the vision for Powys' Climate change strategy, we would like to define what is meant within this document when we talk about Climate change.

### **What is climate change?**

Climate is the average weather in a place over many years. Climate change is a shift in those average conditions. The rapid climate change we are now seeing is caused by humans using oil, gas and coal for their homes, businesses, and transport.

When fossil fuels burn, they release greenhouse gases- mostly carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). These gases trap the sun's heat and cause the planet's temperature to rise.

The world is now about 1.2C warmer than it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere has risen by 50%

## **Our Vision and Principles**

***In 2030 Powys County Council is carbon neutral and climate resilient.***

*We have collectively achieved a fair and inclusive transition, capturing the opportunities of new jobs and investment, improved health, wellbeing and education, and a better environment for local people. We are harnessing the power of nature and people working in balance and have a rich ecosystem and thriving green economy. We have contributed to a safer global climate.*

This vision is supported by a number of key principles

Long Term

We are looking to 2030 in our plans and split this into three terms for ease of focus. We acknowledge in many workstreams, that looking through a longer-term lens identifies opportunity for earlier intervention.

Integration

The recent publication of “Net zero carbon status by 2030 A route map for decarbonisation across the Welsh public sector” has been fully utilised and the structure of this document includes the headings found there. Based on work with the Partnership Council for Wales and published by the Welsh Government. This plan also includes work on all six priority areas of the Mid Wales Energy Strategy and incorporates suggestions from the Powys Public Service Board’s draft work on creating a Carbon Positive Powys. Bringing together Regional, Sub-national and National workplans into one document.

Involvement

We meet every month as a cross party working group with member representatives from across the county to discuss climate change. We are using the place-based approach to not only increase involvement and innovation, but to understand and meet the needs of the diverse communities across our vast region. We have published information on climate change, why it matters, what the council is doing and how you can get involved on our website.

Collaborative

We are working across the council through our climate champions group and our steering group. We attend regional steering groups and are the regional representative on the decarbonisation strategy panel at the national level.

Prevention

The work on inclusion, engagement, involvement, education, skills and just transition all work towards the prevention sustainable development principle.

Underpinning these principles is '**A strategy that is fair to all**' meaning outcomes will be fair, transformative, evidence-based, collaborative, and able to evolve in line with emerging technologies, changing individual and community behaviours, and new scientific findings. This means that the areas of climate action will support the County in securing wider benefits of social, economic, and environmental equality.

All people who live, work, learn and play in the County will be involved in the delivery of climate action. The action plans which will support the delivery of this Strategy and its outcomes will enable a transition for the county that is accessible and possible for all.

Below are some community-centred solutions which support wider social, economic, and environmental equality and are already in place.

- **Affordable warmth** including addressing fuel poverty, projects listed in buildings section of action plan
- **Zero Interest Loans Fund** for energy efficiency and renewable energy
- **New Ways of Working**, including remote working, avoiding travel time and cost
- **Digital Inclusion** so the shift to digital can be inclusive, including rural broadband
- **Public transport and Active Travel** improve mobility, health, and address transport poverty
- **Public EV Charging Infrastructure** facilitate a continuous roll out of charging infrastructure

## Taking action

The action that is needed to achieve our vision is complex and multi-faceted. The strategy details five key areas of change where climate action is needed to achieve the vision for Powys in 2030. Each of these five areas require clear plans and actions to ensure

that we achieve our vision. These detailed, measurable plans will be completed during the next stage of the strategy and will draw on a wide range of guidance from local, regional, and national good practice advice.

### **Five key areas of change.**

Below are the key areas of change which this strategy focuses on. Please note that these are high level areas and through the development of action plans and continued engagement they will evolve and be shaped by measurable outcomes.

These areas of change follow the publication – *“Net zero carbon status by 2030 – A route map for decarbonisation across the Welsh Public Sector”*. Through a consultation exercise we asked the residents of Powys how much they agreed that these five areas are suitable to support the goal of reaching net zero by 2030. We also asked them to prioritise the areas of focus and gave them the opportunity to share ‘what more can be done’ (See appendix 1 for suggestions via the public consultation). The following information is based on their feedback.

