



Communities Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 2 April 2026

Carbon Management Action Plan Review

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. On 10 March 2020, Cabinet agreed a target to become carbon neutral by 2030 from the Council's direct operations and adopted a Carbon Management Action Plan to monitor progress against the target. The Carbon Management Action Plan is a working document and is scrutinised annually by the Communities Scrutiny Group, most recently in April 2025.
- 1.2. The Communities Scrutiny Group is requested to consider progress to date for the year 2026-27 financial year and, if satisfied, accept the recommendation of the report.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Communities Scrutiny Group notes the progress to date of the adopted carbon management action plan and priority projects for the forthcoming financial year 2026/27.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. In December 2021, Cabinet adopted the Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030. The Strategy reaffirmed the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral for the Council's operations by 2030 but also included a confirmation of its commitment to be "Net Zero" as a Borough by 2050 in line with national government targets. The wording of the Strategy was also strengthened to recognise the ecological crisis.
- 3.2. The Carbon Management Action Plan (CMAP) sets out how the Council will seek to drive carbon behaviour change through its policy and regulation work along with acting in a leadership capacity to positively influence residents and businesses across the Borough.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. The UK Committee on Climate Change states: "There is a crucial role for local authorities in reducing emissions to meet national carbon budgets", and: "the focus of a local authority low-carbon plan should be emission drivers over which they have significant influence. In particular, residential, and non-residential buildings, surface transport, waste, and own estate".

- 4.2. Greenhouse gas emissions are categorised into three groups or 'scopes' by the most widely used international accounting tool, the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol.

Scope 1 – All Direct Emissions from the activities of an organisation or under their control. Including fuel combustion on site such as gas boilers, fleet vehicles and air-conditioning leaks.

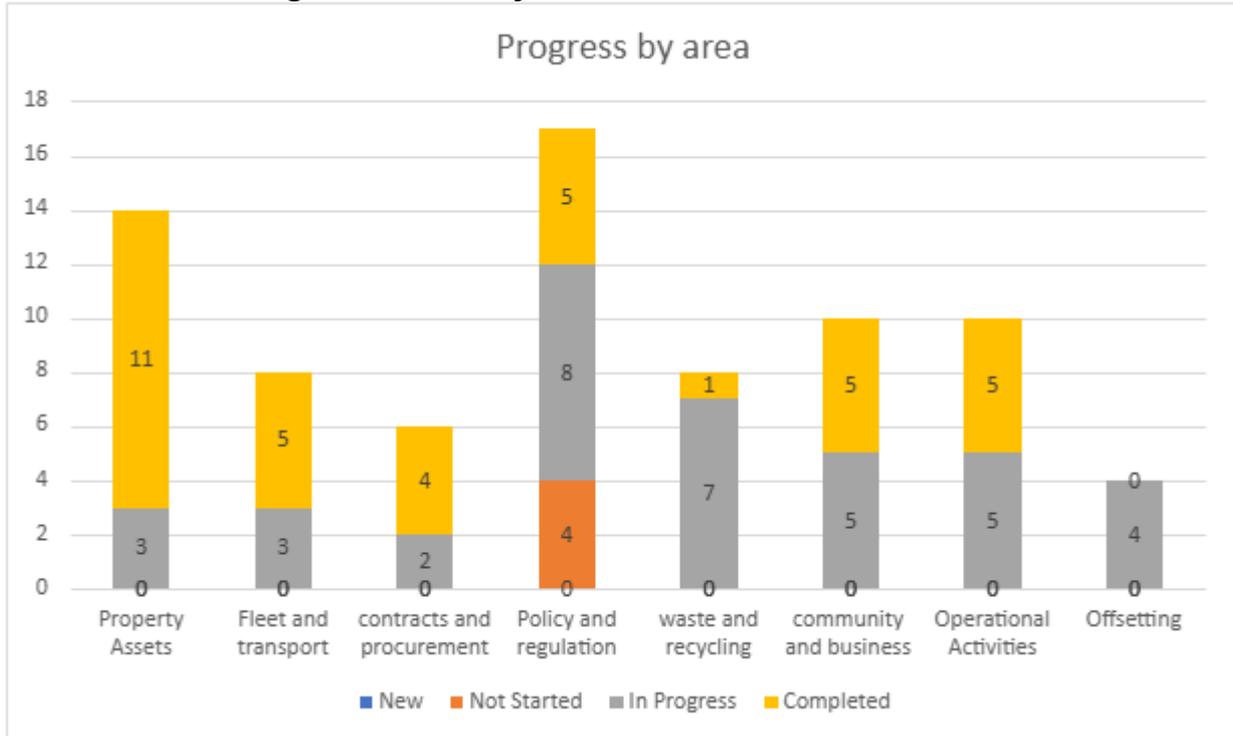
Scope 2 – Indirect Emissions from electricity purchased and used by the organisation. Emissions are created during the production of the energy and eventually used by the organisation.

