



March 2025

Net Zero Strategy Progress Report 2024 - 2025





Foreword

This report covers the progress made against net zero objectives set out in our Net Zero Strategy 2023 - 2028 by Scotland Excel in the period 2024/25.

The Net Zero Working Group at Scotland Excel plays a pivotal role in supporting the organisation's commitment to environmental sustainability and climate action. Its primary objective is to identify, develop, and implement initiatives that contribute directly to achieving net zero carbon emissions, in alignment with national and global climate targets.

The working group is composed of representatives from across all departments within Scotland Excel. This cross-functional representation ensures a holistic and integrated approach.

Our Net Zero Strategy is supported with a detailed delivery plan that sets out clear objectives to deliver on our short and medium term (2023-2025) and longer term (2025-2028) net zero related priorities.

Appendix 1 sets out the short-medium term objectives and activities identified within the strategy. The aim of these short terms objectives is for completion between 2023 and 2025, and Appendix 1 outlines the progress made in 2024/25.

You can read more on our Net Zero Strategy 2023-28 on our [website](#)

Appendix 1

Net Zero Strategy Progress Report 2024 - 2025

Short-Medium Term Objectives (2023-2025)				
1. Establish proven and robust methods of ensuring that tender exercises across the entire portfolio maximise positive impacts regarding carbon reduction , whilst ensuring that goods and services supplied are relevant and appropriate in supporting individual councils’ pursuit in delivering net zero targets whilst continuing to offer quality, choice and best value.				
Develop and introduce standardised contract and supplier management actions that support carbon reduction and innovation , as well as continue to work with user intelligence groups in identifying, encouraging and developing additional collaborative opportunities, whilst ensuring that already available and relevant options are fully signposted and encouraged.				
Activity	Target Commencement Date	Target Completion Date	Progress Updates	Impact
1. Ensure new contract opportunities (including renewals) are designed to maximise positive impacts regarding carbon reduction.	Commence- April 2023	March 2025	<p>Revised suite of approved standard operating procedures and templates are made available to Scotland Excel procurement staff and are adopted in all procurement developments.</p> <p>This improvement work is reflective of the revised Sustainable Procurement Handbook.</p> <p>The legal advisory panel is fully operational ensuring appropriate risk mitigation from early-stage contract development.</p> <p>Work on refining and improving net zero practices within procurement continues with collaboration and sharing net zero best practice through the cross sectoral Scottish Government Climate and Procurement Forum.</p>	<p>Deploying a standardised approach ensures each procurement exercise is assessed for Net Zero opportunities.</p> <p>Potential for new practices to be embedded without exposing members to increased compliance risks.</p> <p>Sharing on national policy, good practice and expertise in an emergent sphere ensures opportunities are maximised.</p>

Activity	Target Commencement Date	Target Completion Date	Progress Updates	Impact
2. Ensure new contract opportunities (including renewals) are designed to include products and services relevant and appropriate in supporting councils' pursuit of net zero targets aligned to quality, choice and best value considerations.	Commence- April 2023	March 2025	<p>Update to frameworks redesigned in 2024/25 to respond to this commitment:</p> <p>LHEES - Award of Scotland Excel's first-generation framework for consultancy services relative to local heat energy efficiency strategies. This framework provides councils with a mechanism to procure analysis for future updates to their Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES). It will also help councils complete work to meet any future deadlines for Heat Network Zoning or Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs). The framework will support The Scottish Government's Energy Efficient Scotland programme to ensure that by 2040 all buildings are warmer, greener and more efficient thus supporting Scotland's net-zero ambitions.</p> <p>Bitumen – Future Proofing for more environmentally friendly products. Several market trends are influencing both buyers and suppliers in the bitumen market. There is growing interest in sustainability and environmentally friendly materials, prompting suppliers to innovate with new technologies, such as warm-mix bitumen and recycled bitumen products as well as packaging. These alternatives not only reduce carbon emissions during production but also align with broader Net Zero goals. Councils are increasingly seeking to incorporate these products into their roadworks to meet sustainability targets, thereby influencing supplier offerings and market dynamics.</p>	Examples provided to demonstrate measures already in place which contribute to the delivery of this action.

