

NET ZERO ROSSENDALE

ACTION PLAN 2020 - 2030

Revised July 2024



NET ZERO ROSSENDALE

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1. Introduction

It is generally agreed that human-induced global warming is changing our climate. Scientific, peer-reviewed studies provide evidence that climate change has been exacerbated by human activity¹. In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report which presented evidence indicating that efforts to combat climate change should seek to limit the rise in global temperatures to 1.5°C². The report highlighted that greenhouse gas emissions produced by industrial and agricultural processes from the early industrial era through to today will continue to impact our climate, leading to problems such as higher global temperatures and rising sea levels, resulting in extreme weather events, including flooding, heatwaves and drought. According to the IPCC, in order to ensure global temperatures do not exceed the limit of a 1.5 °C increase, global net human-induced carbon dioxide emissions need to reduce by about 45% by 2030 and reach net-zero by 2050.

The UK Committee on Climate Change (CCC) recommended in 2019 that the “UK should set and vigorously pursue an ambitious target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050, ending the UK’s contribution to global warming within 30 years”³. In May 2019, the UK Parliament also backed a motion to declare a Climate Emergency, and in June 2019 the UK became the first major economy in the world to pass legislation to bring greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050.

In response to this unprecedented challenge, Rossendale Borough Council (RBC) declared a Climate Emergency in September 2019. RBC committed to reaching net-zero carbon emissions in our estate and operations by 2030 and to work in partnership to reduce carbon emissions for the whole of Rossendale. In 2020, we published our climate change strategy setting out the framework for taking actions to achieve net-zero by 2030.

This action plan sets out how we can reduce carbon emissions across our operations and estate to reach net-zero by 2030 or sooner, as well as how we can work collectively with our partners and communities to deliver a net-zero Rossendale as stated in our climate change strategy. This plan will be reviewed annually to enable new issues, challenges, opportunities, and solutions to be considered, with projects added over the life of this document.

1 Harvey, J. A., Turgeon, K., Gals, R., Heine, R., Abaca, M., Abram, P. K., & Chow, S. L. (2023). Scientists' warning on climate change and insects. *Ecological monographs*, 93(1), e1553.

2 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (2018). Global Warming of 1.5 °C. <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

3 Committee on Climate Change (CCC). (2019). <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/>

2. Our Emissions

In 2019, soon after declaring a "Climate Emergency", RBC commissioned an assessment of the Council's carbon footprint, in order to understand our emission levels, identify priority areas for action, and check our progress towards making the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030. We worked with One Carbon World to assess our carbon footprint, including all our activities covered under scopes 1, 2, and 3 of the Green House Gas (GHG) protocol corporate standard (see Figure 1). Therefore, the baseline period of the 2019-2020 financial year is used as the most recently available data measuring the Council's carbon footprint.