Scope 3 – All Other Indirect Emissions from activities of the organisation, occurring from sources that they do not own or control. These are usually the greatest share of the carbon footprint, covering emissions associated with business travel, procurement, waste and water, staff commuting, business travel, RBC's leased properties, staff working from home.

Carbon Management Action Plan

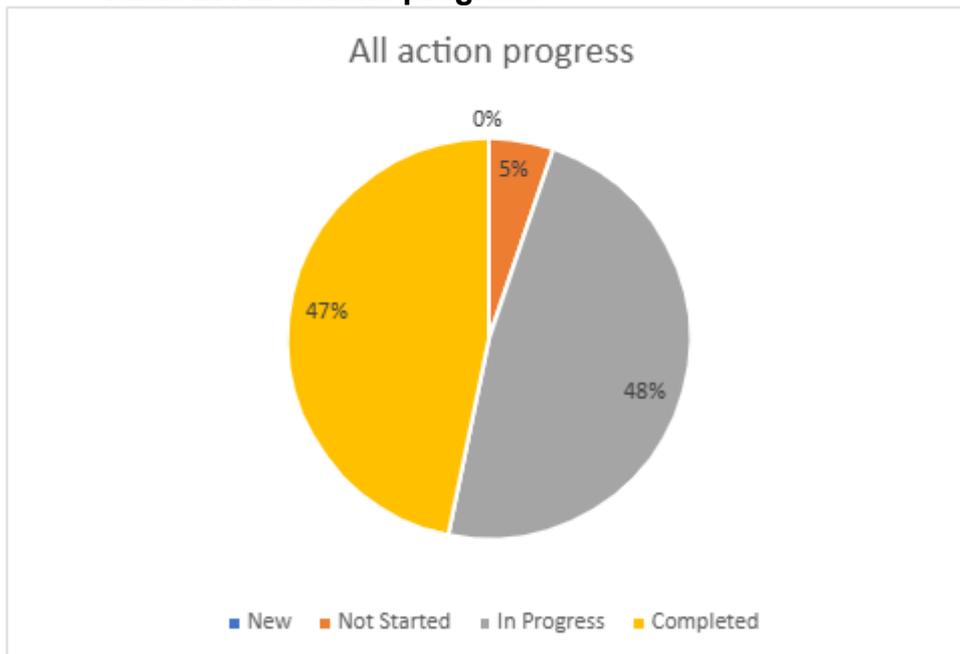
- 4.3. Overall, the latest data for gas and electric Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions provide evidence that the Council continues to make excellent progress against the original 2008/09 baseline with a carbon reduction of 71% for 2025/26 when compared to the 2008/09 baseline.
- 4.4. The significant reductions observed in the 2024/25 financial year have primarily been achieved by the implementation of the heavy bin lorry fleet switching from diesel to Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil fuel (HVO), the transition to Electric Vehicles (EV) as part of our vehicle replacement programme and the electrification of the Bingham Depot. The completion of the leisure centre Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme at Cotgrave Leisure Centre along with similar work at Sir Julian Cahn and Gamston Community Hall will be reflected in the 2025/26 financial year carbon figures expected to be released end of April 2026.
- 4.5. There were 67 actions in the first iteration of the CMAP. These were spread across eight key theme areas: property assets, fleet and transport, contracts and procurement, policy and regulation, waste and recycling, operation activity, community and business, and offsetting. Since the last review, overall actions have decreased to 77 from 90, due to the Climate Action Plan review and the completion of projects.
- 4.6. The CMAP is a live document which is regularly updated. The current plan has 37 live actions, 0 new, 4 not started, 36 completed actions, Table 1 overleaf shows the progress to date by theme.