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			<p>Suppliers are increasingly focusing on innovation to meet evolving customer demands and regulatory requirements. New technologies, such as cold mix asphalt, polymer-modified bitumen, and bio-bitumen, are gaining traction as they offer enhanced performance, reduced emissions, and better lifecycle costs. The framework incorporates current and future needs for councils, including more environmentally friendly products.</p> <p>Education Materials – the next generation tender will introduce minimum order values to encourage councils to place larger orders less frequently. Technical section of tender will focus on how suppliers can encourage reduction of deliveries and offer more environmentally friendly products through the core list.</p>	
3. Review contract management activities to ensure inclusion of relevant contract and supplier management activities in supporting carbon reduction and associated innovation.	Commence- April 2023	Complete- July 2023 (Action ongoing)	<p>The Scotland Excel 'Net Zero Group'- group continues to hold monthly meetings.</p> <p>Cross category working taking place on Net Zero to ensure improvements are applied to the full portfolio</p> <p>New Sustainable Procurement Handbook supports updated procurement practices relevant to net zero.</p> <p>Delivering sustainability through social care contracts can present affordability issues. Social Care continue to complete the Sustainability Test for all new/ renewal contracts.</p> <p>One of the identified Key Supplier Management (KSM) suppliers (on the Roadstone framework) has committed to</p>	<p>The new Contract Implementation and Management team is now in place following the workforce Planning changes in 2024/25. A major focus is to reinvigorate Scotland Excel's Key Supplier Management programme which was paused in 2020.</p> <p>Links to compliance, clarity on Scotland Excel policy supports any changes to tendering processes.</p>

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			<p>provide Scotland Excel with a KPI on sustainability regarding how they recycle materials and the delivery miles. All KSM suppliers are looking to provide information on councils' Co2 emissions and should start to report these from Key Supplier Meeting 3 onwards (next quarter).</p> <p>Delivering greater value from identified frameworks, through supportive actions to improve the customer experience and thereby increase customer satisfaction. This in turn will generate more social value, engage a greater mix of suppliers and contractors, bringing broader social value and environmental impact. Initial meetings have been held with ten key suppliers and six shared goals have been implemented (one of which is specifically around sustainability and environmental benefits). Whilst it is too early to tell the impacts of these shared goals, suppliers participating within the key supplier management programme have indicated they are keen to demonstrate their industry knowledge to support environmental targets across Scotland. Some initiatives highlighted through early discussions, will support lifting families out of fuel poverty with recommended heating and boiler efficiencies. Further reporting will be completed on a quarterly basis.</p>	<p>Introduction of revised method statements, targeting net zero initiatives.</p> <p>Carbon and financial savings.</p>
4. Liaise with user intelligence groups to ensure requirements are captured, additional needs are identified, and contract opportunities are designed to align.	Commence-April 2023	March 2025	<p>Cross-sectoral collaboration continues with The Scottish Government Climate Group to identify and maximise opportunities for carbon reduction across the wider public sector.</p> <p>Scottish Local Government Procurement Forum (SLGPF) - standing agenda item at SLGPF to discuss and share best practice.</p>	<p>This network provides access to best practice, expertise and intelligence.</p> <p>Joint working with local authority procurement managers to design change.</p>

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			Scotland Excel is working with The Scottish Government and other key stakeholders on the Adult Social Care Ethical Commissioning Procurement Sub-group. This group is looking to agree principles of ethical procurement for social care (which include environmental considerations) and will seek to drive improvements in social care procurement. Social Care continue to complete the Sustainability Test for all new/renewal contracts.	Greater sustainability of care providers.
5. Review current contract portfolio with an aim of identifying and signposting to users' options already available that could support net zero ambitions or linked activities.	Commence-April 2023	Complete-July 2023 (Action ongoing)	All new and renewal procurement developments go through an agreed segmentation approach to prioritise net zero, if relevant. New development priorities shared with The Scottish Government Climate Group to help inform priority list.	Segmentation ensures those frameworks with greatest impact are prioritised.
2. Update Scotland Excel's Sustainable Procurement Policy reflecting embedded practices. Review internal governance and ensure a formalised internal governance process that facilitates due focus on net zero considerations within tendering activity. Maintain ongoing and active participation in applicable cross sector groups with a view to being aware of and where appropriate, influencing policy and associated impacts it may have. Implementation of standardised and where applicable, more bespoke minimum net zero related tender requirements across the contract portfolio linked to recent changes to SPD documents, supporting a greater level of focus on carbon reduction and embed within governance process including Contract Steering Group scrutiny.				
1. Review and update Scotland Excel's Sustainable Procurement Policy.	Commence-April 2023	Complete-January 2025	New Sustainable Procurement Handbook is now live, and guidance and practices are embedded into operational practices. This handbook is a replacement for the now outdated Sustainable Procurement Policy and this handbook reflects and is aligned with the aims, ambitions and actions of the Net Zero Strategy.	The new handbook aligns to the Net Zero Strategy approved in 2023. Handbook articulates the impact of the Net Zero strategy on all procurement development work.

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2. Review internal governance and amend to ensure an appropriate level of focus of net zero considerations within tendering activity.	Commence- April 2023	Complete- July 2023	<p>Work was completed on segmenting the full Scotland Excel framework portfolio. This identified frameworks that had potential to contribute to net zero targets.</p> <p>As above, all procurement developments now go through an agreed segmentation approach to prioritise net zero, if relevant.</p>	Frameworks identified through the Segmentation approach will be developed with the particular focus on Net Zero products or services that can reduce carbon.
3. Influence policy via participation in relevant cross sector groups.	Commence- April 2023	March 2025 (Action ongoing)	<p>Scotland Excel is represented in the cross sectoral Climate and Procurement forums chaired by The Scottish Government.</p> <p>This representation is ongoing and convenes on a quarterly basis.</p>	The Climate and Procurement forum provides opportunity and a platform for the Centres of Expertise including Scotland Excel to share best practice, monitor progress on net zero activities within procurement and to champion carbon reduction action and focus across the wider public sector.
3. Measure, record and report our own carbon footprint impact linked to business activities, with an aim to reducing this via actions that may include refreshed and formalised policies on home working, virtual and in-person meetings, office space and resource use, and staff travel arrangements.				
1. Explore feasibility of measuring, recording and reporting Scotland Excel's carbon footprint linked to business activities.	Commence- April 2023	Complete- July 2023	<p>Internal planning to manage carbon measurement metrics of business activities.</p> <p>To develop an understanding of the carbon impact of business activities, Scotland Excel has enquired with Renfrewshire Council about the carbon footprint of Renfrewshire House, in which the Scotland Excel office is situated.</p>	Scotland Excel's carbon impact contributes to the total carbon impact of Renfrewshire House. Developing an understanding of the total carbon impact of the office building can help Scotland Excel to identify key sources of waste and emissions, and to take a data-informed approach to reducing the impact of business activities.

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2. Identify and implement means to reduce Scotland Excel's carbon footprint/positively impact linked to business activities.	Commence- July 2023	Complete- October 2023	<p>Scotland Excel colleagues have attended 'Business Energy Scotland Green Champion' training, a course supporting organisations to identify, implement, and measure methods of reducing energy and water usage. Scotland Excel has implemented energy efficiency measures including reducing the number of printers in the office and encouraging paperless activities to reduce landfill waste.</p> <p>Scotland Excel has enquired with Renfrewshire Council around measures taken to reduce the carbon impact of the office building. Where possible, Scotland Excel will look to implement energy and carbon efficient measures in its office space in Renfrewshire House.</p> <p>The organisation has been focusing more on online events as opposed to in person, wherever possible.</p> <p>Reduced use of paper at events - Instead of printed materials, Scotland Excel have been using QR codes linking back to our website with the opportunity to download electronic versions of our documents.</p>	Scotland Excel can reduce the short and long-term carbon impact of business activities by regularly identifying and implementing energy saving measures. The implementation of carbon reducing measures can also provide financial benefits through reducing the running costs of business activities.
3. Review, amend and/or introduce relevant internal policies linked to positive carbon related actions and business practices.	Commence- October 2023	Complete- January 2024	Scotland Excel reviews policies periodically to ensure compliance with current workplace standards and practices. Carbon footprint and environmental considerations are incorporated into workplace policies where appropriate to reflect relevant policy.	The ongoing incorporation of carbon measures in internal policies can support the mandated reduction of Scotland Excel's environmental impact, whilst ensuring compliance and relevance to policy and regulation.
4. Deliver targeted and regularly refreshed training internally and externally , ensuring appropriate staff across the sector are fully aware of compliant options that can be utilised during the procurement process and lifetime of a contract arrangement that can maximise a positive impact on net zero targets and ambitions .				