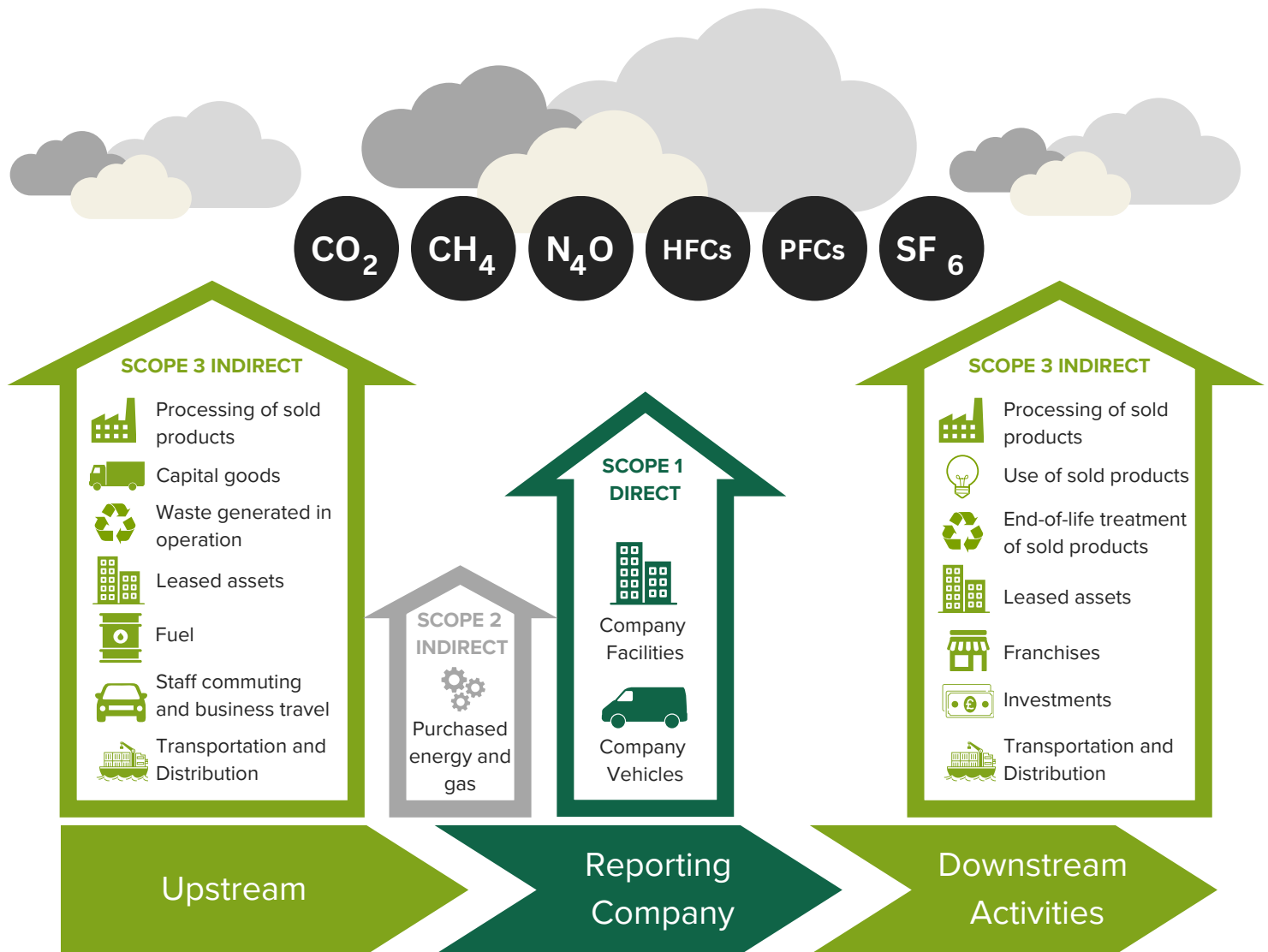
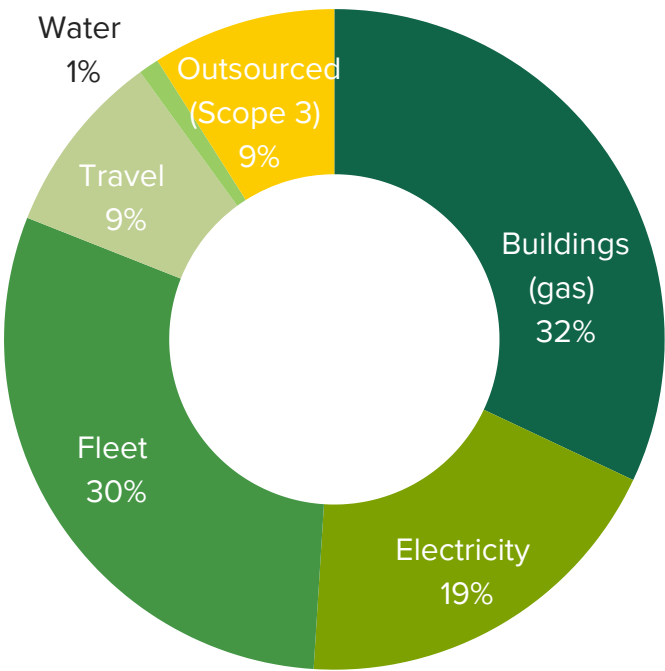


Figure 1 - Scope 1 - 3, Source - GHG Protocol

Net Zero Rossendale

For the 2019-2020 financial year, we calculated the carbon emissions resulting from our activities and operations as **2,028.13 tCO₂e** ("tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent", which is the standard measurement of emissions used by the GHG protocol).



As shown in Figure 2, our top three emission contributors are our buildings, vehicle fleet, and electricity. Therefore, we have prioritised decarbonising these three areas. In 2021, emissions from heating our buildings reduced by 10%.

Figure 2: RBC emissions Source: One Carbon World⁴

⁴ Rossendale Borough Council CO₂ report 2021 as provided by One Carbon World

Figure 3 presents borough-wide emissions data for Rossendale. In 2020, the total estimated carbon footprint for the Borough was 326,000 tCO₂e. The data indicates that transport was the largest carbon emitter, producing 36% of CO₂ emissions in the Borough. While the Council represents only 0.6% of the total emissions in the Borough, we are conscious that by leading the way to become net-zero ahead of the national 2050 timeline, we can demonstrate what can be achieved and inspire Rossendale residents and local businesses to join us on this rewarding journey.

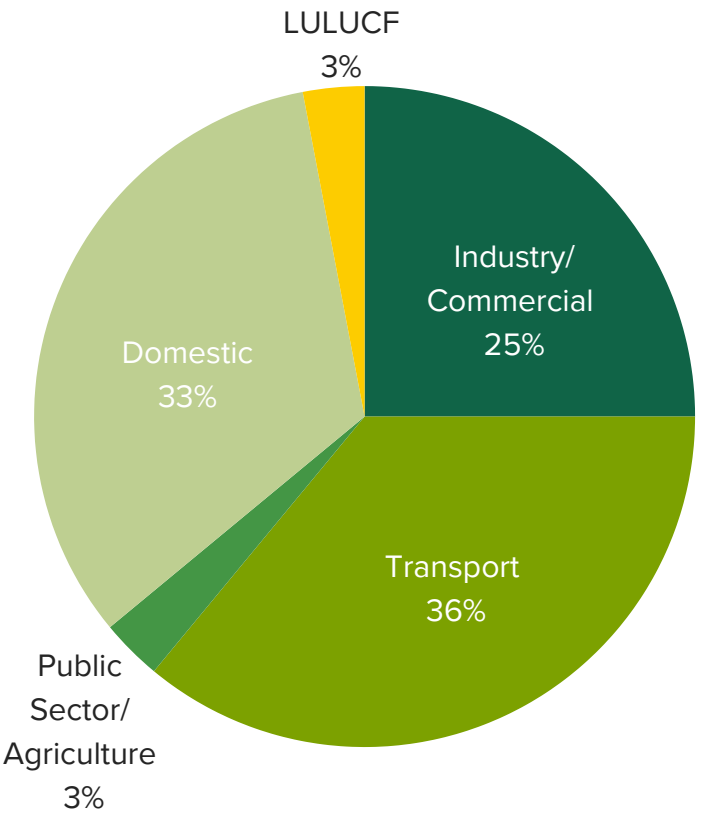


Figure 3: RBC sectoral GHG emissions (2019-2020). Source: BEIS⁵

⁵ Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). (2022). UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005 to 2020. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2020>

3. Our Approach to Decarbonisation

We aim to ensure that the Council's activities and operations reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 and to work in partnership to reduce carbon emissions for the whole of Rossendale. To achieve net-zero, we must avoid and reduce carbon emissions as well as increase the amount of carbon that is removed from the atmosphere. It is important that we use our resources wisely for effective delivery of net-zero, taking cost-effective actions which have the greatest impact on reducing emissions.