- 6. Buildings**
- 7. Mobility and transport**
- 8. Procurement**
- 9. Land use and Agriculture**
- 10. Council and governance**



1. Buildings



Areas of focus	Benefits
Energy efficient housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower energy bills</li> <li>• Long term income from renewable energy</li> <li>• Build local skills in refurbishment</li> <li>• Provide local jobs</li> <li>• Decrease climate and financial risk</li> <li>• Demonstrating our commitment to climate action and inspiring others</li> <li>• Reduce Fuel and Child Poverty</li> </ul>
Deploy renewable energy where possible at our sites and in our buildings	
21 <sup>st</sup> century net zero schools	
Use timber and other locally sourced/ available natural building materials where possible	

## 2.Mobility and Transport



Areas of focus	Benefits
Work with Transport partners to improve transport infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid and lower transport cost</li><li>• Promote Healthier lifestyles and have healthier residents.</li><li>• More energy efficient travel options</li><li>• Increased electric charging points for all to use</li><li>• Saved transport time from remote working</li><li>• Lower Pollution levels in built up areas</li></ul>
Promote public transport	
Reduce the need for travel – opportunities for remote working	
Active travel options will allow residents to make more positive choices	
Provide opportunities for the electrification of transport (including school transport)	

### 3.Procurement



Areas of focus	Benefits
Build local supply chains and industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The circular economy principles reduce the need to spend</li> <li>• More opportunities are found for the Council to meet its needs</li> <li>• Community benefits from procurement increased</li> <li>• Demand for repairing helps create local skills which can service the wider community</li> <li>• More sustainable products being purchased for day-to-day needs</li> </ul>
Help develop the circular economy in Powys	
New frameworks make the sustainable choice visible to decision makers	
Create opportunities for the use of more sustainable products and services to supply to the council. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative procurement to tackle climate change</li> </ul>	

#### 4.Land use and Agriculture



Areas of focus	Benefits
Understand the environmental impact on our land and the opportunities available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1232 510 2004 550">• We can measure climate impacts from our land</li><li data-bbox="1232 622 1971 734">• Protect land-based businesses, including agriculture, horticulture and forestry through climate resilience</li><li data-bbox="1232 813 1937 853">• Improved community health and wellbeing</li><li data-bbox="1232 925 1635 965">• Decreased flood risk</li></ul>
Support and encourage best practice including local sustainability and innovators.	
Give our local communities a voice to help express local preferences through place-based planning	
Encourage community groups to develop green spaces and other similar initiatives	

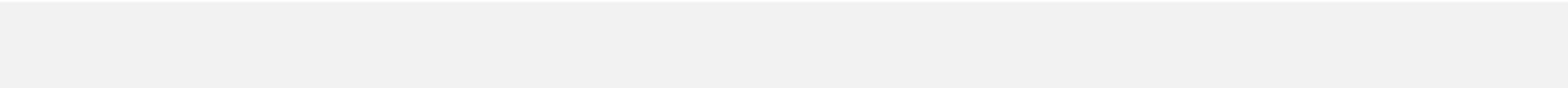
## 5. Council and governance



Areas of focus	Benefits
Integrate emerging legislation and strategy plans from international to local – UN, UK, Wales, Mid Wales and Powys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain the resources to enable the transition</li> <li>• Compliance with a complex and evolving regulatory framework</li> <li>• Be globally responsible</li> <li>• Identifying more funding options in support of net zero</li> <li>• Creating the environment for transformation</li> <li>• Create a highly desirable place to live, learn, work and play.</li> </ul>
Utilise best practice	
Develop clear roles and responsibilities	
Build on the inclusive governance and collaboration framework for Climate Action	
Develop policies in support of climate action	
Support communities with carbon positive initiatives	
Provide training for our staff	
Develop funding opportunities to support our transformation	

## Our Aims

To support the key areas of change and vision, we have identified some high-level key aims:

- To address climate change in a way consistent with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Being prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, globally responsible, vibrant culture and cohesive communities by embedding climate change at the heart of vision 2025.
  - To work in partnership to overcome barriers to the development of renewable energy across the county for local energy networks and to promote the sustainable and appropriate use of renewable resources from air, land and water
  - To maximise opportunities for carbon sequestration and minimise carbon release through the appropriate management of our natural resources.
  - To raise awareness so that our communities can understand the options and benefits of the choices they can make.
  - To maximise the benefits of Welsh Government, UK government and wider funding opportunities to deliver change, innovate and scale-up.
  - To promote funding programmes and initiatives in support of renewable energy and other energy saving projects.
  - To rise to the challenge of the climate emergency and create a climate conscious and resilient Powys.
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## Strategies and polices

There are a number of local, regional and national strategies and policies which have supported the development of this strategy. These include:

Local	Regional	National
<p><u>Powys County Councils Corporate Improvement Plan</u></p> <p>Public Service Board (PSB) climate change, step 7 – A carbon positive Powys. Which is part of the <u>Towards 2040 – Powys PSB Well-being Plan.-</u></p> <p><u>Brecon Beacons National Park Future Beacons</u></p> <p><u>Welsh Local Government Association</u></p> <p><u>Powys Climate strategy consultation</u></p>	<p><u>Mid Wales Energy Strategy</u></p> <p><u>Vision for Growing Mid Wales Strategic Economic Plan &amp; Growth Deal Roadmap (May 2020)</u></p> <p>Public Service Board Draft Regional Strategy by AECOM.</p> <p>Public Service Board Draft Regional Strategy Technical Companion Report by AECOM.</p>	<p><u>The Climate Change Act (2008)</u></p> <p><u>The Sixth Carbon budget (2020)</u></p> <p><u>Wales Climate Targets and Carbon budgets (2021)</u></p> <p>The Climate Change Risk Assessment (2021) from the climate change committee</p> <p><u>UK Gov road to zero Industrial decarbonisation strategy</u></p> <p><u>UK Gov Clean Air Strategy</u></p> <p><u>UK Gov Clean Growth Strategy</u></p> <p><u>The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution</u></p>

		<u>Energy white paper: Powering our net zero future.</u>
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## Delivery/next steps

This Strategy sets out Powys County Councils ambition and vision for transformation climate action. The journey for delivery will be detailed in a range of delivery plans, which will be engaged on and developed.

This strategy provides a framework for direct action by Powys County Council and will help us collaborate with our partners and influence our stakeholders across the county; what needs to come next is ACTION. We need to move from Strategy to Action immediately. Two key things are required to enable this, they are;

- Committed and collaborative leadership to lead and influence
- Resource and capacity to deliver

These along with the key guiding principles will lay the foundation of action.

To support the journey of delivery the strategy and actions will follow the Welsh Governments route map for change as detailed below. This route map will provide a clear pathway to change.



# The Journey to net zero

## **Moving up a gear 2021–2022**

Where understanding the context and what needs to be done is vital, and where action needs to accelerate.

## **Well on our way 2022–2026**

Where there is an expectation that low carbon is becoming the norm and we are definitely on the way to a net zero Welsh public sector.

## **Achieving our goal 2026–2030**

Where choosing zero carbon has become routine, culturally embedded, and self regulating.



Once detailed action plans have been developed and agreed the outcomes achieved will align to these three step changes under our five keys areas of change: Buildings, Mobility and transport, Procurement, Land use and Agriculture, and Council and Governance.

## How we will monitor progress

An essential part of this strategy is monitoring and regular review. Once the Council has a county baseline along with detailed action plans, we will develop a robust monitoring framework to report on progress and outcomes. This will help us to understand which projects/actions work best, which provides the widest co-benefits, and which offer best value for money. The council's Performance Management and Quality Assurance Framework will be followed in establishing the evaluation and monitoring of the strategy.

There are currently several Boards, such as the Climate Programme Board, Public Service Board, and the Cross-Party climate working group which the climate agenda sits. Their roles and responsibilities will need to be reviewed and we will need to ensure

that there is an effective platform to drive, monitor and manage the counties Climate change journey. Key to this platform will be engagement and collaboration from our partners.

## Closing statement

When we chose the path of listening to the climate science and proactively acting in a strategic way, we see that the solutions to climate change are so often the solution to other hurdles. From affordable warmth to flood resistance, from energy efficiency to creating space for nature, these solutions and many more “multisolve”. Tackling climate change is a key part of transformation, a transformation which will affect us all and requires us all to embrace. Through this vision we will save lives, improve livelihoods, and offer a realistic and aspirational vision of sustainable living in Powys for all.

## Appendix 1

Below are a sample of suggestions of 'what more can be done' gathered via the Strategies public consultation exercise. Please note that the comments below are a sample.

