

**Operations-only Climate Action Plan for Welsh councils**

**A resource for Friends of the Earth local groups and Climate Action Groups in Wales**

Councils in Wales have been asked to introduce plans to the Welsh Government by March 2021 on how they will get to net zero by 2030. This is a great opportunity to work with councils and influence them to introduce strong ambitious plans that cover all policy areas. However, councils only need to look at their own operations – the impact of their own buildings and services on climate emissions, the energy they use, and what they buy and spend.

We are encouraging them to instead present plans for the whole local authority area, as our full [Climate Action Plan for Councils](https://takeclimateaction.uk/sites/files/climate/documents/2020-06/Climate%20Action%20Plan%20for%20councils%20June%202020.pdf) set out, and some are already doing so. But we recognise that others will already have drafted plans on their own operations which are too late to change by the deadline. For this reason, we’ve prepared this checklist of which of those actions apply to this narrower definition of council operations as a fallback position you can use.

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| **Number** | **Policy** |
| W1 | Check whether all our decisions would help or hinder meeting climate, air pollution or nature plans, as well as deliver on COVID-19 recovery. |
| W2 | Identify both a councillor at cabinet level and a lead officer as Climate and Nature Champions, who are required to publish a twice-yearly independent and audited public report on progress in meeting climate change and nature targets. |
| W3 | Align procurement policy and guidance with climate, nature and green economy goals. |
| W4 | Review and improve how we involve citizens in our existing decision-making processes. |
| W5 | Introduce a workplace car parking levy or similar initiative for council staff to encourage sustainable transport use. |
| W6 | Ensure that the voices of the most vulnerable communities are also represented in council decision-making and council-citizen deliberations. |
| W7 | Retrofit council-owned properties with heat pumps and high levels of insulation where possible, starting with homes most at risk of fuel poverty. |
| W8 | Require buildings built on council land to be extremely energy efficient, using the Passivhaus standard or similar. |
| W9 | Deliver a rapid transition of the council’s own fleet to electric vehicles. |
| W10 | Require an electric vehicle or bike to be used for deliveries to the council, and encourage greener deliveries across the area by setting up an area-wide distribution centre. |
| W11 | Switch street lighting to well-designed and well-directed LED lights. |
| W12 | Reduce energy used by the council in its own estate. |
| W13 | Require the installation of renewable energy such as solar thermal, PV or heat pumps in council developments. |
| W14 | Divest from fossil fuels and invest in renewable energy projects. |
| W15 | Aim to send no waste from council premises to landfill or incineration and ensure that in the waste services the council provides to residents and businesses minimisation, reuse, and recycling are prioritised. |
| W16 | Adopt circular-economy waste policies in contracted-out specifications. |
| W17 | Ban the use of single-use plastic in council offices and premises. |
| W18 | Work with community schools to ensure that the buildings are zero-carbon, the environment is central to teaching, and purchasing is green (eg meals follow the official Eatwell Guide on healthy eating and most menu options are plant-based, with less and better meat or fish as other options). |
| W19 | Double tree cover on council-owned land, and ensure existing trees are properly protected, in order to store carbon, support nature, aid flood protection and deliver mental health benefits. |
| W20 | Manage council-owned land, farms and road verges to increase biodiversity and draw down carbon pollution, and produce a restoration plan for this land to reverse habitat and species loss and restore ecosystem quality and function.  |