Emissions Reduction Hierarchy

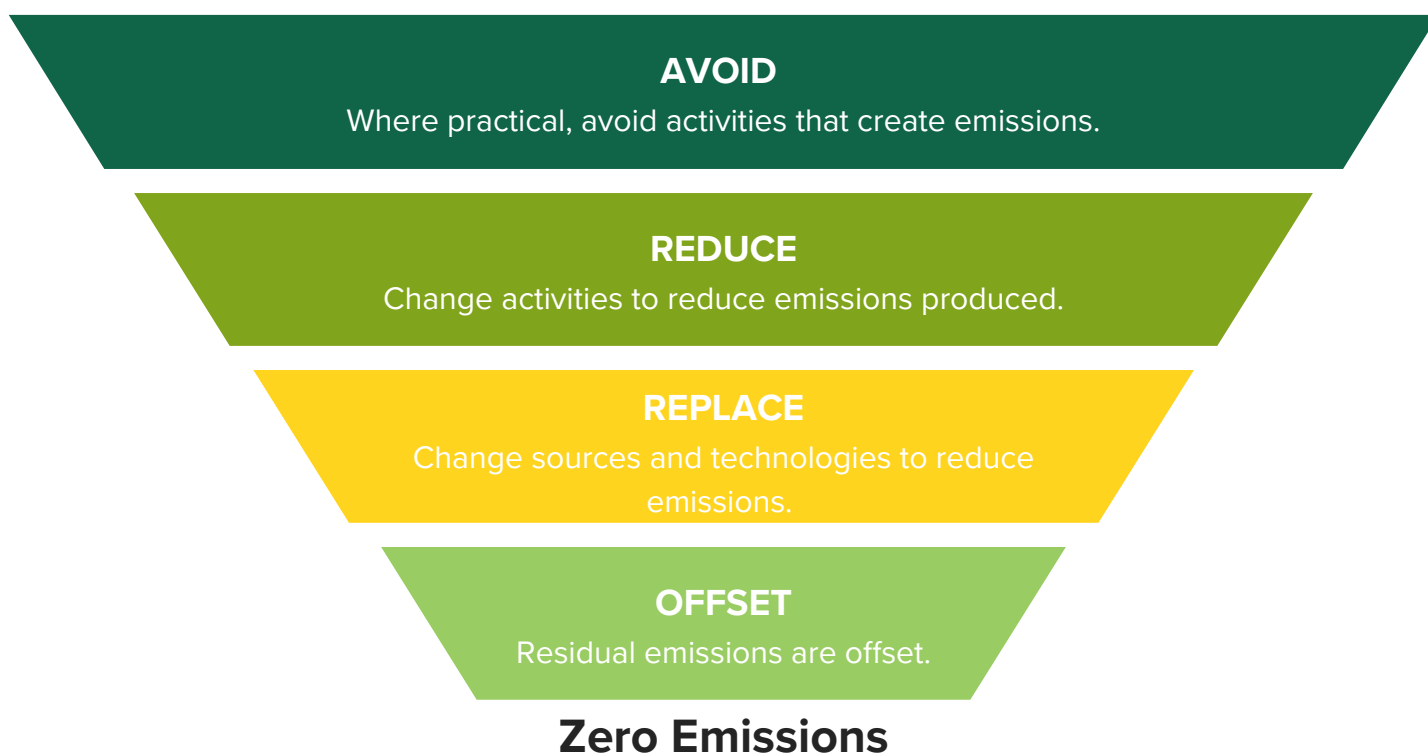


Figure 4: Emissions reduction hierarchy Source: [IEMA](#)

As highlighted in Figure 4, we will follow the internationally recognised emissions reduction hierarchy, an approach to cutting carbon emissions in the most efficient way. In line with the emission reduction hierarchy, avoiding the production of GHG emissions will come first in our plans, followed by taking steps to reduce our emissions. To reduce emissions, the Council will adopt four key areas of focus: efficient energy consumption, sustainable transport, waste and the wider environment, and working together in partnership.⁶

⁶ Rossendale Borough Council. (2020). Climate Change Strategy. <https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/environment/climate-change>

Efficient Energy Consumption



Energy consumption in our buildings from gas and electricity contributed our largest emissions in 2020 (51%). Therefore, making our buildings more energy efficient has to be a priority, along with purchasing and generating renewable energy. To achieve this, we will focus on the following key objectives:

- Identify ways to reduce the consumption of energy in Council-owned buildings
- Work with local housing associations and private sector landlords to increase the use of home insulation and adopt other energy efficiency measures, identifying government funding where possible
- Review our planning guidelines and use these to encourage the construction of new buildings that have a lower carbon footprint in both construction and operation.
- Support energy-switching schemes that enable more residents to move to energy providers that use renewable sources to generate energy.

Sustainable Travel



Transport accounted for 39% of the Council's emissions and 36% of borough-wide emissions in 2020. We aim to deliver low-carbon transport options for all, whilst also promoting healthier travel options such as walking and cycling. To achieve this, we will focus on the following key objectives:

- Strive to switch all Council-owned fleet from petrol/diesel to low carbon alternatives including electric and Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO)
- Install rapid electric car charging points across the Borough.
- Work with local public transport providers and Lancashire County Council to promote public transport options for residents commuting to work.
- Publicise walking and cycling routes within the Borough to encourage the use of travel options that are more sustainable.



Waste and Biodiversity



In 2018, UK-wide emissions from the waste management sector amounted to an estimated 0.1% of total GHG emissions in the UK (BEIS, 2019). However, if we consider emissions across the lifetime of products, from resource extraction and manufacturing, to disposal, the total emissions recorded from this sector would be significantly higher. Finding ways to ensure sustainable resource extraction, use, and end of life management of natural resources will support a transition to a circular economy and contribute to reducing waste streams such as plastics waste.

