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**To:**           **Climate Change Sub-Committee**

**On:**           **9 December 2020**

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**Report By:**   **Head of Policy and Commissioning**

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**Heading:**     **Update on Climate Change Actions**

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## **1.     Summary**

- 1.1     This report provides an update on the Climate Change actions agreed by Council in February 2020 - these are detailed in the appended table where they have been allocated to a lead Council service.
  - 1.2     A progress update is provided and any new opportunities, challenges or issues to be aware of are highlighted in order for members of the Climate Change Sub Committee to consider which areas they wish to know more information about.
  - 1.3     It is proposed that these actions will form the basis of an adaptation plan for the Council, which will be structured around the broad themes identified.
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## **2.     Recommendations**

- 2.1     It is recommended that members:
    - note the update and comments relating to the previously agreed Climate Change actions as highlighted in appendix 1; and
    - agree priority areas will be progressed as part of adaption plan for the Council.
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## **3.     Background**

- 3.1     Prior to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, a report was approved by Council on the 27th of February 2020, outlining the activities and recommendations of the Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) to respond to the climate emergency in Renfrewshire.

- 3.2 The CEWG recognised the range of activities already undertaken by Renfrewshire Council and made recommendations to develop this programme of work and actions to be taken to both reduce and offset carbon emissions, with a primary focus on the reduction of carbon emissions.
- 3.3 In addition to the key priority areas identified in the Council report in February, a high-level action plan was also approved. The action plan is set out in Appendix 1 with a range of actions detailed against key themes.
- 3.4 This action plan was also reported to the first meeting of the Climate Change Sub Committee which took place in October 2020. Members gave comments which have also been noted in the appendix.
- 3.5 As highlighted at the previous meeting of the Climate Change Sub Committee, the pandemic has significantly changed the way in which people live and work, which may influence the prioritisation of actions. For example, there have been significant shifts in travel patterns with many people working from home or restricted to travelling shorter distances; purchasing habits for goods and services have changed; and the use of green space and local outdoor facilities has increased.
- 3.6 In addition, the national and local policy context has also altered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Locally, the Council agreed to develop an Economic Recovery Plan and a Social Renewal Plan for Renfrewshire - both plans will develop the theme of green recovery at a local level, ensuring that opportunities within this agenda are maximised. Nationally, the Scottish Government continues to prioritise work on the climate change agenda and has rooted climate change action within the national response to COVID-19. A range of potential funding opportunities were also outlined in the Programme for Government 2020/21, the detail of which is now starting to emerge.
- 3.7 It was agreed at the previous meeting that the Climate Change Sub Committee would establish the current position against each of the actions. To support this, lead Council services have been identified for each action and an initial update has been provided. It is proposed that these actions are then used to develop the adaptation plan for the Council.
- 3.8 It is also proposed that members consider what actions they would like to know more information about, particularly in light of the constraints due to local and national restrictions and also officer capacity due to supporting the Council's activities relating to the pandemic.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial Implications** – none
2. **HR & Organisational Development Implications** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning Implications** – none
4. **Legal Implications** – none
5. **Property/Assets Implications** – none
6. **Information Technology Implications** – none
7. **Equality & Human Rights Implications** - the recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and

human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website

8. **Health & Safety Implications** - none
9. **Procurement Implications** - none
10. **Risk Implications** - none
11. **Privacy Impact Implications** - none
12. **Cosla Policy position** – none
13. **Climate Risk** – the purpose of this report is to progress the Council's actions to respond to the climate emergency

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**List of Background Papers** - none

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## Appendix 1: Climate Emergency Action Plan (agreed by Council in February 2020)

