



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee Meeting 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Communities and Environment Director

Portfolio Holder: Keith Melton, Climate Change Portfolio Holder

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<b>Report Summary</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	Climate Emergency Update
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To provide an update to members on the progress of the Climate Emergency Strategy and associated Action Plan.
<b>Recommendations</b>	a) For progress on the action plan, and its key projects, be noted
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	This work aligns with the Council’s Community Plan objective to “enhance and protect the district’s natural environment”. There is a specific activity under this objective to reduce the Council's carbon emissions by implementing an environmental strategy and carbon reduction action plan to achieve carbon neutrality.

## **1.0 Background**

1.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) declared a Climate Emergency at the Full Council meeting of 16 July 2019. At this stage, the declaration did not include a target for net zero for the Council but recognised that the UK Government had, the preceding month, agreed a target of 2050.

1.2 Following the declaration, the Carbon Trust were appointed to work alongside officers and members to develop a Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. The Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) met on several occasions to review the data and findings from the Carbon Trust, as well as to seek out views from partners, businesses, and local groups. The CEWG comprised of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokespersons of the Policy & Finance, Leisure & Environment, Economic Development, and Homes & Communities Committees. Members of the working group recommended the carbon net neutral target date of 2035, and a emissions reduction target in line with this aspiration. The Climate Emergency Strategy and both targets

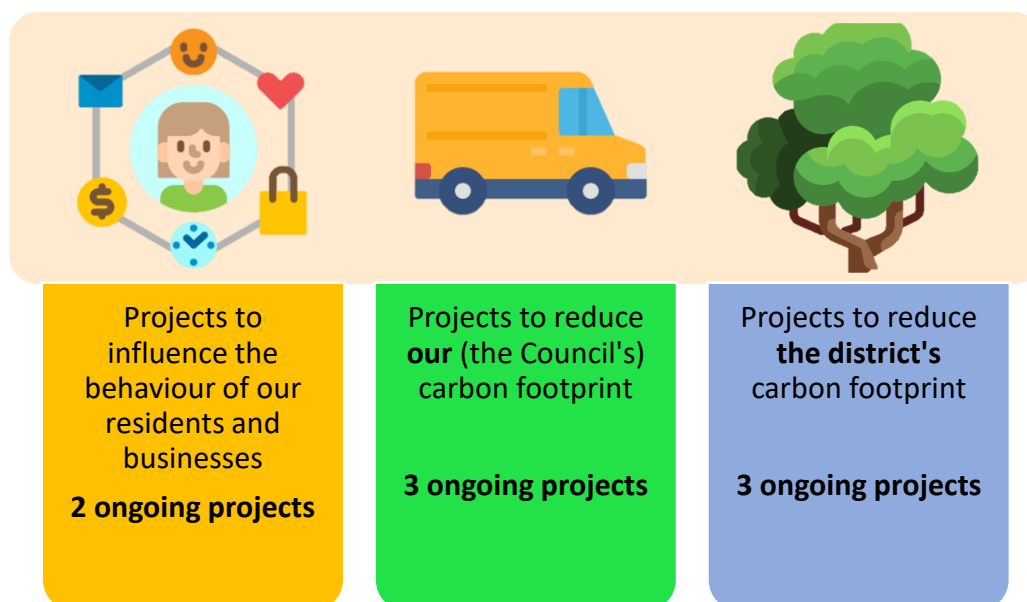
were approved by Policy and Finance Committee in September 2020 and Full Council in December 2020.

- 1.3 The Council's agreed target for reduction is 2,165 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (gas and fuel consumption from scope 1, purchased electricity from scope 2, and waste and water from scope 3).
- 1.4 The Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan was developed to deliver the vision outlined in the Climate Emergency Strategy. This action plan is being progressed and an annual report of progress is made to members. This report informs members of the Council's progress towards the 2035 carbon neutrality target and provides an update on work ongoing to date to tackle Climate Change.

## 2.0 Ongoing projects

Members can refer to previous update reports (November 2022) for previous works. This section of the report updated members on going work.

These ongoing projects fall into three themes as outlined below.



### 2.1 **Green Rewards App** (Behaviour change in residents)

- 2.1.1 The Green Rewards App is an online platform designed to incentivise and encourage users to undertake positive behaviour change by enabling users to log carbon reducing activities and gain points for these activities. Residents collect points for undertaking carbon avoidance measures, such as having a sustainable commute, learning about recycling or buying eco-friendly products. The points collected are honesty based and rely on users logging completed tasks. For some tasks you can only gain points once, for example completing the carbon quiz, whilst for other tasks, such as a recycling, users can connect points every week. The Green Rewards App launched to the rest of the County in November 2021, to coincide with COP26, and it launched to Newark and

Sherwood residents on 16 February 2022. This made Nottinghamshire the first county to have a carbon focused platform available to all residents.

- 2.1.2 The platform features a leader board which enables residents to view where they sit in relation to other residents. Winners are selected on a monthly basis by the platform operator. There are two winners a month, both receiving a £20 voucher.
  - The resident with the most points (each resident can only win once bi-annually), and
  - A randomly selected resident that has logged activities in the last month.
- 2.1.3 The project team continue to review the progress of the App on a quarterly basis to monitor uptake, analyse trends and ensure the App's continued promotion. So far 567 our residents have signed up (as of 19/12/2023) and we have the second highest average actions logged per user in Nottinghamshire. Also 57 tonnes of carbon has been avoided (as of 20/09/2023). This is equivalent to our expected annual carbon savings from the solar PV for Newark Sports and Fitness Centre, Newark Beacon, Sconce & Devon & Vicar water combined.
- 2.1.4 Healthy competition has been encouraged on a ward by ward basis via social media to highlight the highest performing wards. This is currently Devon ward. Parish Councils have also been provided with a communications digital toolkit to promote Green Rewards, future plans are in place to update this.
- 2.1.5 We have signed up to the App for Two years, this expires in January 2024, before expiry the success of the App will be reviewed. This review will consider the carbon savings attained, impact achieved and take up across the geography and demographics of the district. A recommendation on whether to continue with Green Rewards will then be taken to the Portfolio Holder for decision.

## 2.2 **Accelerator Training Workshops** (Behaviour change in businesses)

- 2.2.1 Accelerator is a new fully funded business support project being delivered by East Midlands Chamber to help local businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate.
- 2.2.2 This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. As part of this NSDC has committed £150k over 2 years for the delivery of the accelerator training workshops.
- 2.2.3 The Sustainability Accelerator will support businesses to reduce the cost of their energy bills and improve energy efficiencies any stage or level of their sustainability journey. Businesses can access a variety of workshops, training courses and 1-2-1 bespoke consultancy opportunities. The programme will also support businesses to develop comprehensive energy audits and decarbonisation plans.
- 2.2.3 Workshops and training courses take place through a mix of online and in person events throughout Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, NSDC businesses are welcome to

attend at any location. Topics featured include: Supply-Chain Decarbonisation for manufacturing, retail and food & drinks sector, Introduction to Carbon Footprinting, Sustainability Sprint Series: Share your company sustainability journey and Remodel your brand for Net-Zero.

### 2.3 **Solar PV installation** (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)

2.3.1 Our Climate Emergency Strategy Action plan outlines recommended carbon reduction initiatives which the Council can undertake in order to improve energy efficiency and reduce its overall carbon footprint. This includes the installation of Solar PV. As such we undertook feasibility works in collaboration with specialist consultants to consider the intricacies of Solar PV installation on a range of its corporate and leisure sites in order to gain further understanding in relation to costs involved, payback, carbon savings and if installation is practical.

2.3.2 The outcome of the feasibility study was presented to members at Policy and Finance Committee in November 2021 with a £685,250 expenditure approved for installation on the below sites in order of installation schedule:

- o Newark Sports and Fitness Centre
- o The Beacon
- o Vicar Water
- o Dukeries Leisure Centre
- o Sconce and Devon

2.3.3 The installation begun at Newark Sports and Fitness Centre on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023, this has now been completed and work on The Beacon site is underway. The installation at all sites is due to be completed by the end of the 2023/2024 financial year. The installation of the Solar PV will generate in excess of 280,000kWh annually and save an estimated 70 tCO<sub>2</sub>e per annum. The completion of this project will assist the Council with making carbon savings and generating renewable energy which will assist us with reaching our 2035 net zero target.

