

NFNPA RAPC 583/26

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

RESOURCES, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – 2 FEBRUARY 2026

AUTHORITY CARBON REDUCTION PLAN - UPDATE

Report by: Nigel Stone, Head of Resources

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present progress against the Authority own Carbon Reduction Plan (RAPC 477/22), meaning that for the Authority itself rather than the place, following an oral update at the last Committee meeting.

Section 5 then puts this into a wider context of carbon emissions across the National Park as whole, the region, nationally and internationally.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Since 2022 the Authority has been actively working with the Defra sustainability team and their chosen independent experts, the Carbon Trust. This work has been to simplify, standardise and amplify the data around the carbon footprints of Defra itself and related bodies such as ours.
- 2.2 Whilst there are many types of emissions, to allow clear and accurate comparisons all emissions are shown as carbon equivalents. This is often expressed as 'tCO₂e', meaning tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- 2.3 The work with Defra and the Carbon Trust is currently focussing on gathering and publishing the data for all bodies, it is not currently looking at wider initiatives those organisation support (for us examples would include work undertaken through the Sustainable Communities Fund or on New Forest Marque food miles) - no offsetting benefit is given for any of these.
- 2.4 As with all complex data, the work is never perfect, however we have strived to uphold the highest standards, such as including Scope 3 emissions which many ignore, and also have looked to update our calculation methods as necessary, such as adding emissions for home working which is far more common everywhere since Covid. Whilst

updated methodologies and formulae are positive in many senses, they do make it significantly more difficult to compare data sets over many years, where in fact the change in methodology is the key item responsible for much of the variances seen.

3. Progress Reporting

3.1 Within our 2022 Carbon Reduction Plan, we set out a clear overall goal and the policies required to achieve it:

Goal:

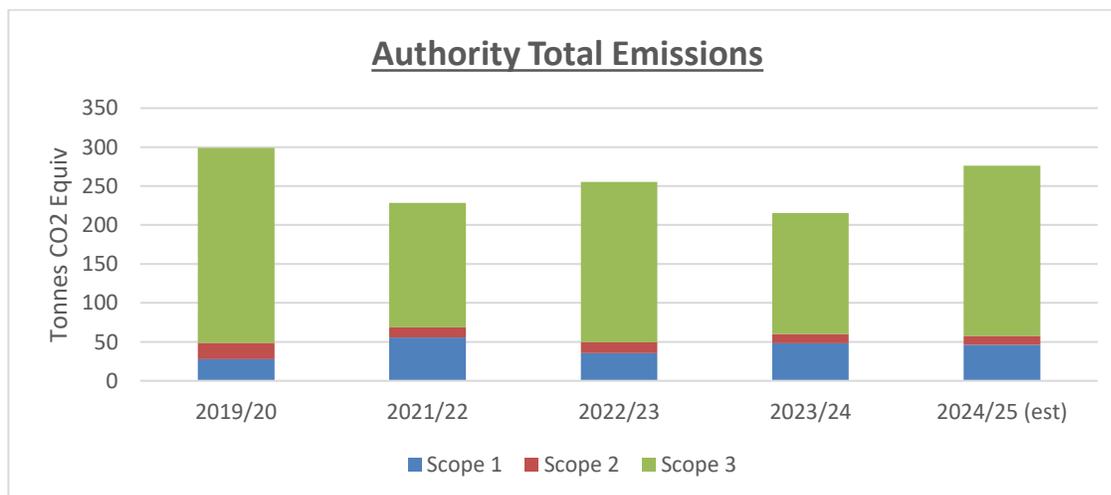
- As an organisation to be officially Net Zero by 2030.

Policies and undertakings:

- Data must include all three scopes – emissions from directly owned assets, those from assets controlled by the Authority and those from our upwards and downwards supply chains.
- Priority to Avoid – Reduce – Replace – Mitigate (offsetting)
- To reduce our core 2019/20 baseline emissions by at least 40% by 2030 (300 tCO₂e down to 180), with therefore a maximum offset of 60%
- To involve all staff in the process and targets, moreover that it should be driven by them.