Meanwhile, experts have highlighted the importance of ecosystems and biodiversity in offsetting carbon emissions and mitigating some of the effects of climate change, including flooding. The Urban Forestry and Woodland Advisory Committee Network (UFWACN) recommends that 20% tree canopy cover is a good aspiration and will unlock several benefits to the environment. Currently, tree cover across the Borough stands at just 5%. We need to explore opportunities to increase our tree canopy cover and enhance biodiversity.

To achieve our aim of reducing waste and impact on the wider environment, we will focus on the following key objectives:

- Work with Lancashire County Council to incentivise recycling and increase recycling and re-use rates to 45% by 2030.
- Introduce food waste collection.
- Work with local businesses, communities, and schools on a major tree planting scheme.
- Identify areas in the Borough to work on the enhancement of biodiversity and climate change mitigation schemes.





Working Together in Partnership



In 2020, the Council's carbon emissions represented 0.6% of emissions in the Borough. Therefore, to achieve our ambitions and make a significant impact, we need to work together in partnership with local businesses, institutions, community groups, and residents in the Borough. We need to establish the building blocks for a much broader partnership to tackle the Climate Emergency. To achieve this, we will focus on the following key objectives:

- Hold a Rossendale Climate Change Conference that brings people together to share ideas and to pledge to work together on the Climate Emergency and to protect our environment
- Establish Climate Change Champions across all sectors and support them to create wider networks for action.
- Create a public platform to track our progress on specific actions and targets, and help you to hold us accountable for taking the action we need.
- Support campaigns and initiatives across the district that deliver carbon savings and increase sustainability.

4. Governance

We have established project groups to ensure we deliver actions committed in this plan, to ensure that the changes benefit the full range of residents in the Borough and to ensure that money is spent appropriately. Table 1 identifies some of these groups and their roles, but it is not intended to be fixed, nor to list everyone that should be included.

Group	Members	Roles and Reporting
Climate Emergency Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Economic Development • Director of Resources • Lead Member for Climate Change 	<p>Overall responsibility for action plan delivery remaining on target and to budget</p> <p>Annual report to Cabinet</p>
Implementation Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Economic Development • Head of Environmental Services • Head of Finance • Head of Planning • Facilities Manager 	<p>Responsible for the delivery of projects and reporting progress to CMT and Executive leadership board</p>
Climate Emergency Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Stakeholders • Community groups 	<p>Public engagement, information sharing, reporting</p>

5. Funding

Delivering all the actions in this action plan requires significant funding. The pursuit of our net-zero ambitions and decarbonising the Borough is a top priority for RBC. The Council commits to spending £1m carbon reduction fund to improve energy efficiency of our buildings and other carbon saving technologies. It is important to highlight the carbon reduction fund will not be enough to fund all carbon reduction projects.

We need public and private funding, as well as businesses and residents using their own financial resources to take action, where possible. We will approach government departments, energy companies, and other partners to invest in the future of Rossendale, and will explore all finance options available, such as decarbonisation funds, social impact bonds, and other forms of blended finance.



6. Monitoring and Reporting

To deliver this plan effectively, we will need to monitor, evaluate and report our progress in reducing carbon emissions. We aim to produce an annual carbon emission report outlining our own operational carbon emissions for each financial year using the Green House Gas Accounting Tool developed by local partnership and the Local Government Association.

Across borough-wide emissions, we will utilise the UK Government Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) territorial carbon emissions data, released annually each summer.

An annual Climate Change Conference will be arranged to bring together stakeholders and interested parties in this agenda to review performance and plan the route forward. We will also create a platform for residents to be able to engage with and track our progress and performance so we can ensure we remain accountable.

