

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
DATE: 6TH MARCH 2024
REPORT OF: HEAD OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
AUTHOR: MICHAEL JOHNSON

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE ANNUAL
REPORT 2022-23

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Senior Management and Members with an update concerned with the progress that is being made by the Service in relation to the environment and sustainability agenda.

Recommended: That

[1] the report be noted.

Background

2. This report is the third report prepared for the Performance and Overview Committee by the Environment and Sustainability Officer. Previous reports were delivered March 2022 and February 2023.
3. The Fire Authority approved the Environment and Climate Change Strategy 2020-2025 (the strategy) in June 2021. It contained six key objects and remains as the core focus of planned improvements.
 - Provide buildings that are energy efficient.
 - Reduce the fuel use by our fleet to cut emissions and costs.
 - Reduce business travel mileage.
 - Reduce waste and improve recycling rates.
 - Use purchasing power to drive environmental and social benefits.
 - Increase carbon literacy to encourage and embed behavioural change.
4. The strategy, supported by further Fire Authority approval of the Ethical Procurement Strategy and Social Value Policy in December 2021, has given the service the platform to improve our performance and influence further and continuously in the subject area.

5. The service also signed the Emergency Services National Sustainability Charter based around the global united nations goals. These goals focus on People, Planet, Public Purse.

Information

6. **CARBON EMISSIONS REDUCTION:** The carbon emissions report for April 2022 until March 2023 was published in July. This reported a return to a reduction of 59% from a 2017 baseline.

More details can be found in Appendix 1 – Carbon Report 2022/2023.

7. One stand-out headline from the report was a reduction of 609,191kWh of gas usage against the previous year. This is a result of moving away from using fossil fuel for heating and utilising power from renewable energy sources.

8. **CARBON LITERACY:** This report last year set an aim to have 50 colleagues certified as Carbon Literate during 2023. Following several workshops at Headquarters and a satellite course held at Chester Fire Station we have exceeded this expectation.

The next course is being held in the new station at Crewe during February. The courses are now being partly delivered by colleagues who have previously carried out the training.

9. **WASTE & RECYCLING PERFORMANCE:** The service maintains 100% land-fill free. Following a tender process and awarding of contract to new supplier we have greatly reduced our pure recycling performance to 31.1%. This is mainly due to the infrastructure available to our contractor.

There is a much higher percentage going to energy from waste and fuels derived from waste.

10. **EV CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE:** During 2023 all the historical Electric Vehicle infrastructure was upgraded in line with new regulation.

Inclusive of the upgrade, new installations, modernisation, and the new station at Crewe the service now has 66 charging sockets for electric vehicles.

A project to have electric charging at every Cheshire Fire location is currently underway. Remaining locations are being scoped for power needs and the objective is to complete this project during 2024.

11. **SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS:** Work on this project has begun and the initial data is being prepared by Finance. This will include 3 years of invoice data and supplier listing.

The external analysis of this data with the aid of AI software programs will identify the main emissions embedded in the service. There are many elements to scope 3 emissions, and some are directly linked to the service operations.

- Purchased goods and services
- Business travel
- Employee commuting
- Waste disposal & Water

Scope 3 emissions can account for 60/70% of an organisations carbon emission.

12. **GENERAL:** The Services Strategic Environment and Sustainability Lead remains as Chair of the Emergency Services Environment and Sustainability Group, which supports both the NFCC and NPCC. This has undoubtedly had a positive impact on the Service's performance in several areas covered by the Strategy.
13. This group brings together colleagues from fire and police services and has representation from Ambulance Services and The Royal National Lifeboat Institute. The group meets bi-monthly to identify best practices, share ideas, presentations from industry and government led initiatives. It returned to staging a face-to-face national conference in September 2023 held at West Midlands Fire Headquarters.
14. The group has been invited to host its conference and be a central point of the Emergency Services Show 2024 held at the NEC.
15. One of the main objectives and work streams this year is to produce a carbon accounting tool available for use by all police and fire services. It would allow some synergy and provide a sector reporting platform.
16. Phase 3 of the modernisation project is completing shortly with additions of solar PV and EV charge points. Although the full scope was reduced, this will provide more mitigation of energy usage. It is hoped that there is a return to the full environmental scope potential for phase 4.
17. Following several years work around our water portfolio, we are beginning to see results of the claims we had made with the regional water wholesaler. Incorrect historical charges have been raised with United Utilities.
18. Energy markets continue to be volatile and are closely monitored. Industry reports predict reductions towards April 2024. Our decision to go early with the tender of our utility contract has been shown to be a wise decision. It has allowed a full year of purchasing for our requirements for 2024/25.

Financial Implications

19. Financial investment into environment, sustainable projects and initiatives is key to progression in this area. Longer term return on investment should also be considered as savings in terms of carbon and consumption are imperative to the Service's longer-term goals.

Legal Implications

20. Mandatory and advisory targets are set nationally, and the Service must achieve the mandatory targets.

Equality and Diversity Implications

21. Equality Impact Assessments are required when formulating policy, but this report and its recommendations do not have any equality and diversity implications.

Environmental Implications

22. The measures detailed above in line with our strategy are driving continuous improvement in the areas of environment and climate change and a reduction in emissions.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE