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|  <p> GIG CYMRU NHS WALES </p> <p> Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales </p> | <p> Name of Meeting Board </p> <p> Date of Meeting 26 March 2026 </p> <p> Agenda item: 5.3 </p> |
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| <p align="center">Public Health Wales Climate Response Plan and Climate Adaptation Report</p> | |
| <p>Executive lead:</p> | <p>Sumina Azam, National Director of Policy and International Health</p> |
| <p>Author:</p> | <p>Emily Matthews, Planning Support Manager Tracy Evans, Senior Sustainable Development Officer</p> |

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| <p>Approval/Scrutiny route:</p> | <p> Strategic Executive Team – 11 February 2026 Climate Change Programme Board – 10 March 2026 Executive Team – 18 March 2026 Public Health Wales Board Meeting – 26 March 2026 </p> |
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| <p>Purpose</p> <p>Public Health Wales is required to update and refresh its Decarbonisation Action Plan every two years. This plan, succeeds and replaces the previous two Decarbonisation and Sustainability Action Plans, approved by the Public Health Wales Board in 2022, and 2024. Taking the recommendations in the Welsh Government Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales (2024), we have combined our work on Decarbonisation and Climate risk into one plan. This Climate Response Plan details the actions Public Health Wales will take over the next two years to increase its climate resilience and support our ambitions of becoming a net zero organisation by 2030, as set out in our Long Term Strategy.</p> <p>The plan is required to be submitted to Welsh Government alongside the Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) 2026-2029 and high level actions within this plan have been reflected in the IMTP to ensure there is alignment between the two plans.</p> <p>We also include Public Health Wales’ Adaptation Work Programme Qualitative Report. This sets out Public Health Wales’s progress in the Climate Risk and Adaptation work from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, with a specific focus on the Welsh Government requirements. The report is required to be submitted to Welsh Government by 30 April, 2026</p> |
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| <p>Recommendation:</p> | | | | |
| <p>APPROVE</p> | <p>CONSIDER</p> | <p>RECOMMEND</p> | <p>ADOPT</p> | <p>ASSURANCE</p> |



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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>The Board is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Public Health Wales Climate Response Plan 2026-2028 • Approve the Public Health Wales Adaptation Work Programme Qualitative Report in advance of submitting to Welsh Government by 30 April 2026 | | | | | |
| <p>Link to Public Health Wales Strategic Plan</p> <p>Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives.</p> <p>This report contributes to the following:</p> | | | | | |
| Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective | | 6 - Tackling the public health effects of climate change | | | |
| Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective | | All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives | | | |
| Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective | | All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives | | | |

| Summary impact analysis | |
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| Equality and Health Impact Assessment | An Equality or Health Impact Assessment is not required however may be undertaken for specific milestones detailed within the plan. |
| Risk and Assurance | <p>Risks and issues are included within the plan and outlined in section 4 below.</p> <p>There is a risk on the Corporate Risk Register that Public Health Wales will not meet its target to become a net zero organisation by 2030. This plan forms part of the mitigation measures to reduce this risk.</p> |
| Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act | The plan focuses on actions that will aid continual improvement of public health services and outcomes as we reduce our carbon footprint and embed the changes. Progress of improvements will also be actively monitored as the plan progresses and updates shared on a public facing website page for transparency of information, contributing to our Duty of Quality |
| Financial implications | The plan has been developed with the assumption that it can be delivered within existing resources. Delivery of some milestones may lead to additional funding being required in the future. |
| People implications | Specific actions will be led and delivered by a number of teams across Public Health Wales. However, in order to achieve our net zero targets, it will require |



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| | behaviour change of all our staff if we are to achieve the goals within our Long Term Strategy. |
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1. Purpose / situation

To seek approval of two documents ahead of submission to Welsh Government:

- Public Health Wales Climate Response Plan 2026-2028: Our Pathway to Net Zero and Climate Resilience
- Health and Social Care Climate Emergency National Programme – NHS Wales Adaptation Work Programme Qualitative Report

Public Health Wales is required to update and refresh its Decarbonisation Action Plan every two years. Taking the recommendations in the Welsh Government Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales (2024), we have combined our work on decarbonisation and climate risk into one plan. The Climate Response Plan 2026-2028 succeeds and replaces the previous two Decarbonisation and Sustainability Action Plans, approved in 2022, and 2024 and details the actions Public Health Wales will take over the next two years, to increase its climate resilience and support our ambitions of becoming a net zero organisation by 2030.

The plan is required to be submitted to Welsh Government alongside the Integrated Medium-Term Plan (IMTP) 2026-2029 and high-level actions within this plan have been reflected in the IMTP to ensure there is alignment between the two plans.

Alongside this, the Adaptation Work Programme Qualitative Report, detailing our progress on Climate Risk and Adaptation activities between 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, is required to be submitted to Welsh Government by 30 April 2026.

Due to the overlap between decarbonisation, foundational and circular economy, biodiversity and our role in implementing the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the plan also includes actions that contribute to these sustainability agendas.

2. Background

The Climate Response Plan and the Adaptation Work Programme Qualitative Report work together to provide a clear picture of Public Health Wales' response and actions planned for the upcoming years to tackle the public health effects of climate change. This work has been developed in collaboration with partners from the wider NHS and with Welsh Government.

2.1 Climate Response Plan

Since 2021, work has been underway across Public Health Wales and the wider health system to respond to the climate emergency. Our Climate Response plan sets out how we plan to address the climate emergency in Wales through reducing Public Health Wales' carbon footprint (the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere).



Taking the lessons learnt from the development of previous Decarbonisation and Sustainability Action Plans, this Climate Response Plan 2026-2028 has been developed internally, led by the Climate Change Programme Board.

The previous plans have built momentum for climate action, encouraging staff to lead on initiatives which have resulted in a Green Labs working group, cardboard waste redirection in CQ2, electrification of our DESW fleet, and many sustainable changes within HPSS. This plan continues to align to relevant milestones within the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan and will include any actions from the previous plan (2024-2026) where timescales were not met (and where still applicable).

Climate change will affect everyone in Wales, but its health impacts will fall unevenly, with existing inequalities leaving some groups far more vulnerable. Actions in our Climate Response Plan have been developed and will be delivered with inequalities in mind, ensuring that mitigation and adaptation efforts protect rather than disadvantage those most at risk and support greater social equity and resilience.

2.2 Adaptation Work Programme Qualitative Report

This is the first report for our Climate Adaptation work. The information we provide will be assessed and reported to the Welsh Government’s Health & Social Care Climate Emergency Programme Board, National Adaptation Board and shared with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care as required. Subject to approval, our Climate Response Plan will be published on the Public Health Wales web pages and a communication plan is under development to ensure all staff are aware of our plan aligned with the route map for climate change. The governance arrangements and reporting processes will be implemented from 1 April 2026 onwards.

3. Description/Assessment

3.1 Climate Response Plan

There are six activity stream areas, aligned to the updated Welsh Government’s NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan:

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| ❖ Workforce & Governance |
| ❖ Buildings, Estates and Facilities Planning (incl. Waste) |
| ❖ Transport and travel |
| ❖ Procurement and Supply Chain |
| ❖ Approaches to delivering our services |
| ❖ Climate Risk and Adaptation actions |



Our Climate Response Plan details our successes to date; where we are now; and the actions we will take over the next two years to progress our ambitions of becoming a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, and a carbon-negative organisation by 2035. We have also included our milestones up to 2030 to enable better planning.

Our plan highlights a number of risks and issues (see page 38) associated with delivery of this plan. Risks and issues will be managed within the relevant activity streams as part of the overall programme management approach. Key risks include:

- Not achieving the actions set out in the Climate Response Plan due to insufficient capacity across the organisation.
- Insufficient understanding of the financial implications to deliver the Climate Response Plan.
- Understanding the true organisational position in relation to achieving net zero as we are unable to calculate the carbon emissions for all our activity. This may result in the organisation not achieving the net zero target by 2030.

Actions to mitigate the risks are included within our action plan. Of note, there is a risk on the Corporate Risk Register that Public Health Wales will not meet its target to become a net zero organisation by 2030. This plan forms part of the mitigation measures to reduce this risk.

Whilst leads have been identified in the current plan, a subgroup of the Climate Change Programme Board will continue to review allocation of actions to ensure a cross-organisational approach to delivery.

3.2 Adaptation Work Programme Qualitative Report

This report provides evidence of Public Health Wales's progress and delivery of our adaptation actions in four areas:

- 1) Participation in the Accelerator Programme
- 2) Completion of Risk Assessment
- 3) Development of Project Plan
- 4) Combining Decarbonisation and Adaptation Activity where appropriate.

Our report is underpinned by climate adaptation work that has progressed rapidly over the past year, with substantial progress made against the Welsh Government Climate Adaptation requirements.

Staff engagement has increased through training, surveys and workshops, and a comprehensive Climate Risk Assessment has been submitted to Welsh Government, identifying 115 organisational risks and related opportunities. A project plan and an integrated Climate Response Plan have been developed to embed adaptation and decarbonisation into core planning and decision-making.

4 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This work has been put together following the five ways of working, as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act, in the following ways:



A long-term perspective has been embedded by assessing future climate risks and opportunities. Future work will include prioritising adaptation actions to minimise future costs and strengthen system resilience.



Preventative action has shaped the approach throughout, focusing on reducing emissions and proactively adapting to the impacts of climate change to avoid future harm.



Our Climate Response Plan and Climate adaptation work has been aligned with existing PHW strategies and processes to avoid duplication and ensure it becomes part of routine business practice. This integrated approach also highlights wider benefits, including cost efficiencies, improved staff and patient wellbeing, and enhanced organisational resilience.



Collaboration with internal staff and partners across Wales has strengthened understanding and supported implementation, including through participation in the Adaptation Accelerator Programme and the Health Board Climate Adaptation All-Wales Group. Additionally all actions on the Climate Response plan have been formed collaboratively with staff representation from across the organisation.



Staff from across PHW have been actively engaged in developing, testing and challenging the work, helping to develop ownership and accountability within each directorate and ensuring a broad range of perspectives inform decision-making.

5 Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

- **Approve** the Climate Response Plan 2026-2028: Our Pathway to Net Zero and Climate Resilience
- **Approve** the Public Health Wales Adaptation Work Programme Qualitative Report.



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