

Proposed Emissions Targets

Meeting: Council Briefing
Date of meeting: 01 September 2021
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Purpose | Ngā whāinga

To introduce proposed emissions targets for Council's consideration.

Context | Horopaki

Council's confirmed climate change mitigation work as part of the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan (LTP) includes the following:

1. Measure and report annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
2. Set emissions targets for Council as an organisation.
3. Establish emissions reduction goals across Council supporting short, medium and long-term reduction actions (i.e. Climate Action Plan).
4. Establish disclosure process for emission risks and reduction progress.

Council has commenced its first piece of work, to annually measure and report on GHG emissions. At the July Briefing, staff presented the 2018-2019 FY and 2019-2020 FY Corporate GHG Emissions Footprint reports and introduced the next steps, which are to establish emissions targets.

In terms of setting emissions targets, Council can control and reduce emissions from our activities. While Council has no legislative authority to influence emissions management beyond its organisation boundary, we can deliver services in a way that enable people and businesses to reduce emissions. Emissions targets will guide this transition to a low-emissions way of operating and delivering services.

The proposed emissions targets will put Council in line to meet its obligations under the Climate Change Response Act 2002 (the Act). The targets will also enable Council to meet Goal 3 of the *draft Kaipara Ki Tua Climate Smart Strategic Framework*, that 'Council identifies, discloses, and reduces its own greenhouse gas emissions in line with the national emissions reduction target'.

Discussion | Ngā kōrerorero

Proposed emission targets and structure

To develop the proposed targets, staff looked at best practice guidance, central government direction and other local authorities' approaches. **Attachment A: Review of councils' emissions footprints and reduction directions** compares Kaipara District Council to 38 territorial authorities' direction on emissions reduction and corporate emissions. The review also includes example emissions target statements from other councils.

As a result of this analysis, staff propose that Council adopt two emissions targets. These align with the Act and ensures Council transitions to zero emissions in a way that is ambitious, realistic and achievable.

Proposed Targets
Reduce Kaipara District Council's corporate emissions to net zero by 2050.
Reduce corporate net emissions by 30% by 2031, compared to 2018-2019 baseline (6,019 tCO ₂ e).

In order to meet the first proposed target by the 2049-2050 FY, all of Council's GHG emissions will be balanced by GHG removals. Unlike the national targets, Council's proposed target includes biogenic emissions (methane)ⁱ.

Council's methane emissions come from our wastewater treatment services, our third highest source of GHG emissions. Aiming for net zero methane emissions along with net zero carbon emissions makes Council's low-emissions transition ambitious. This target is still realistic and achievable for two main reasons. First, we are only addressing corporate emissions, not community-wide emissions, so agriculture emissions are outside the scope of this target. Second, Council's wastewater treatment services are our only major source of methane emissions and we do not have other major sources, like an active landfill.

The second proposed target is an interim target. This interim target is an accountability measure to ensure Council is on track for net zero by 2050. A 30% reduction (compared to 2018-2019 levels) requires Council to reduce net emissions by 1,806 tCO₂e over ten years, 180.6 tCO₂e or 3% reduction per year. A 29 year time period is challenging for people to conceptualise and therefore actively work towards achieving net zero. The interim target enables people to envisage more tangible and immediate activities and actions within existing planning timeframes.

The interim target will be supported by additional activity-specific reduction goals and actions. These goals and actions will follow even shorter time periods (likely 1-2 yr, 3-6 yr, 6-8 yr). Staff will identify and commit to these goals and actions as part of the Climate Action Plan. This includes Council's roading and transportation activities, delivered through the Northland Transportation Alliance.

The proposed targets do not include requirements regarding hierarchy of emissions reduction actions (i.e. prioritising the elimination of sources of emissions before offsetting). Council can establish a mitigation hierarchy through the upcoming Climate Smart Policy work.

Everyone at Council has a role to play

A successful transition to a low-emissions way of operating and delivering services will require staff time and energy, led by the executive team. The changes will be phased and will be synced with current Council processes as much as possible. But, like any transition, this is a learning process; some emissions reduction goals and actions will require testing and refining. This work will involve regular reporting to and direction from Elected Members.

Next steps | E whaiake nei

Based on the feedback received at this Briefing, Staff will present a report for a decision on the emissions targets at the September Meeting.

Attachments | Ngā tapiritanga

	Title
A	Attachment A: Review of councils' emissions footprints and reduction directions

ⁱ 24–47% reduction in biogenic emissions by 2050, compared to 2017 baseline levels.