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1. Design suitable training for internal and external access.	Commence- April 2023	March 2025	<p>All Scotland Excel staff have undertaken Climate Awareness training as provided by The Scottish Government. Scotland Excel staff have a requisite level of climate awareness and net zero.</p> <p>Scotland Excel has updated its mandatory training requirements for all employees. The Scottish Government's Climate E-Literacy Course has been incorporated into the mandatory training programme that must be completed by all new Scotland Excel employees upon joining Scotland Excel.</p>	The inclusion of climate literacy training in the organisation's mandatory training programme emphasises Scotland Excel's commitment to delivering net zero objectives and helps to foster an environmentally conscious culture within the organisation.
2. Deliver targeted training across the sector, including refresh as required.	Commence- October 2023	March 2025	<p>The Scotland Excel Academy continue to be sustainable through our online delivery eliminating the need for travel and its impact on the environment. Developing online resources will continue to reduce any environmental impact.</p> <p>Scotland Excel delivered two Joint Committee Member sessions on Net Zero on 30th October 2024 and 22nd November 2024. These sessions covered Scotland Excel's Net Zero strategy and the practical steps and initiatives we are taking toward supporting the journey to net zero.</p>	Building Net Zero awareness and skills to deliver on Net Zero planning throughout the procurement community.
5. Continue ongoing engagement with corporate procurement managers and other appropriate procurement colleagues within individual councils ensuring clear lines of communication regarding council need and options available via Scotland Excel as portfolio develops. Activities likely to include regular updates on progress of council net zero/climate change strategies, signposting to areas of interest and ultimately a level of commitment from councils to support and utilise options offered within Scotland Excel's contract portfolio linked to supporting net zero ambitions.				
1. Establish and maintain two-way communication regarding progress of strategy developments and delivery, individual	Commence- April 2023	Q3 2024/25	Quarterly Business Reviews carried out between Council Procurement Managers and Scotland Excel Project and Account Managers facilitate a wide range of topics for discussion, including when appropriate, those linked to council net zero ambitions.	A collaborative approach to planning is fostered.

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council need and solutions available.			20 councils took part in the 'Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme Pulse Check' [PCIP Pulse]. Of those, half achieved a level of 'Good Practice or Advanced' within the area of Climate Change in terms of how considerations are embedded within processes, measured and progress recorded.	Feedback mechanism in place and opportunities for new initiatives to be explored.
2. Secure a level of commitment regarding participation as solutions are designed and made available.	Commence-April 2023	March 2025	<p>Scotland Excel's governance landscape continues to invite feedback at every engagement level. Communication at each forum now includes Net Zero as a key theme.</p> <p>Updated Scotland Excel structure following the changes made operational during 2024/25 through the Workforce Planning exercise helps support ongoing and increased commitment.</p>	Information and feedback provided to elected members, executive officers, procurement functions and buyers.
6. Progress existing and develop new relationships with suitable stakeholders from across the public and private sector, spotlight good practice examples from within the supply base, focus upon and include net zero considerations within appropriate events such as seminars, user intelligence groups and mobilisation sessions, promote the availability of reuse and repair organisations and communicate regularly of Scotland Excel and this Strategy's progress to appropriate audience as it develops.				
1. Build relationships with stakeholders from across public and private sector.	Commence-April 2023	March 2025	<p>Scotland Excel sits on the cross sectoral Climate and Procurement Group forum chaired by The Scottish Government. Meetings are held quarterly.</p> <p>Strong relationships continue to develop with organisations such as Zero Waste Scotland, Scottish Futures Trust, Transport Scotland, Energy Technology Partnership, Civ-Tech Alliance and BE-ST.</p> <p>Scotland Excel have joined as a member of Adaptation Scotland. Funded by The Scottish Government and delivered by a sustainability charity, Adaptation Scotland help</p>	<p>Share best practice, monitor progress on net zero activities within procurement.</p> <p>Share ideas, information, industry intelligence, opportunities, innovation and best practice.</p>

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			Scotland be better prepared and resilient to the effects of climate change.	
2. Identify and share good practice examples within the supply base.	Commence- April 2023	March 2025	<p>The Scotland Excel Estates Management Expo held in September 2024 at Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall had a strong focus on green building practices. Included presentations from Zero Waste Scotland, Built Environment - Smarter Transformation (BE-ST), The Scottish Government and several public and private sector organisations on carbon reducing building techniques.</p> <p>Scotland Excel's £1.5bn second generation New Build Residential Construction was launched at the event and has been enhanced to incorporate silver, gold, Passivhaus, and Net Zero standards - promoting energy efficiency and sustainability. This will ensure the framework supports the construction of homes that meet higher energy efficiency requirements, contributing to broader sustainability goals.</p> <p>Scotland Excel continues to seek opportunities to publicise good practice achieved by councils working effectively with the Scotland Excel supply base.</p>	Benefits delivered to Scotland Excel members through contract management were shared more widely through the public sector, promoting good practice.

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3. Ensure net zero is included as an area of focus at appropriate internal and external events.	Commence-April 2023	March 2025	<p>Opportunities are reviewed by User Intelligence Groups (UIG's) to ensure frameworks are planning for Net Zero outcomes.</p> <p>Scotland Excel staff have presented on net zero related themes at recent events including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - APSE Energy and climate change event (October 2024) - Estates Management Expo (September 2024) 	<p>Scotland Excel teams will continue to support engagement and focus on net zero.</p> <p>Scotland Excel has used these events to also learn from other key stakeholders on innovation and best practice within the net zero space.</p>
4. Promote the availability of reuse and repair organisations.	Commence-April 2023	Complete-October 2023	<p>Final preparations are underway to tender for the renewal of the Domestic Furniture and Furnishings framework. A major focus is on re-use of furniture (supporting a circular economy).</p> <p>A practical example of net zero actions from the current Domestic Furniture and Furnishings framework is that over £2m of spend on that one framework alone was on the procurement of reused furniture.</p>	Supporting the circular economy, reducing landfill and reducing carbon emissions.
5. Communicate progress of Strategy to appropriate audience as it develops.	Commence-April 2024	March 2025	<p>Discussions with fellow public sector bodies – NHS, APUC, Scottish Climate Intelligence Service (SCIS) as well as The Scottish Government – took place during 2024. There is an appetite to collaborate on the draft “Pathway to New Zero” proposal that University of Edinburgh have presented to the wider public sector and The Scottish Government Procurement and Climate forum.</p> <p>Scotland Excel have researched and have had demonstrations of numerous AI-driven carbon accountancy tools to better understand how to begin recording carbon data and using it to drive reductions. Scotland Excel’s members and a cross-section of suppliers have been surveyed to ascertain each organisations position and</p>	<p>Scotland Excel continues to communicate progress on net zero across the sector.</p> <p>Research is reaching a conclusion point to establish how best to gather, analyse measure and report environmental data.</p>

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			progress to date on the journey to net zero, and the recording of environmental data. This survey is under analysis and will be used to establish Scotland Excel's path forward.	

You can contact us or find out more online via the following routes:

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www.scotland-excel.org.uk

 [@ScotlandExcel](https://twitter.com/ScotlandExcel)  www.linkedin.com/company/scotland-excel

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