### 2.4 **Decarbonisation Plan** (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)

2.4.1 As part of the Climate Emergency action plan we are committed to delivering and installing low carbon heating measures at a range of Council buildings before 2035. The Carbon Trust recommended Air Source Heat Pumps as the low carbon technology. However, before installing this technology on large scale sites (which require significant heating) we must ensure this new technology is appropriate and consider all fossil fuel free options.

2.4.2 As such, work is underway with consultants to develop a Decarbonisation Plan for our corporate and leisure buildings. This plan will advise on the energy efficiency measures and carbon reduction improvements we can put in place at each site. This work is expected to be completed by February 2024.

## 2.5 **Climate Awareness Training** (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)

2.5.1 Climate Awareness training has been introduced to the internal training programme for the first time. This training will help ensure decision makers are aware of the Climate Emergency and are considering carbon reduction in decision making. For example, considering the impact that the implementation projects and policy may make on the district's carbon footprint. The training is for both Members and report writing officers currently.

2.5.2 The Climate Awareness training takes the form of a Climate Fresk Course, this is an objective workshop or seminar style training course which presents the established scientific facts relating to climate change. The workshop involves individuals working as part of a group to 'piece together' the journey of climate change from cause to effect. Climate Fresk workshops enable participants to take ownership of the subject matter and gain further insight and knowledge into the climate change agenda. Delivered by the LAEP (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities' Energy Partnership).

2.5.3 Climate Fresk workshops first gained momentum during COP26 in 2021, since then various partners have begun to facilitate this course. The workshop utilises a selection of cards and a large sheet of paper. It takes place over a three-hour period with a maximum of 12 attendees and is divided into three distinct phases:

- Discovering and linking the cards by the relationship between causes and consequences associated with climate change,
- A creative element where participants within each group decorate the Fresk, and creating further links/relationships between each cause and consequence, and
- A debrief including a discussion about how the emotional response of the participants, as well as any questions. This section also includes a discussion on solutions, and we would also include here information specific to NSDC and what 'you' as a member/officer can do about it.

2.5.4 To ensure that the debrief element is specific to NSDC an example set of slides have been developed to be delivered by NSDC staff focusing on local data and examples such as recent wildfires due to extreme heat and flooding events.

2.5.5 So far 47 Officers and 12 Members have received training, plans are in place to continue to roll this out further with new training dates to be arranged. The course has been well received with feedback received displaying the following:

- 100% of participants gained a better understanding of climate change and the risks facing our society.
- 100% of participants thought that the speed and pace of the course was just right,
- 100% of participants rated the overall course delivery as very good or good

## 2.6 **Electric Vehicle charge points** (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)

2.6.1 The Climate Emergency action plan commits us to exploring the implementation of electric vehicles within the Council owned fleet of vehicles. It was agreed at Leisure and Environment Committee on 16 March 2021 to adopt a phased approach towards electrification. This began with the pilot of two vehicles which have been used by our

Community Protection team for short journeys in the district within the past two years. Work is currently ongoing to upgrade the EV charge points outside the back of Castle House to enable faster charging of our Community Protection vehicles and the installation of a charge point at Brunel Drive for the first time.

## **2.7 Energy Efficiency Improvements to Homes** (Reducing the district's carbon footprint)

2.7.1 LAD3 is a scheme which aims to raise the energy efficiency of low income and low energy performance homes. Focusing on homes with energy performance certificate (EPC) ratings of E, F or G. The Midland Energy Hub allocated Newark and Sherwood £710k of funding to carry out this work which enables cost saving for householders as well as carbon reduction, and the creation of green jobs via Regional Energy Hubs.

2.7.2 So far as part of the LAD3 programme of works 65 properties have been identified and a total of 59 properties have been completed, these have been retrofitted with energy efficiency measures, enabling cost savings on energy bills and to support low-income households in Newark and Sherwood. This comprised of energy efficiency improvements such as Solar PV installation, External Wall insulation and loft insulation.

2.7.3 As part of the Yorke Drive development a minimum of 83 houses will be constructed. The main focus of the development will be to ensure these properties are as energy efficient as possible, current plans include the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps.

## **2.8 Tree Planting** (Reducing the district's carbon footprint)

2.8.1 As part of the Community Plan and Climate Emergency Strategy the Council committed to planting 10,000 trees by 2023. The Council have surpassed this record as since 2019 we have planted or given away in excess of 19,000 trees. Earlier this year we planted 800 trees on our own land and opportunities to increase this number are continually explored. A typical tree can absorb an estimated 21 kilograms of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) per year, however this figure is only achieved when the tree is fully grown.

2.8.2 We are also taking part in the Sherwood Forest Trust project 'Trees for Climate' helping to identifying suitable areas for planting and woodland development in the district.

## **2.9 Local Area Energy Plan** (Reducing the district's carbon footprint)

2.9.1 The Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) is a pathway broken down into components that show the district's route to achieve net zero. It will list the interventions and where they will have the most impact, for example, heating system installations in this area and public electric vehicle chargers in this town.

2.9.2 The LAEP will focus on three key areas;

- Retrofitting of existing housing to improve energy efficiency of homes (private and Council owned homes)
- Switching to low carbon road transport (private and Council owned)
- Deployment of renewable generation (on Council owned land/properties)

- 2.9.3 The implementation of a LAEP will complement our existing ongoing projects and work streams, this included housing specific projects which focus on energy efficiency improvements in the private and Council owned sectors. This is also aligned with our Climate Emergency Projects and our overall direction of travel in relation to becoming net carbon neutral. This also will give us the opportunity to consider each of the included aspects at a district level in combination with our direct emissions.
- 2.9.4 Undertaking the works outlined in the LAEP would realise considerable associated benefits, both socio-economic and health benefits, as undertaking this carbon reduction work across the East Midlands would likely lead to;
- The creation of new 'green' jobs as a result of low carbon investments in local areas,
  - Benefits to health and comfort from warmer homes and improved air quality,
  - A reduction in fuel poverty through lower cost warmth, and
  - A lower delivery cost due to economies of scale with mass procurement and the opportunity for more grant funding.
- 2.9.5 The opportunities to obtain further grant funding will be extremely beneficial in meeting our individual net zero targets and making strides in carbon reduction at a district level. The LAEP will also enable the creation of an interconnected work stream between housing, energy generation and electrification of vehicles internally and at a district level.
- 2.9.6 The procurement to appoint a consultant to deliver this programme of works is currently taking place, this work to develop the LAEP will begin this winter. The project is expected to be completed with a targeted NSDC specific action plan in early 2026.

### **3.0 The Council's 2022-23 Carbon Footprint**

- 3.1 As part of the Climate Emergency Strategy, and associated action plan, we have committed to monitoring and measuring our carbon emissions. This helps us be accountable to our residents. It also helps us identify areas of high carbon emissions suitable for targeted action.
- 3.2 Our target for reduction is 2,165 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (gas and fuel consumption from scope 1, purchased electricity from scope 2, and waste and water from scope 3).
- 3.3 Full Council in December 2020 decided that the Council's housing stock would be excluded from this target. This decision was made due to the estimated associated costs (circa £55million based on a 2020 estimate). A piece of work is currently in the beginning phases to determine if it is now feasible to include our housing stock in our net zero 2035 target or consider if we can be more ambitious and bring our target forwards to 2030 still with the exclusion of the Council's housing stock. Further updates and output from this assessment will be brought back to PPIC in the future.
- 3.4 The baseline carbon emissions (meaning the carbon footprint of the Council), was first measured in 2020, and the baseline was agreed at Full Council in December 2020. However, since the setting of this baseline with the Carbon Trust, the Council has undergone some key service changes impacting on its emissions, such as;

- We now deliver our garden waste service in house, which increased the fleet by two waste trucks,
- Next year we'll also be delivering a new kerbside glass service which will require three new trucks
- We have increased the scale of our Grounds Maintenance works, including taking on the maintenance of HRA land, which increased the fleet by five vehicles,
- The addition of the 4 Community Protection Officers, and their 2 vehicles,
- An additional vehicle to run the targeted action street scene team,
- Management of Southwell Leisure Centre, and
- The installation of a pool at the Dukeries Leisure Centre.