Table 1: Progress to date by theme



4.7. In this reporting period, the completed actions are the replacement of the Gamston Community Hall and Sir Julien Cahn boilers to air source heat pumps from traditional gas systems, the commencement of the EV charge stations at Bridgeford Road/Nursery Car park projects and also the completion of the Heating Upgrade Grant 2 scheme. There have also been longer term actions removed such as running a youth climate change parliament, due to Local Government Reorganisation.

Table 2: All actions progress



2030 Own Operations Net Zero Target

- 4.8. The completed projects for 2025/26 have contributed significantly to the reduction of CO₂e by 800T CO₂e (see Appendix 1). This is an excellent achievement but also highlights the importance of focusing efforts to deliver the last measures needed to get the net 0 by 2030 target.
- 4.9. The priority projects identified for delivery during the 2026/27 financial year are the Rushcliffe Arena Solar Project, Gresham Sports Park solar project and the Edwalton Golf Centre Solar Project.

Land Acquisition for Carbon Offsetting

- 4.10. Even if all the actions contained in the CMAP are successfully implemented there will still be some requirement for carbon offsetting for the carbon we will produce post 2030 from our operational activities. Therefore, on 14 May 2024 Cabinet approved a Carbon Offsetting Framework, which represents a very important component of the CMAP to achieve the commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 4.11. The Framework's focus on offsetting within the Borough also supports the establishment of a range of habitats to promote ecological connectivity and recovery for the benefit of our residents. Based upon a 90% reduction in emission from the measured 2008/09 baseline, a residual 360 tonnes of carbon emissions would remain, and this would need to be offset/sequestered.
- 4.12. Importantly, due to the nature of carbon offsetting and sequestration, it is important that tree planting is delivered early in the time window (leading to 2030), to allow newly planted woodland to mature (as it takes nearly five years to commence sequestering carbon) and meadow/wet land to establish, thereby allowing the project to fully meet the decarbonisation targets required by 2030.
- 4.13. A significant key achievement in 2025/26 financial year has therefore been the land acquisition programme for carbon offset at Upper Broughton (Rushcliffe Woods) and land off Fosse Way, Kinoulton (Wolds Woods). Rushcliffe Woods is 21.54 hectares or 54 acres and Wolds Woods is 21.02 hectares or 52 acres, providing the authority with 106 acres for offset.
- 4.14. At full maturity it is expected that Rushcliffe Woods will offset 232.60 tonnes of CO₂ and Wolds Wood will offset 209 tonnes of CO₂ providing a total of 442 tonnes of carbon offsetting potential or 123% of our 360tonne offsetting target providing flexibility should our operational footprint change for example food waste collections in October 2027.

2050 Borough Wide Net Zero Target

- 4.15. The Heating Upgrade Grant 2 project has now been completed. This addressed 16 (29 measures) off gas properties in fuel poverty across the borough. The interventions were mainly insulation, air source heat pump and solar panels. When measured against the cost of LPG/oil heating both the cost/carbon savings are significant for the residents. There has also been a rise in the amount of Energy Company Obligation 4 (ECO4) declaration form sign offs within the Borough. 37 declarations have now been signed since the scheme began and 24 of those were in this reporting year. Interventions range from new gas boiler replacements to insulation and air source heat pumps. It is accessed via low income high cost, qualifying benefits and/or health conditions.
- 4.16. The CMAP Dashboard **Appendix 1** provides a summary of progress to date. The Communities Manager/Team Manager -Environment will deliver a presentation at the meeting to provide an overview on the action plan activity. It is essential to note that the carbon stats are always a year in arrears. Items such as Cotgrave Leisure Centre Decarbonisation Project will be recognised in the next reporting stats due towards end of April 2026 when annual consumption data is returned from energy providers.
- 4.17. Scope 3 emissions will also have to be brought into consideration on how the Council will measure and report on. The scope 3 emissions reporting is very likely to become mandatory in the near future and it will be essential to work with Finance on their new financial management system to deliver a way of measuring this with all activities undertaken via goods/services procured. Third party complimentary system via universities existing software from NHS and/or framework agreements will all be considered for best value for money.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1. There is overwhelming scientific consensus that human activities have caused global warming. Without significant change in behaviour and policy, continued increases in temperature at the current rate will result in global warming reaching 1.5 degrees between 2030 and 2052. This would cause irreversible damage to the environment and result in climate related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply and economic growth (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report; October 2018). This highlights a significant longer-term risk of major environmental and societal damage resulting from inactivity to tackle climate change.
- 5.2. The technology available to deliver the significant carbon reductions required is constantly evolving. The desire to make faster carbon reductions through early adoption of new technology needs to be balanced against the risk that technology may be superseded or become available at a lower cost in the future. The available options will go through a process of due diligence to minimise the level of risk to the Council.