### **Buildings** -What more can we do? Areas to consider for our action plans

<i>What about planning? Could more be done in the assessment of applications against the targets for net zero and natures recovery?</i>	<i>Work with Welsh Government to alter the subsidy land owners already receive to produce food, to focus more on land management to maximise opportunities for carbon sequestration and promote more biodiversity and places for nature.</i>
<i>Sell off more public buildings to simply reduce your corporate footprint and use recycled materials in construction and refurbished office furniture etc</i>	<i>Integration and scale are really important. Linking in with maintenance work and making sure work is done at a big enough scale to meet the challenge of net zero and at a pace which meets net zero by 2030.</i>
<i>Look to provide energy for council buildings that can also be used in nearby homes.</i>	<i>Promote net zero for all new building in private sector via planning etc</i>
<i>only use materials available within the County.</i>	<i>sustainable planning of community areas</i>
<i>provide relevant support for educating in key areas of need to meet the energy efficient housing by creating green jobs and developing a greener workforce.</i>	<i>Sustainable food production - of healthy, nutritious affordable food, and de-intensifying farming, creating shorter supply chains as local as possible</i>
<i>Give consideration to restoring and repairing buildings as an alternative to new build.</i>	<i>Working to inform Powys residents of the actions they can take personal responsibility for and facilitating these</i>
<i>Free up plots for self-builders with strong eco plans</i>	<i>Sustainable planning of community areas</i>
<i>A focus on lobbying for further reflections of the climate</i>	<i>. Given the old building stock in our town centres, I think</i>

<i>emergency in owner occupied housing - building regulations etc</i>	<i>we should have a programme of carbon footprinting businesses and shops and provide support to better insulate these buildings and instal other energy efficiency measures.</i>
<i>Industrial units and agricultural buildings - better regulation, education and monitoring regarding environmental impacts re pollution</i>	<i>provide training and help for local people to set up businesses to build energy-efficient buildings and carry out renewable energy retrofitting at an affordable rate for all to be able to improve the public's ability to be more energy efficient</i>

**Mobility and Transport** -What more can we do? Areas to consider for our action plans

<i>Low-cost public transport to reduce car usage</i>	<i>Promote the development of alternative fuels such as hydrogen</i>
<i>Introduce small scale wind and solar generation to all Powys Carparks to subsidise the use of more charging points.</i>	<i>Support the re-opening of railway lines</i>
<i>Safer Cycling - Cycle lanes</i>	<i>The creation of subsidised carpools with up-to-date vehicles.</i>
<i>Affordable and available public transport, rural areas are forced to rely on cars due to very limited public transport availability</i>	<i>Reward and incentivise car and lift share; rationalise parking - do not insist on unnecessary parking spaces for new planning applications</i>
<i>Increase access to footpaths by better signing</i>	<i>Join up public transport- eg buses go to and stops at train stations.</i>
<i>Investigate further the concept of "20-minute neighbourhood" - i.e. provide as many services as possible within a 20 minute walk, including shopping, recreation and work.</i>	<i>Subsidise and increase the availability and spread of public transport - if more people can use it, they will be enabled and empowered to make a lasting change.</i>

<i>Safer Walking - Pavements</i>	<i>Charging network for electric vehicles</i>
<i>Transport partners to work closely with providers of essential services to provide transport plans to the essentials. Including active travel, public transport, shared mobility, and mobility hubs</i>	<i>Optional extra a tenner a month bus pass from each household on their council tax bills.</i>
<i>Provide support for the uptake of e-bikes, e-cargo bikes and adapted cycles</i>	<i>Reduce the speed limit on country roads, which will lessen pollution and make the roads safer for different modes of transport</i>
<i>•Implement 20mph limits in built up areas to increase safety for people walking, wheeling and cycling</i>	<i>Improve and reinstate footpaths, bridleways, and cycleways in rural areas to link homes to villages and towns to support Active Travel options</i>
<i>Promote locally produced food so the distance to market is shorter</i>	<i>Better broadband would help reduce travel, increase education and availability to those not IT enabled</i>

**Procurement-What more can we do? Areas to consider for our action plans**

<i>Minimum environmental impact should be given weight in procurement</i>	<i>Focus on reducing the need, prior to sourcing the products.</i>
<i>Encourage and enable the growing of more plant based foods in the county, especially fruit, vegetables and oats.</i>	<i>Food from local farmers</i>
<i>Make sure that local foods are used in School dinners and County Council refreshment areas as much as possible</i>	<i>Enabling Local Markets at community centres or schools</i>
<i>Make the right policies first to build the business case for circular and sustainable economy in Powys. Have strict criteria on what can't be purchased i.e very polluting products or high carbon products.</i>	<i>Creating localised buying club to overcome the issues of value for money and be prepared to break down contract sizes as Powys has no supplier giants able to compete.</i>
<i>Carbon audit on all procurement decision making</i>	<i>Support and encourage responsible procurement by others</i>