Activity	Lead Service	Update
<b>ENERGY</b>		
Work with national and local partners to explore alternative energy options for Council buildings such as solar panels, battery storage, energy from waste and district heating, ensuring the Council has robust businesses cases in place ready to attract significant levels of national funding.	FAR	<p>The City Deal team are progressing proposals for a low carbon district heating network at the AMIDS site. The proposals for an Ambient Loop District Energy Network are being finalised and presented to Council Leadership Board in December. Grant funding is being sought in the form of capital grant from Scottish Government's Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme and revenue grant from Ofgem's Renewable Heat Incentive programme.</p> <p>In terms of wider developments, work is underway to consider the feasibility of establishing a large Photo Voltaic site within Renfrewshire, particularly considering the likely payback.</p> <p>Work is also ongoing with a supplier to review and report on external lights that are powered by solar and wind and establish if these can operate power free. A business plan has also been prepared to change all internal lights in the PPP estate to LED.</p>
Implement pilot initiative to turn 75 local homes into low energy homes and develop investment proposals to reduce carbon across the Council's housing stock.	CHAPS	<p>As discussed at October's meeting of the Climate Change Sub-Committee it was not possible to appoint a contractor to deliver this project within the funding timetable set by the Department of Business, Energy &amp; Innovation.</p> <p>Alternative opportunities will be considered in the meantime linked to any emerging funding streams.</p>

Review the lifecycle replacement programme for Council buildings to consider how changes to current specifications could improve energy efficiency, piloting innovative materials and developing business cases to roll these out where appropriate.	FAR	The Council is reviewing its design criteria for all new builds and extensive refurbishment for its non-domestic building stock. Work is ongoing to appoint consultants to advise on these areas. Possible pilot projects are being considered to explore the implications of adopting an Enerphit approach to existing buildings.
WASTE		
Work with staff and communities to maximise opportunities to eliminate unnecessary single use plastic use within the organisation and throughout Renfrewshire.	E and I	<p>At October's meeting of the Climate Change Sub Committee it was agreed to change the wording of this action from 'reduce unnecessary single use plastic' to 'eliminate unnecessary single use plastic'.</p> <p>The Scottish Government has launched a consultation on banning common single-use plastic items. Renfrewshire Council will be responding to the consultation which is due to close on 4 January 2021.</p> <p>The plans is to ban some of the most environmentally damaging single-use plastic items in Scotland, including plastic cutlery and plastic straws. The Scottish Government is seeking views on the introduction of new legislation to restrict the sale or commercial supply of plastic plates, plastic straws, plastic cutlery, polystyrene food and drink containers, plastic balloon sticks and products made from oxo-degradable plastics. Millions are used in Scotland each year, including an estimated 300 million plastic straws, 276 million pieces of plastic cutlery, 50 million plastic plates and 66 million polystyrene food containers.</p>

		Restricting these items would bring Scotland in line with Article 5 of the EU Single-Use Plastics Directive (EU) 2019/904. It is expected that any legislation would be introduced in 2021.
Continue to promote recycling awareness and availability of recycling facilities across Council buildings including schools and consider opportunities in relation to the reduction of food waste.	E and I	The Council is working with the Scottish Government and Zero Waste Scotland on the “Managing our Waste Campaign”. Awareness raising in schools and Council buildings has been impacted by Covid-19 restrictions. The focus at present is to ensure that PPE items being used commonly by the public are disposed of appropriately and promoting reusable masks. A national food reduction campaign is being launched in 2020-2021.
Develop options for the promotion of the circular economy in Renfrewshire, which could provide opportunities to reuse and recycle surplus or end of life items.	E and I	This has not yet progressed significantly due to covid-19 restrictions.
TRANSPORT		
Work with partners at a local, City Region and national level to consider low carbon integrated transport solutions, trains, buses, cycling and walking and the uptake of electric vehicles.	CE	The Council is an active participant in the Glasgow City Region Regional Transport Working Group. The group will be coordinating submissions to both the Scottish Government Bus Partnership Fund and the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2. Both funding streams will have a particular focus on active travel improvements as well as increasing green fleet within public transport.
Promote the use of low carbon travel within the Council’s workforce through the provision of electric pool vehicles and cycle to work schemes.	E and I	The Council took delivery of two fully electric 14-seater minibuses in July 2020 taking the number of electric vehicles in the Council fleet to 102 .20% of our car and light fleet are now electric. 40 of these vehicles are electric pool vehicles and are based at Renfrewshire House and the rest at outlying areas throughout Renfrewshire. There are 20 charging stations alone based at Renfrewshire House to help