- 5.3. Local Government Reorganisation is a risk factor on how future projects are delivered and funded. Although there is likely to be a two-year period before any changes begin to happen it is worth exploring all avenues to ensure that the net zero 2030 target is achieved.
- 5.4. The cost of climate change targets presents a cost risk to the Council delivery of carbon reduction schemes which in themselves can be costly and does not always equate to financial savings e.g. electricity usage.
- 5.5. External funding can mitigate the cost of delivering carbon reduction, but there is a risk that external funding cannot be utilised in full if resources are not available to deliver schemes to deadlines.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

See **Appendix 2** for the movements and commitments of the Climate Change Reserve. The original Climate Change Reserve was established at £1m; this has since been topped up from additional grants, New Homes Bonus and in year underspends and has funded various initiatives. The projected balance is £2.492m by 31 March 2031. Reserves balances are dynamic and this may change.

The award of external energy efficiency grants and the use of the Climate Change Reserve to match fund has levered in over £7m of additional funding (Appendix 2).

For any further potential funding bids, a business case will be produced to demonstrate the non-financial and financial benefits/costs in line with Financial Regulations. This will ensure that grant submissions cover anticipated costs and, where match funding is required, the appropriate approval and budgetary provision is sought.

At the end of each financial year, the schemes identified are assessed for funding from the Climate Change Reserve and will be included in the Outturn Report for approval.

There is pressure on this Reserve going forwards as the Council strive to meet the commitment to achieve a carbon neutral target by 2030. In the outturn report for 2025/26, any underspends will be assessed with a view to identifying a top-up to the Climate Change Reserve.

6.2. Legal Implications

In 2019, the Government passed legislation to commit the UK to a legally binding target of net zero emissions by 2050. The target requires the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero, compared with the previous target of at least 85% reduction from 1990 levels. The Council's Carbon Management action plan supports this aim at a local level.

Individual actions in the Action Plan may have legal implications (i.e. procurement, land acquisition) that will need to be considered for each project.

6.3. Equalities Implications

Tackling climate change through reducing emissions has the potential to benefit groups vulnerable to heat and air pollution. Where applicable, Equality Impact Assessments will be completed.

6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no implications arising from this report that impact on community safety in respect of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988.

6.5. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

There has now been a full year of BNG and the Senior Ecologist and Sustainability Officer has drafted the first Biodiversity Duty Report which has been submitted to Central Government. The new tablet and software are in place for the Assistant Biodiversity and Sustainability Officer to start monitoring the new BNG sites in April 26.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	Implementing a carbon reduction action plan and providing a budget to support delivery, are all designed to improve and safeguard the environment.
Quality of Life	Delivery of the carbon management action plan contributes to improvements in public health for example through improved air quality, food consumption and more physical activity through travel behaviour change.
Efficient Services	Enhancing the energy efficiency of the Council's assets will potentially lead to reductions in operating costs.
Sustainable Growth	Over the longer term it is anticipated that policy changes will lead to improved energy efficiency within residential and commercial developments.