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Level	Estimated Costs	Carbon Savings
Low	Free or low cost measures	Limited carbon saving, single intervention
Medium	Some investment needed	Significant project or multiple interventions
High	Large capital projects	Large capital projects

Efficient Energy Consumption



Action	Lead	Timescale	Cost	Funding	Carbon Saving	Outcome
Commission and develop a full energy audit of council buildings	Facilities Manager	September 2021	Low	One Carbon World Funding	Low	Identification of energy consumption and carbon output of council owned buildings and potential savings
Develop a building heat decarbonisation strategy and delivery plan	Director of Economic Development	August 2022	Medium	Existing salary budget	Low	Structured route to decarbonise council buildings
	Facilities Manager	Ongoing		External Funding (LCSF)		
Deliver energy efficiency and decarbonisation of heat project to council buildings in line with Rossendale Borough Council building heat decarbonising strategy	Director of Economic Development Facilities Manager	Ongoing	Medium	Existing salary budget External Funding (PSDS, SPSF, LCSF)	High	Lower energy use and associated carbon emissions in council buildings
Apply for future funding to support building retrofit for council buildings and buildings in the Borough	Director of Economic Development Head of Finance Head of Legal	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget	Medium	Increase energy performance of council buildings and homes across the Borough
Incorporate energy efficiency measures and other net zero interventions into Town Centre Regeneration plans for Rawtenstall, Bacup, Waterfoot and Haslingden	Director of Economic Development Head of Housing and Regeneration	Ongoing	Medium	Capital Regeneration Fund External Funding (UKSPF)	High	Improved air quality, enhanced biodiversity and reduced carbon emissions in the Borough

Net Zero Rossendale - Action Plan

Action	Lead	Timescale	Cost	Funding	Carbon Saving	Outcome
Develop a supplementary planning document which sets the requirement to develop net zero enabled buildings, which are resilient to future climatic changes	Director of Economic Development Head of Planning	November 2022	Medium	Existing salary budget Local Plan review budget	Medium	Developers meet higher standards of sustainability and include provisions for electric vehicle charge points and renewable energy provisions by use of appropriate planning conditions
Work with East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce (ELCC) to conduct free carbon audits and provide advice to support businesses reduce their carbon emissions	Director of Economic Development	Ongoing	Low	External Funding (UKSPF)	Medium	Businesses taking up advice and available funding to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy costs and carbon emissions in the Borough
Work collaboratively with Rossendale Valley Energy (RVE) to provide energy advice through the Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD) project and the Fairer Warmth App	Director of Economic Development	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget External Funding (Innovate UK funding)	Medium	Increased numbers of households improving energy efficiency of their homes
Promote Government household energy efficiency support schemes including ECO flex and HUG	Housing Renewal Officer	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget	Medium	Energy efficiency in homes, reduction in fuel poverty and carbon emissions
Encourage the installation of appropriate renewable energy sources including solar and wind turbines to generate sustainable renewable energy	Director for Economic Development Head of Planning	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget	Medium	Allocation of sites for renewable energy projects in Local Plan review. Increased uptake of energy from renewable energy sources

Sustainable Transport



Action	Lead	Timescale	Cost	Funding	Carbon Saving	Outcome
Develop a council fleet/plant decarbonisation plan to accelerate the shift to electric vehicles	Head of Environmental Services/ Operations Team	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget	Low	Structured route to decarbonise council vehicle fleet/machinery
Explore greater remote/work from home arrangements for staff	HR Manager Head of IT	March 2026	Low	Existing salary budget	Low	Reduction in carbon emissions resulting from staff commuting to work
Procure electric pool cars for staff and encourage the use of public transport for business travel and commute to work	Head of Environmental Services/ Operations Team	December 2020 Ongoing	Medium	Carbon Reduction Fund	Medium	Reduction in carbon emissions from staff travel
Explore options to switch council vans and maintenance vehicles to electric or ultra-low emission alternatives by 2027	Head of Environmental Services/ Operations Team	Ongoing	Medium	Carbon Reduction Fund Capital Replacement Budget	Medium	Reduction in carbon emissions from staff travel and operations
Monitor Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) cost and where feasible fuel fleet using HVO	Head of Environmental Services/ Operations Team	Ongoing	Medium	Carbon Reduction Fund HVO budget	Medium	Reduction in operational carbon emissions
Develop EV infrastructure strategy	Director for Economic Development	March 2026	Low	Existing salary budget	High	Strategy to address the Council's role in supporting transition to electric transport
Support Lancashire County Council to deliver LEVI funded EV charging infrastructure project to develop an expanded network of EV charge points across the district	Director of Economic Development	Ongoing	Low	External Funding (LEVI fund, ORCS fund)	High	Increase uptake of electric cars in the borough

Net Zero Rossendale - Action Plan

Action	Lead	Timescale	Cost	Funding	Carbon Saving	Outcome
Support the implementation of Lancashire County Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)	Director for Economic Development Head of Planning	Ongoing	Low	External Funding (LCC funding) Developer contributions	High	Increasing the number of people across all sectors that regularly walk and cycle for both exercise and commuting to work or school/college
Work with local public transport providers to improve public transport service	Director for Economic Development Head of Planning	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget	Medium	Increasing the number of people across all sectors that regularly use public transport to commute for work or school/college
Ensure that all Council facilities are cycling friendly with facilities available to encourage staff to take up cycling	Facilities Manager	December 2026	Medium	Carbon Reduction Fund	Medium	Increasing the number of staff who cycle to commute to work

Waste and Biodiversity



Action	Lead	Timescale	Cost	Funding	Carbon Saving	Outcome
Learn lessons from the successful “check before you chuck” programme and apply to food waste collection rollout	Head of Environmental Services/ Operations Team	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget	Medium	Increase recycling rates in the Borough to 45% by 2030
Explore the potential for collaborating with local charities and organisations to segregate and redistribute good quality products from households	Head of Environmental Services/ Operations Team	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget	Medium	Increase in reuse, diversion of waste and a transition to a circular economy
Develop and deliver Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs) on Council owned land	Head of Environmental Services/ Operations Team	Ongoing	Medium	Existing salary budget External Funding	Medium	Flood mitigation
Implement the Biodiversity Net Gain approach in planning	Head of Planning	Ongoing	Medium	Existing salary budget External Funding	Medium	Increased biodiversity across the Borough
Explore opportunities for the Council to be a biodiversity and carbon offset provider on Council owned land	Director for Economic Development Head of Planning	July 2026	Medium	Existing salary budget External Funding	Medium	Increased biodiversity across the Borough and removal of carbon emissions from atmosphere
Increase tree cover of Rossendale Forest by 2 hectares per year	Head of Environmental Services/ Operations Team	December 2025	Medium	Existing salary budget External Funding	Medium	Increase tree canopy cover towards the national average

Net Zero Rossendale - Action Plan

Action	Lead	Timescale	Cost	Funding	Carbon Saving	Outcome
Address the impact of extreme heat in regeneration schemes	Director for Economic Development	December 2026	Medium	Existing salary budget External Funding	Medium	Increase adaptation to impacts of extreme heat. Assist with the design codes for Rossendale, needed for the Local Plan Review

Net Zero Rossendale - Action Plan

Working Together in Partnership



Action	Lead	Timescale	Cost	Funding	Carbon Saving	Outcome
Hold annual Rosendale Climate Change Conference	Director for Economic Development	April 2025	Low	Existing salary budget Carbon Reduction Fund	Low	Increase in awareness of climate change issues and participation in environmentally positive behaviours
Establish community climate action group	Director for Economic Development	March 2025	Low	Existing salary budget	Low	Increase in awareness of climate change issues and participation in environmentally positive behaviours
Explore opportunities to deliver carbon literacy education and training	Director of Economic Development HR Manager	April 2025	Low	Existing salary budget Carbon Reduction Fund	Low	Greater carbon literacy leading to Council progress to Carbon Literate Organisation silver status and beyond
Work in partnership with Rossendale Valley Energy (RVE) on Net Zero Terrace Streets project	Director of Economic Development Head of Planning	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget External Funding (Innovate UK funding)	Medium	Reduced energy demand for domestic activities
Pursue local and regional partnerships with other councils to implement RBC climate action plan	Director for Economic Development	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget	Low	Borough-wide collaborative activity to deliver carbon emissions reduction
Work in partnership with Rossendale Valley Energy to develop opportunities to involve young people in climate action, including the Energy Heroes initiative	Director of Economic Development Head of Planning	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget External Funding (Innovate UK funding)	Medium	Increase in awareness of issues and participation in environmentally positive behaviours

Net Zero Rossendale - Action Plan

Action	Lead	Timescale	Cost	Funding	Carbon Saving	Outcome
Work in partnership with Electricity North West to plan deliver and promote Rossendale Council's climate action plans	Director for Economic Development Head of Housing and Regeneration	Ongoing	Low	Existing salary budget	Medium	Borough-wide collaborative activity to reduce carbon emissions
Establish a system to monitor annual carbon emissions to track progress, raise public awareness and maximise carbon reduction benefits.	Director for Economic Development Head of Environmental Services/ Operations Team Facilities Manager	April 2025	Low	Existing salary budget	Medium	Accurate monitoring of reduction in carbon emissions, carbon accountability and raising public awareness

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