

<b>Subject:</b>	Council Building Decarbonisation	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Climate Change Programme Officer	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Environment and Corporate Services
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kwabena Osei Poku	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706252551
<b>Email:</b>	kwabenapoku@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet approves the Council's Building Heat Decarbonisation Plan, and the programme of decarbonisation works recommended within the plan for the 2025/26 financial year.
- 1.2 That Cabinet approves capital spend of £100k already included within the 2025/26 Capital Programme, funded from the Carbon Reduction Fund, to finance the proposed decarbonisation works.
- 1.3 That Cabinet approves a further capital spend of £100k in the 2025/26 Capital Programme, funded from the Carbon Reduction Fund, to finance the integration of low-carbon and energy-efficient solutions into the Rawtenstall Market Project
- 1.4 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Economic Development, Director of Resources and the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Lead Members for Resources and Economic Development to undertake and approve the relevant procurement activities.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Council has committed funding through a Carbon Reduction Fund to deliver a programme of building decarbonisation, which will play a fundamental role in achieving the Council's net zero target.
- As at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 included within the Capital budgeted was an amount of £500k relating to the Carbon Reduction Fund. To date £300k has already been allocated, leaving a remaining balance of £200k in the Carbon Reduction Fund.
- The Council has been successful in receiving funding from the Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) to develop a Building Heat Decarbonisation Plan (BHDP) which aims to explore and create a strategy for heat decarbonisation. The BHDP was completed in March 2025.
- The BHDP recommends that smaller improvements such as LED lighting upgrades, improved insulation and solar photovoltaic (PV) upgrades should be funded internally. It also advises that officers seek external funding opportunities to deliver larger capital works, including the replacement of existing gas boilers with low-carbon alternatives such as heat pumps.
- This report summarises the proposed approach to allocating the remaining balance of the Carbon Reduction Fund to further decarbonise operational buildings in line with the Plan and incorporate low-carbon measures into town centre regeneration projects.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 In September 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and set out its Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan covering the following four policy themes:

- Efficient energy consumption
- Transport
- Waste and Biodiversity
- Working together in Partnership.

3.2 The Council set a target to achieve net zero operational carbon emissions by 2030. To support this, it has committed funding to deliver a programme of building decarbonisation, which will play a fundamental role in achieving this target. Energy consumption from heating council-owned buildings represented the Council's largest source of emissions in 2020, accounting for 51% of the total.

3.3 In March 2025, with £39k from the Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF), officers completed a Building Heat Decarbonisation Plan (BHDP) for the Council's corporate estate. The plan, which was completed by specialist consultants Mitie, outlined all the viable options for decarbonisation and provided a fully costed roadmap to 2030, primarily built around when the current gas boilers are due for replacement.

3.4 In line with the Council's Climate Action Plan, low-carbon solutions, including energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies, have been incorporated into town centre regeneration projects. Consultants have advised that investment in solar PV and energy efficiency upgrades at the redeveloped Rawtenstall Market would significantly reduce both electricity costs and the building's carbon emissions

3.5 To support the Council's decarbonisation agenda officers are seeking approval to allocate £200k from the Carbon Reduction Fund. This funding would support decarbonisation improvements to operational buildings and enable the integration of low-carbon measures into ongoing town centre regeneration projects.

3.6 It is proposed that £100k be allocated to cover the cost of decarbonisation works for 2025/26, as outlined in the Council's BHDP, and that the remaining £100k be used to install energy efficiency measures and low-carbon measures at Rawtenstall Market if an alternative source of funding is not available. Further detail on the proposals is as at 4.1 below.

3.7 This project forms part of a wider programme of interventions aimed at delivering the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, with overarching goal of achieving net zero operational emissions by 2030. The attached table in Appendix 1 provides context for a range of activities that have either been completed or are currently in development to support the decarbonisation of Council assets.

3.8 As of the end of the 2023/2024 financial period, the Council has achieved 34% reduction in its operational carbon emissions, compared to 2019/2020 baseline. This demonstrates significant progress and reinforces the importance of continuing targeted decarbonisation projects across the Council's estate.