<i>Make sure all your contracts are accessible locally by local suppliers and providers. Keep the money we pay to Powys in Powys for the benefit of Powys people.</i>	<i>Help the public to be able to choose more sustainable products at a price we can afford ie. not more expensive than current non-environmentally friendly products and packaging</i>
<i>Development of guidance, tools and training for procurement professionals to support low carbon decisions</i>	<i>Emphasise to decision makers how important making the most sustainable choices is</i>
<i>Carbon audit on all procurement decision making</i>	<i>Purchase food from local suppliers in all council buildings/schools</i>

**Land use and Agriculture** -What more can we do? Areas to consider for our action plans

<i>Nature recovery to increase biodiversity</i>	<i>Education of our environment and its impact needs to be better delivered to schools and communities</i>
<i>Focus on supporting upland farmers and landowners to increase soil carbon and thus soil water storage capacity through improved grazing/pasture management - important for carbon sequestration</i>	<i>Providing the tools to deliver on best practice and lead on local sustainability and innovation.</i>
<i>The promotion of agroforestry (planting trees amongst crops) in the local area should be a top priority to combat soil degradation.</i>	<i>I would like to a focus on financial support for farmers to move away from sheep and poultry farming, so that land can be used for activities that promote carbon sequestration (eg tree-planting), reduce agricultural carbon footprints and river pollution, and promote the expansion of biodiversity</i>
<i>Council farms to be net zero by default</i>	<i>more supportive of the Welsh Government's targets on phosphate levels in rivers.</i>
<i>Encourage and facilitate tree planting and local water retention</i>	<i>- Reduce the need to, for example, remove hedgerows, trees, wild areas - add to them instead</i>
<i>All hill tops should be covered in trees to reduce erosion</i>	<i>Support Community groups (via funding etc) to create</i>

<i>and flooding downhill.</i>	<i>strong localised services and opportunities.</i>
<i>Encourage local food growing initiatives to build food security, supporting organic and regenerative agriculture.</i>	<i>Support those who want to convert land in Powys to horticulture, especially the younger generation who lack access to suitable land.</i>
<i>We want to see every public owned land being used for people and nature (greenspaces used for sustainable urban drainage, native street trees and new woodlands, wildflowers everywhere, support plans for beaver reintroductions, stop using pesticides</i>	<i>Plant native woodlands, food forests and agroforestry, transfer land management to local communities.</i>
<i>Buy unused/unsustainably used land for use by sustainable community projects</i>	<i>Alternative business model for livestock farmers, producing different crops, sequestering carbon, and generating energy</i>

## Appendix 2

### Glossary/definitions

<b>Net Positive</b>	Net Positive is a way of doing business which puts back more into society, the environment, and the global economy than it takes out.
<b>Climate resilient</b>	The ability to prepare for, recover from, and adapt to climate change.
<b>Ecosystems</b>	The ecosystem is the structural and functional unit of ecology where the living organisms interact with each other and the surrounding environment. In other words, an ecosystem is a chain of interaction between organisms and their environment.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	Biodiversity is a term which describes every living organism within a single ecosystem or habitat, including numbers and diversity of species and all environmental aspects such as temperature, oxygen and carbon dioxide levels and climate.



## Appendix 3 – Climate Strategy Consultation Summary

### Climate Strategy Survey Summary

The Climate Strategy survey was conducted from 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021 to 7<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

The survey was advertised to stakeholders via external communications channels including press, email, and regular social media posts and internally to staff.

There were 170 respondents to the online survey and five responses by email.

### Key Findings

#### Climate Change

*(The statistics below are based on respondents who answered ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ to the statements).*

Climate change is important to me	<b>97%</b>
I am concerned about the impacts of climate change	<b>96%</b>
The council should have science-based climate targets	<b>96%</b>

**96%** are already taking action on climate change. The **top 5 actions** already being taken by respondents are:

- **14%** reduce what they buy new.
- **13%** repair what they already own.
- **13%** expand the lifetime of products through good maintenance.
- **13%** buy used, refurbished or re-manufactured goods.
- **12%** buy sustainable options e.g. from recycled content or low carbon

#### The Climate Strategy

*(The statistics below are based on respondents who answered ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ to the statements.)*

The title of the report – Red Kite Climate Vision and Strategy	<b>43%</b>
The motivation statements (foreword, introduction, the need for action now)	<b>54%</b>
The view ahead (vision, what could Powys look, sound and feel like)	<b>63%</b>
The mission statement	<b>51%</b>
The six objectives	<b>50%</b>