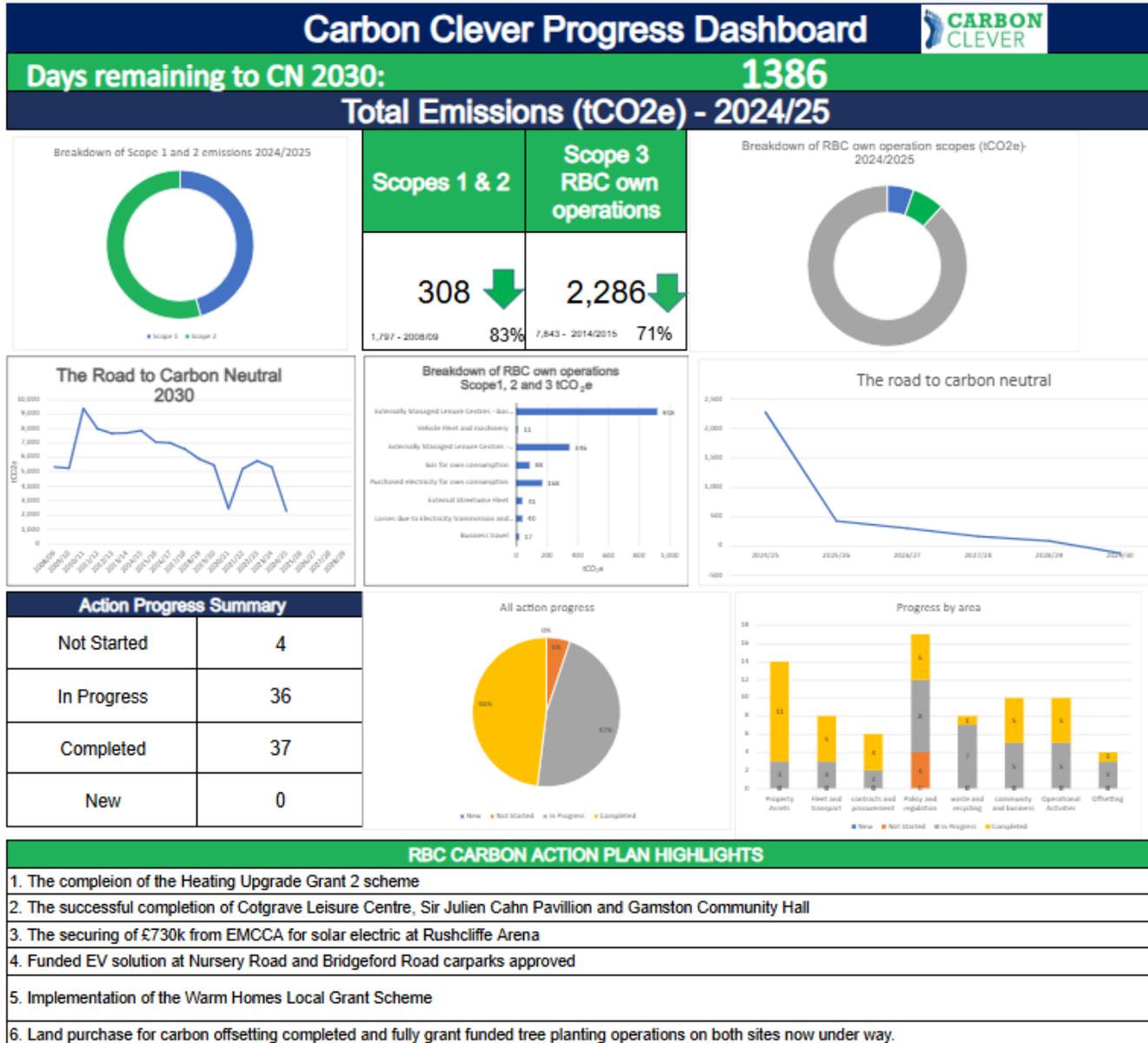
8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Communities Scrutiny Group notes the progress to date of the adopted carbon management action plan and priority projects for the forthcoming financial year 2026/27.