3.5 These approved key service changes have undoubtedly had an impact on our carbon footprint, these changes nonetheless have been required in order to provide these essential services to our residents.

3.6 It is important to recognise the significance of the decisions we have made since 2018/2019 and that these have had an impact on our carbon footprint, as seen in the table below.

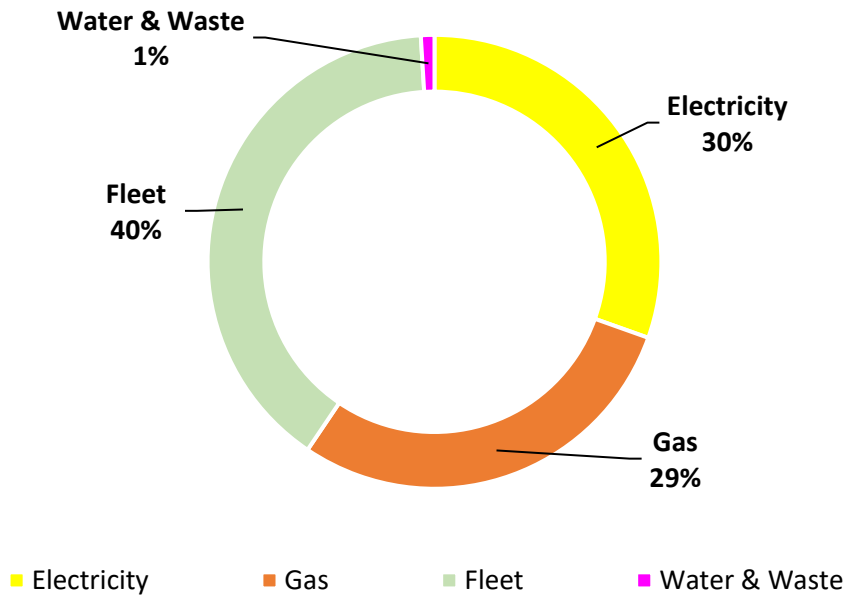
<b>Newark and Sherwood District Council's Carbon Footprint</b>			
<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
2,165 tCO2e	Not gathered due to Covid	2,483 tCO2e	2,358 tCO2e

3.7 Therefore, we have increased our carbon footprint by 8% since 2018/19. However, if we do a 'like for like' comparison. This means measuring our footprint without the vehicles purchased for new services and energy spent on new facilities, such as the pool. When comparing like-for-like, our carbon footprint is 1,916 tCO2e. This is a 11% reduction since 2018/19.

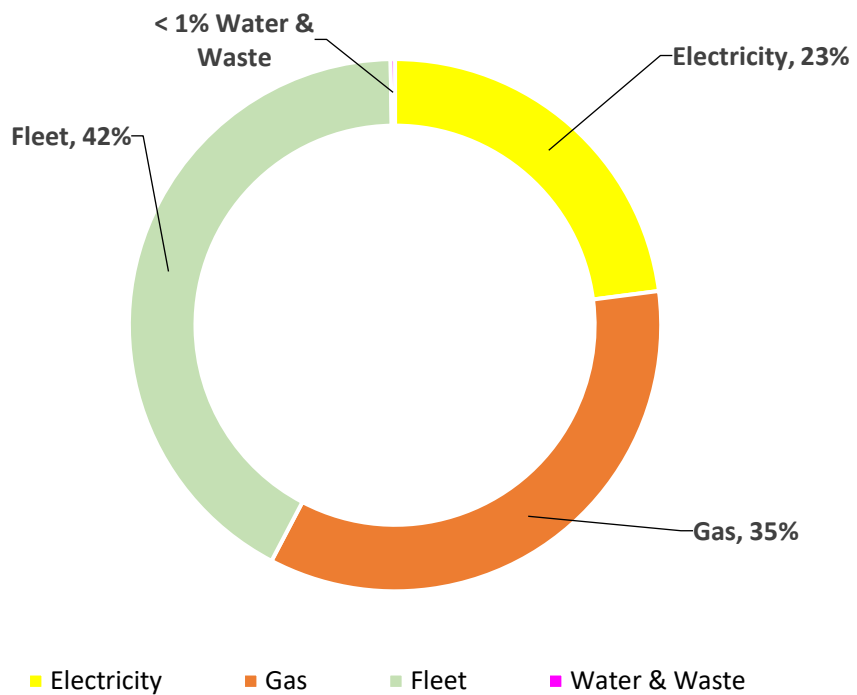
3.8 Please see the graphs below for a breakdown of the carbon footprint this year and in the baseline year.



**Fig.1 2018/19 Carbon Footprint Breakdown**



**Fig.2 2022/23 Carbon Footprint Breakdown**



3.9 The setting of the target and the annual monitoring has shown how we need to be mindful of our energy consumption in both our operational practices and strategic decision making and how these decisions will impact upon our carbon footprint. Moving forwards we plan to consider energy efficiency recommendations from the Decarbonisation Plan and our Corporate property team will continue to review energy consumption and understand energy profiles for each building and determine a tolerance level to carry out investigations. All reports now feature an environment section for report authors to consider when submitting reports for decision.

#### **4.0 Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability, and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

#### **Financial Implications (FIN23-24/6752)**

##### Green Rewards

4.1 As outlined, this is a joint procurement exercise between all Nottinghamshire Councils and the continued subscription to the App for two years expiring in January 2024 and is subject to review. The Transformation Revenue budget 2024/25 includes £5,490 plus inflation going forward should the Portfolio Holder decide to continue the subscription. If the Council withdraw, then this budget will be removed.

##### Accelerator Training Workshops

4.2 The Accelerator Training workshops are fully funded by SPF grant, £50,000 in 2023/24 and £100,000 in 2024/25.

##### Decarbonisation Plan

4.3 A budget has been set up for £150,780 from the Change Management reserve for Feasibility Works to be completed in 2023/24 at which time recommended works will be brought forward.

##### Climate Awareness Training

4.4 The Councils Corporate Training budget includes a commitment to provide Climate Change Awareness Training.

##### Energy Efficiency Improvements to Homes

4.5 The Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme includes the following budgets for decarbonisation of Council Dwellings:

	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Total</b>
Budget	916,212	1,352,470	2,268,682
Total NSDC Contribution (HRA Capital)	458,106	676,235	1,134,341
Total Grant	458,106	676,235	1,134,341

#### Tree Planting

- 4.6 NSDC are working in partnership with Sherwood Forest Trust in respect of planting and maintaining Whips, Feathers, and Fruit Trees, within their jurisdiction. A full agreement in terms of number of trees and time scales is still in progress; this will come at no additional expense to the Council.

#### Local Area Energy Plan

- 4.7 The revenue budget includes £82,000 split over two years 2023/24 and 2024/25. This represents £75,000 contribution to the creation of the LAEP and £7,000 towards a LAEP advisor for a 2-year period. There is currently no budget provision for 2025/26 onwards.

#### Climate Change budget allocation

- 4.8 The Capital Programme has the following budgets in the Capital Programme:

	<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>Spend to 31 October 2023</b>
Climate Change	205,000	36,850
Solar PV	685,250	55,600
LED Lighting – Beacon	81,995	0
Boiler - Beacon	61,525	0
Electric Vehicle Charge points – Beacon	36,850	0
Electric Vehicle Charge points – Castle House	50,000	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,120,620</b>	<b>92,450</b>

#### Solar PV

- 4.9 The maintenance costs and savings anticipated following the installation of the PV units have already been included in the 2023/24 revenue budget. For the Leisure Centres an adjustment was made to the Active 4 Today management fee to take account of their maintenance costs and savings.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Climate Emergency Strategy

Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan

Climate Emergency Update November 2022