Those who selected ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ were given the opportunity to comment why they had answered in that way, the main themes included:

- The use of ‘Red Kite’ in the title and as a repeated example throughout the report
- Lack of clarity on the ‘plan of action’ - just words
- No specific agriculture/food security/farmland references
- No ‘urgency’ or emphasis on ‘emergency’
- Lack of mentions of ecological crisis/biodiversity

- Nothing on waste management/recycling
- Should mention benefits to people e.g. better health, etc.
- Could be simpler/less jargon
- Objectives are not SMART

### Approach, focus and priorities

The publication - [“Net zero carbon status by 2030 - A route map for decarbonisation across the Welsh public sector”](#) suggests five priority areas of Buildings, Procurement, Mobility and Transport, Land use and Governance.

The statistics below are based on respondents who answered ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that these areas are suitable for the public sector to reach net zero by 2030:

Buildings	<b>89%</b>
Mobility and transport	<b>89%</b>
Procurement	<b>87%</b>
Land use	<b>85%</b>
Council and governance	<b>82%</b>

Top areas of focus for each of the key areas for change were provided and ranked by respondents (*where 1 is top priority*):

#### Buildings

1. Energy efficient housing
2. Deploy renewable energy where possible at our sites and on our buildings
3. 21<sup>st</sup> Century net zero schools
4. Use timber and other locally available natural building materials where possible

#### Mobility and transport

1. Work with transport partners to improve transport infrastructure
2. Promote public transport
3. Reduce the need for travel – opportunities for remote working
4. Active Travel options will allow residents to make more positive choices
5. Provide opportunities for the electrification of transport (including school transport)

#### Procurement

1. Build local supply chains and industries
2. Help develop the circular economy in Powys
3. New frameworks that ensure that the most sustainable choice is clear to decision makers
4. Create opportunities for the use of more sustainable products and services to supply to the Council

#### Land use

1. Understand the environmental impact on our land and the opportunities available
2. Support and encourage best practice including local sustainability and innovators
3. Give our local communities a voice to help express local preferences through place-based planning
4. Encourage community groups to develop green spaces and other similar initiatives

When asked if they would add a different area of focus to the list, themes included:

### **Buildings**

- Net-zero private sector housing
- Support/advice/grants on how to make homes more energy efficient
- Restore/repair/conservate/retrofit older (and listed) buildings
- Educate builders/trades
- Planning controls
- All buildings not just residential

### **Mobility and Transport**

- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Low-cost/Free public transport and taxi service for remote areas
- Promote and reward/incentivise car sharing
- Hydrogen vehicles

### **Procurement**

- Food/produce from local farmers/suppliers
- Guidance to help businesses support low-carbon decision making
- Emphasis on Powys Pound

### **Land use**

- Tree planting
- Sustainable practises, including food production
- No intensive farming
- Community green spaces/growing areas/sustainable projects

## **Just Transition**

All large changes have impacts, while climate change is referred to by some as an equality issue due to the impacts often hitting those least responsible and the poorest hardest. While the end goal benefits all, i.e. a safe climate, lower risks of flooding, storm damage, erosion, etc.

A 'Just Transition' means to make sure that changes are fair, and opportunities for involvement are maximised, including for those on low incomes and otherwise vulnerable. A 'Just Transition' is 'very important' or 'important' to **92%** of respondents.

## **Appendices**

When asked about the appendices of the strategy, respondents were asked to rate their preference for each one with both recommended as 'adds important information to keep':

- Appendix 1: Building a vision - **75%**
- Appendix 2: Integration - **81%**

## **Potential stakeholder group**

**36%** of respondents highlighted that they would be interested in joining a stakeholder group.

Those with an interest were asked for their name and contact details and some follow-up questions:

Topics they would be interested to talk on (out of the key priority areas mentioned earlier in the survey): Buildings; Mobility and transport; Procurement; Land; and Governance. Land was the most popular choice (35%) and Procurement the least popular (9%).

Level of expertise in climate change (from Casual Observer through to Professional with 10 years+ experience):

- Casual observer: **7%**
- Long-term interest: **56%**
- Professional - new to field: **4%**
- Professional - 2 years experience: **4%**
- Professional - 5 years experience: **2%**
- Professional - 10 years+ experience: **27%**

## Appendix 4 – Carbon Accounts Data Comparison