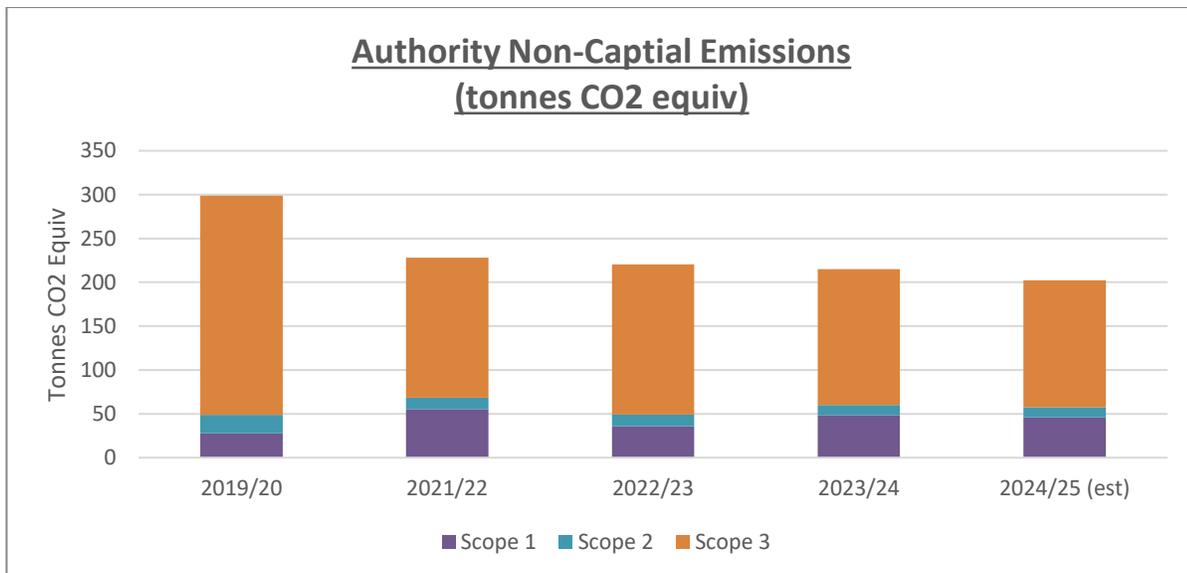
3.2 **Graph 1** below shows our carbon equivalent emission data for the past six years since the baseline year of 2019/20 (2020/21 was not collected due to the difficulties in collecting data during this Covid period and the impact that the pandemic would have on the figures).

Graph 1



- 3.3 Whilst we see a general trend downwards from 2019 until 2024, the most recent data for 2024/25 shows an increase – it is worth noting that 2021/22 was the year when the methodology was updated to include home working impacts. The reason for the increase in 2024/25 was the capital grant given to NPAs that year, which led to a welcome update in some ageing assets such as our pool car fleet, but has a knock-on impact on the Scope 3 (purchased goods and services) data. This is likely to be further impacted in 2025/26 with the larger capital grant provided to us.
- 3.4 We currently have the lowest emissions of any National Park Authority within Defra and are one of the smallest emitters even when it is expressed as emissions per full-time equivalent (to allow better comparison of different sized organisations).
- 3.5 To further evidence this impact of capital purchases, **Graph 2** below shows just the non-capital emissions.