		support this network. We have a bespoke booking system in place for our pool vehicles and for over 2 years now our staff have engaged in the pool car and try a bike scheme that was installed.
Develop an electric vehicle plan for Renfrewshire, targeting opportunities to lever in additional funding to secure EV infrastructure, such as charging points, equipment and fleet.	E and I	<p>Currently we have taken delivery of two new Electric Social Transport buses part funded along with Transport Scotland and Energy Savings Trust. We are very much still in the testing phase with these before moving them into front line service usage. We are also looking to progress this new technology into our larger fleet vehicles with planned demonstrations of Electric RCV's in the coming weeks.</p> <p>To date Renfrewshire Council in partnership with Transport Scotland have invested £1.5 million in EV charging units throughout the region installing 15 Public Charging Units, with a further 15 planned for this year to support the ever increasing charging network and a Planned £75K being invested at our main depot for further charging infrastructure to help support the ever increasing fleet.</p>
Consider approaches being rolled out across other local authorities in relation to the promotion of better air quality, including the development of low emissions zones, which are also aiming to improve public health	CHAPS/E and I	<p>Renfrewshire Council Officers discuss, collaborate with and monitor actions taken by other local authorities, in keeping with best practice, to promote and improve air quality with the aim of reducing the impacts which poor air quality has on our residents. We undertake work with other local authorities where appropriate eg participation in an anti-idling advertising campaign each year in conjunction with other neighbouring local authorities and participate in national forums where air quality activities are discussed. Air quality actions and monitoring results are reviewed, updated where required, and reported</p>

		<p>on annually to the Council Policy Board, the Scottish Government and SEPA. Currently we have a network of sixty air quality monitoring sites across Renfrewshire.</p> <p>Our Air Quality Annual Progress Report, June 2020 confirmed there was only one minor exceedance of an air quality objective (within the Renfrew Town Centre AQMA). Paisley Town Centre AQMA has five consecutive years of no exceedances of the statutory objective levels and consideration will be given to the amendment or revocation of this AQMA in 2021.</p> <p>Scotland's National Low Emission Framework (NLEF) policy published in 2019 requires all local authorities with AQMAs to consider the implementation of LEZs to help in addressing transport related exceedances. Each local authority requires to undertaken an initial Screening Assessment of existing action measures within the Action Plan; having done this in 2020 and based on our existing action plan measures, there is currently no requirement to proceed to a Stage 2 LEZ Assessment. The Scottish Government have agreed with our conclusions; however this will be reviewed on an annual basis.</p>
<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>		
Introduce new mechanisms for engaging with citizens and businesses on potential responses to the climate emergency such as through citizens assemblies or climate forums, including consideration of how to report the Council's progress on climate change	CE	This work has been restarted and an update report has been prepared for the consideration of the Climate Change Sub Committee. The current local restrictions will likely place constraints on the approach, but alternative options are proposed.
Actively engage with young people through the annual Youth Assembly, and involve young people in the Council's decisions on our climate change actions.	CE	Discussions are ongoing with colleagues in Youth Services on how to best time this work within their annual programme to maximise engagement opportunities and minimise the potential disruption



