

Full Council 17 November 2021

Written question from Mr Christopher Wakeley

In view of the UN having said we need to cut CO2 emissions by 50% by 2030 to avoid the worst effects of climate change and to give Islanders a less distant target, is IW Council prepared to introduce an interim carbon reduction target 2030 for the Island in general please?

Response

The [Climate and Environment Strategy and Action Plan](#) sets out the phases Aims to achieve net-carbon zero:

- As a council in our service delivery by 2030
- Across our schools estate by 2035; and
- As a whole island community by 2040, with no more than 15% offset taking place on privately-owned land and in the marine environment

The pathway to net zero for our island must focus primarily on emissions reductions, with only a small amount of offsetting taking place where strictly necessary. While the council can control its own operations and is likely to be able to meet net zero by 2030, this accounts for a tiny fraction (less than 1%) of the Island's overall emissions. Widespread behaviour change will be necessary across the Isle of Wight, with major changes to energy use and production, housing, and transport and its supporting infrastructure, for the entire area to meet a net zero emissions target. The council must focus on meeting its own net zero target to lead the way for the rest of the Island.

A key piece of work in developing the [Climate and Environment Strategy and Action Plan](#) was commissioning a pathway to net-zero study using scientific research and carbon modelling of the Islands emissions. This study demonstrated the challenge ahead of us and made clear that different target dates would allow the Island greater flexibility and achievability in meeting its goals. It is apparent from the scale of change required across the island, including wide scale adaptations to homes, infrastructure, transport, and the environment, that this is unlikely to be achievable before 2040.

The council has stated that the strategy is not a single use document, the strategy and action plan are live and will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in national and local funding and policy. As part of the regular reviews the team will seek to build in interim milestones for carbon reduction along the longer pathway for the Island as a whole to meet net-carbon zero 2040.

The [Climate and Environment Strategy and Action Plan](#) sets out the reasoning and scientific studies that support the phased approach to achieving net-zero. The Environment and Sustainability monthly forum operated by the Climate Change team regularly discusses these issues and invite experts from across the country to present research, ideas and projects, this is an open public forum you are welcome to join. If you have further questions or would like to attend the Environment and Sustainability Forum please contact the Climate and Environment Team at the council by emailing sustainability@iow.gov.uk.