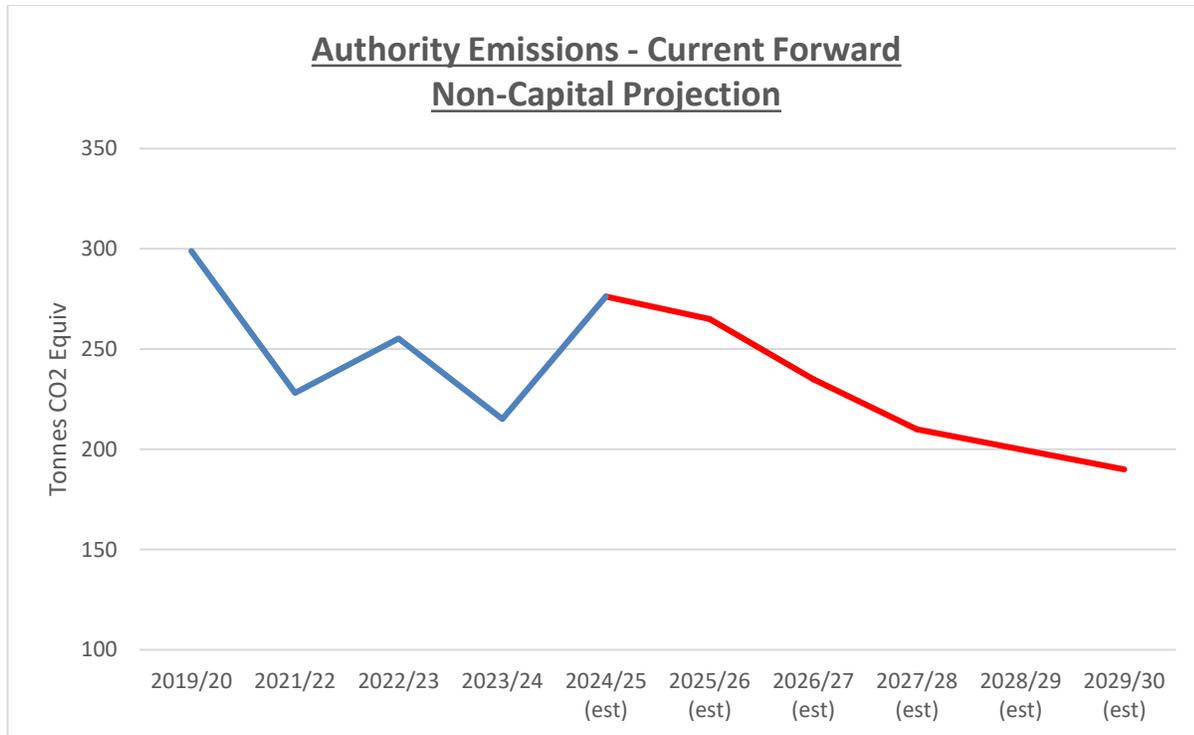
Graph 2



4. Next Steps

- 4.1 **Graph 3** below projects our emissions data forward, assuming all the actions within our Carbon Reduction Plan are completed as planned.

Graph 3



4.2 The Carbon Reduction Plan states that any remaining emissions should be offset and this will be discussed at the appropriate time with Defra, the Carbon Trust and other National Park Authorities. A large number of different methods and schemes for offsetting are currently available, and a full analysis of their benefits and drawbacks must be undertaken by officers and colleagues.

5. Carbon Emissions Context

5.1 The detailed analysis of our own Authority emissions must be seen within the context of greenhouse gas emissions more widely, across the National Park, the UK and globally.

5.2 The most recent data for the National Park, provided by Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) showed that between 2022 and 2023, emissions reduced by around 10%. This reduction appears to have been driven largely by reductions in emissions associated with waste, road transport and household electricity. This is compared to a UK reduction of 5.4% across the same timeframe and 1.1% increase globally. The UK and New Forest National Park figures are based on a territorial emissions model, considering emissions directly generated within the boundary of the National Park. It is this model that is referred to as the

net-zero target for 2050 in our Protected Landscapes Targets & Outcomes Framework.

- 5.3 Our Race to Zero pledge in partnership with the other UK National Parks, to take rigorous and immediate action to halve global emissions by 2030, has led us to producing a consumption-based emissions model. This model includes the wider emissions associated with the domestic and global supply chains of products and services consumed within the National Park, so a broader dataset than that provided by the DESNZ data above. The latest data from this model suggests an increase in emissions between 2022 and 2023 of around 8%. This appears to be a pattern shared by other National Parks, driven by incremental increases across several sectors. Locally, one that stands out is emissions associated with visitors travelling to and from the National Park which appears to have increased by around 20%. This dataset shows the importance of our continued drive to improve opportunities for active travel and lower carbon alternatives for visitor transport. It is unclear at this stage whether this specific increase is due to increased visitor numbers, visitors travelling from further afield, the use of more carbon-intensive transport or some other reason.
- 5.4 Our analysis, partnership working, action planning and reporting on emissions targets and actions is reported annually as part of our Race to Zero commitment - 2024 was our first year reporting. By highlighting all the work we do across the whole of the New Forest National Park Authority to support the landscape to respond to climate change, from Planning policies and control to public engagement, nature recovery and sustainable farming support, to how we manage the Authority's systems and processes and everything in between, we earned ourselves the outstanding score of B, in the category of Climate Managers - Organisations that are managing their environmental impact effectively, actively making progress but still with room to grow.
- 5.5 This is a validation of the work we all do. Organisations globally are part of this reporting process, so for us to be seen as up near the top is a real credit to Team New Forest and everything we do that helps the National Park respond to climate change.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report and following discussion, agree any necessary management action.

Papers:

NFNPA/RAPC 583/26

NFNPA/RAPC 477/22

Cover paper

Authority Carbon Reduction Plan

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Equality and Diversity Implications:

There are no direct equality and diversity implications from this report, however it is considered important that the Authority is open and transparent about its own carbon footprint and the work it is undertaking to reduce or offset it.