### **4. DETAILS**

- 4.1 The proposed works will significantly reduce the Council's overall carbon impact. The decarbonisation project is estimated to achieve substantial annual carbon savings through the following suggested improvements:

**Futures Park, Marl Pits, Ashcroft, Stubblylee Annex, A, B&D**

- Lighting upgrades
- Insulation improvements
- Improve energy management arrangements
- Smart Building Energy Monitoring
- Solar PV remedial works

**Rawtenstall Market**

- Insulation improvements
- Low carbon heating
- Enabling of EV charging infrastructure

- 4.2 These improvements are estimated to reduce the Council's emissions by 15 tCO<sub>2</sub> annually and improve energy efficiency, thereby lowering costs by approximately 12%.

- 4.3 The delivery of these works will be managed by officers, who will go out to procurement to appoint contractors as part of our ongoing building maintenance and upgrade work.

**5. RISK**

- 5.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- Increase in market prices for the installation of decarbonisation measures

Mitigation- The market prices will be continuously monitored. If necessary, the schedule of rates and programmes will be adjusted to align with these changes

- Electrical supply upgrade issues

Mitigation- The electricity supply will be monitored to confirm that the proposed decarbonisation measures can be supported by the current electricity capacity.

- Service disruption/planning requirements

Mitigation- As the projects are minor in nature we do not believe there are any issues which would require planning or service disruption.

**6. FINANCE**

- 6.1 There are no further financial implications not covered in the body of this report. The Director of Economic Development along with officers will need to ensure that spend on the outlined projects remains within this budget and carry out the works in order of priority and benefit to ensure that these works are completed.

**7. LEGAL**

- 7.1 Under the Constitution, Cabinet is required to approve all expenditure over £100k. Officers shall ensure that all procurement activity is undertaken in accordance with the most appropriate procedure as permitted by the Constitution with all necessary legal agreements being sought to protect the Council and its assets.

## **8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no policy or equalities implications arising from this report

## **9. REASON FOR DECISION**

9.1 As part of the delivery of the Climate Change Strategy and its aspiration to achieve carbon neutrality across operations by 2030, Rossendale Borough Council is working to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from its operations. A major focus of this effort is reducing emissions from operational buildings. The successful completion of the building decarbonisation project will support the Council in achieving net zero emissions across its corporate assets by 2030. This initiative aligns with the strategic priorities outlined in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-2025.

<b>Background Papers</b>	
<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>
Current and proposed decarbonisation projects	Appendix 1

## Appendix 1- Current and proposed Decarbonisation Projects

Theme	Project	Timeline	Service areas	Funding Source	Description
Efficient energy consumption	Marl Pits decarbonisation project phase 1	Complete	Economic Development Facilities Finance	Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF)  Carbon Reduction Fund	Installation of new low carbon Air Handling Unit with heat recovery and pool covers
	Marl Pits decarbonisation project phase 2	2026/27	Economic Development Facilities Finance	Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS)  Carbon Reduction Fund	Installation of air source heat pumps, solar PV, and building energy management system optimisation
	Building decarbonisation project phase1	Complete	Economic Development Facilities Finance	Carbon Reduction Fund	Lighting upgrades, Insulation improvements, installation of replacement double glazed units have been implemented at Futures Park and A, B & D Centre
	Building decarbonisation project phase 2	2025/26	Economic Development Facilities Finance	Carbon Reduction Fund	Lighting upgrades, Insulation improvements, improve energy management arrangements, Smart Building Energy Monitoring and Solar PV remedial works are planned at Futures Park, Marl Pits, The Ashcroft, Stubbylee Annexe
	Building decarbonisation project phase 3	2027/28	Economic Development Facilities Finance	PSDS funding	Installation of air source heat pumps, solar PV, and building energy management system optimisation
Transport	Fleet decarbonisation	Ongoing	Economic Development Facilities Finance	Capital replacement budget	Purchase of electric vans for the operations team
	EV infrastructure project phase 1	Complete	Economic Development Facilities Finance	On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS)	Installation of 52 new EV charging sockets in 6 council-owned car parks
	EV infrastructure project phase 2	2025/26	Economic Development Facilities Finance	Private Sector Funding	Exploring opportunities for the installation of EV charging infrastructure in Whitworth, Helmshore and leisure centres
Waste and biodiversity	Biodiversity feasibility studies	Complete	Planning	Biodiversity Net Gain Grants	Feasibility studies to identify opportunities and cost to improve biodiversity in the Borough
Working in partnership	Net Zero Terraced Streets Project	2025/26	Economic Development Facilities Finance	Innovate UK Funding	Pilot innovative project to find solutions to decarbonise