		due to the pandemic.
Engage at a regional and national level with other local authorities and agencies on these issues, including in relation to the delivery of the COP26 event in November 2020.	CE	This work had commenced prior to the outbreak of the pandemic and further information had been sought from government about how Renfrewshire could best maximise the opportunity afforded by such a major event focusing on Climate Change being hosted so close by with experts and interested parties visiting the area plus a chance for Renfrewshire to showcase best practice. The COP26 event has now been postponed due to the pandemic, it is anticipated it will now take place in November 2021.
PLACE		
Put climate change at the heart of the new Economic Strategy and Skills Plan, working with businesses to lead by example and to demonstrate real change.	CE	An Economic Recovery Plan is currently in development which will include plans for a green recovery and link closely to the Council's Climate Change ambitions.
Use effective spatial planning to address climate change in line with legislation, the National Planning Framework and associated guidance, with a focus on adapting to and mitigating the impact of climate change through the planning process.	CHAPS	The Scottish Government are consulting on National Planning Framework 4 and within the context of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 have set high level outcomes to reduce emission of greenhouse gases and to secure positive effects for biodiversity. Renfrewshire's proposed local development plan, which is currently subject to examination, seeks to address climate change from a land use perspective. Officers across Council Services including the planning team are engaged in implementing legislation, statutory environmental processes and relevant guidance to inform the decision-making process on development proposals.
Develop a Carbon Offset Plan for the Council, clearly articulating opportunities for activities such as additional tree planting and carbon sinks such as peat bogs and utilising Renfrewshire's rich biodiversity across areas such as Clyde Muirshiel.	CE lead	A small sub group of the Climate Emergency Officer's Group is being established, to collate existing information about pilot projects in the area and to

		identify potential funding opportunities through the Programme for Government which will then report into a future meeting of the Climate Change Sub Committee.
Consider proposals to introduce wildflower areas in Renfrewshire, and engage with local communities on initiatives which promote the awareness and use of green space.	E and I	In August 2020, the Infrastructure Land and Environment Policy Board agreed to engage communities and seek their views on the creation of biodiversity areas in specific geographical locations across Renfrewshire's communities. There were over 1700 responses provided by Renfrewshire residents and community groups/bodies who gave their time to provide detailed input to the consultation and this extremely welcomed. Over 1200 of those responding were supportive of biodiversity areas being created across Renfrewshire supporting creation of areas in parks, local neighbourhoods, around community facilities and on road side verges. There were a number of specific locations where community views were sought. It is proposed the locations which received 75% and over support for being created into biodiversity areas, will be taken forward with involvement of communities to develop into biodiversity areas during the next 3 years.
<b>GOVERNANCE / INNOVATION</b>		
Develop a Carbon Budget for Renfrewshire with community planning partners, gaining agreement on shared responsibilities and actions, recognising the presence of an international airport within the local authority area.	CE	Due to the pandemic, discussions have not yet commenced with community planning partners, however these will be prioritised in early 2022.
Establish a new partnership forum to drive Renfrewshire-wide change on climate	CE	Following discussion at the previous meeting, proposals are outlined in a separate report for the Climate Change Sub Committee to consider.
Use the Council's sustainable procurement duties to consider all opportunities to reduce or offset carbon, including where possible through community benefits.	CE	We will mobilise the Council's procurement spend to support our climate emergency response and maximise the socioeconomic impacts which can be

		achieved through the sustainable procurement duty. Our Procurement Team are linking closely into all the Scottish Government developments in this area. The Council's Strategic Procurement Manager will be making a presentation to the sub-committee this cycle to discuss further the national and local direction and options.
Develop a detailed adaptation plan for climate change, and ensuring the organisation has the capacity, skills and expertise to deliver a programme of work which will attract external investment/funding wherever possible.	CE	The actions within this plan will form the framework for an adaptation plan for the Council, which will be developed collaboratively across all Council services, over the coming months.
Engage with industry and with academic institutions to develop possible opportunities to pilot new/emerging technologies in Renfrewshire.	CE	This action is linked closely to the Economic Recovery Plans - working across sectors to maximise the development opportunities in this field which will help to diversify Renfrewshire's industries and support the future resilience of the area.