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<p>Background papers available for Inspection:</p>	<p>Report to Cabinet 11 November 2025 Rushcliffe Carbon Offsetting Framework- Land Acquisition (Kinoulton)</p> <p>Report to Cabinet 13 May 2025, Rushcliffe Carbon Offsetting Framework- Land Acquisition (Upper Broughton)</p> <p>Report to Cabinet 14 May 2024 Rushcliffe Carbon Offsetting Framework – Land Acquisition</p> <p>Report to Communities Scrutiny 21 March 2024 Carbon Management Plan annual scrutiny</p> <p>Report to Cabinet 14 December 2021 ‘Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030’</p> <p>Report to Cabinet 10 March 2020 ‘Carbon Management’</p>
<p>List of appendices:</p>	<p>Appendix 1 - Carbon Management Action Plan Dashboard</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Climate Change Reserve</p>

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

Climate Change Reserve	Amount £000	Detail
Established Council 05.03.20	1,000	
Allocation Cabinet 10.11.20	(200)	National Centre for Integrated Zero Carbon Futures project at Ratcliffe on Soar
Top-up Council 03.03.22	200	
RCP	(30)	£22k PV Panels; £8k air source heat-pump
The Crematorium	(300)	Green Tech measures
Bingham Arena	(300)	Green Tech measures
Gamston CH	(7)	Insulaton
Gresham	(9)	EVCP ancillary works
Rushcliffe Country Park	(25)	EVCP Bays and ancillary works
Fleet	(20)	Genex Fleet and Infrastructure Audit
Cotgrave LC 50%	(108)	Match funding for Salix Bid decarbonisation works
BALANCE at 31.03.24:	201	
Schemes 24-25:		
CLC 50%	(43)	Match funding for Salix Bid decarbonisation works
U10 Moorbridge	(6)	Heat decarbonisation works not planned for 24-25
Vehicle Vinyl wraps	(4)	
West Park Enhancements	(6)	
Budget Report Council 07.03.24	750	From New Homes Bonus
Budget Report Council 07.03.24	100	From additional Government Grant
Budget Report Council 07.03.24	377	From New Homes Bonus
Top-up Council 10.12.24	698	From 24/25 underspends
Land for biodiversity net gain	425	Not yet committed
BALANCE at 31.03.25:	2,492	
Projected Expenditure 2025/26		
Land Acquisition for Carbon Offsetting	(1,042)	2 pieces of land acquired
Streetwise Depot Carbon Reduction	(100)	Vehicle Wash contribution
PROJECTED BALANCE at 31.03.26:	1,350	
Land Acquisition for Carbon Offsetting	(458)	balance of sum earmarked
Hound Lodge 26/27	(285)	Decarbonisation works
KLC and Rushcliffe Arena 27/28	(300)	Decarbonisation works
Lutterell Hall decarbonisation works 28/29	(75)	Decarbonisation works
Planned transfers in to reserve during MTFS	2,201	
PROJECTED BALANCE at 31.03.31:	2,433	
Climate Change Expenditure Met from other Grants:		
Gresham Floodlights Existing	(31)	Football Foundation Grant/S106s
Gresham Floodlights New	(66)	Football Foundation Grant/S106s
LED Energy Efficient Lighting schemes Operational and Invest	(101)	SALIX Grant
RBC EV Network	(53)	OZEV Grant from Dept of Transport
Energy Efficiency Grants to owner occupiers	(899)	LAD2 Grants
Energy Efficiency Grants to owner occupiers	(1,149)	LAD3 and HUG Grants
Energy Efficiency Grants to owner occupiers	(231)	HUG2
Energy Efficiency Grants to owner occupiers	(511)	RETROFIT Grants
Public Sector De-Carb Scheme 16.01.23 CLC	(1,215)	Salix Award
Energy Audit	(50)	UKSPF
Gamston CH and Sir Julien Cahn Pavilion decarbonisation	(105)	Salix
Edwalton Community Facility land acquisition	(176)	UKSPF
Cotgrave LC decarbonisation	(110)	UKSPF
Keyworth LC decarbonisation	(150)	UKSPF
U10 Moorbridge EVCP	(40)	UKSPF
Cotgrave LC PV panels	(250)	Sport England
Energy Efficiency Grants to owner occupiers	(1,200)	Warm Homes Grant
Arena Solar Panels	(729)	EMCCA
TOTAL External Funding:	(7,066)	