
To: Climate Change Sub-Committee

On: 17 NOVEMBER 2021

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: PUBLIC BODIES CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES REPORTING 2020/21

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To comply with the requirements of the Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) legislation, Renfrewshire Council is required to prepare an Annual Report detailing progress in helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
 - 1.2 Renfrewshire Council's Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report for 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 is attached as Appendix 1 for noting by sub-committee members.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Climate Change Sub-Committee:
 - (i) note the content of Renfrewshire Council's Public Bodies Climate Change Duties report for 2020/21 which will be submitted to Leadership Board on 1 December 2021 for formal approval.
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3. Background

- 3.1 All 32 local authorities in Scotland are signed up to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration. Signatories to the Declaration acknowledge the importance of climate change and are committed to:
- Mitigating their impact on climate change through reducing greenhouse gas emissions
 - Taking steps to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of a changing climate
 - Working in partnership with their communities to respond to climate change.
- 3.2 The Declaration recognises the key role Scottish local authorities play in helping to tackle the challenges of climate change. Signatories to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration have committed to preparing an Annual Report detailing their progress in mitigating and adapting to climate change. This provides an important mechanism for the public sector to lead by example in addressing climate change.
- 3.3 The Council's climate change report for 2020/21 is due to be submitted by 30 November 2021 and is a mandatory submission required of all public bodies. The report is intended to assist with monitoring Public Bodies Duties compliance and encourage continuous improvement.
- 3.4 Officers have written to the Scottish Government to advise that the report will be submitted to Leadership Board for formal approval on 1 December 2021. As this is one day after for the deadline, the draft report will be submitted noting that this is subject to formal approval.
- 3.5 The Scottish Government developed the reporting framework to assist in providing accurate and consistent performance information to inform the future direction and development of policy, legislation, funding and support services.

4. Renfrewshire Council's Annual Report 2020/21 – Key Highlights

Corporate Emissions, Targets and Project Data

- 4.1 Renfrewshire Council's Carbon Management Plan 2014/15 - 2019/20 included ambitious objectives to reduce emissions that are then included in other corporate and strategic documents. Renfrewshire Council set a target to reduce its total annual carbon footprint by 19,389 tCO₂e by the end of financial year 2019/20, equating to a reduction of 36%. The completed Carbon Management Plan was reported to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board in January 2021 and reported that there had been a total reduction of 31,818 tCO₂e equating to a 60% reduction, well above the 36% target.

Adaptation

- 4.2 The Council's Risk Management process considers risks associated with flood risk, energy and carbon management, waste management as well as planning for severe weather. Climate change, sustainability and adaptability, was contained in the corporate risk register during 2020/21. Climate change risk is now included within the strategic risk register.
- 4.3 To recognise the links between air quality and climate change, the Council is promoting initiatives to improve air quality and reduce emissions. Paisley Town Centre, Johnstone High Street and Renfrew Town Centre are current locations that are being targeted to achieve air quality improvements. Air Quality Management Areas have been declared at these locations and the Renfrewshire Air Quality Action Plan covering the 3 air quality management areas in Renfrewshire is now complete and being delivered. The action plan was subject to consultation with the Scottish Government, SEPA, neighbouring local authorities and the public.
- 4.4 The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan continues the focus of sustainable economic growth within Renfrewshire, identifying where there are opportunities for change, regeneration and enhancement, and directing developments to locations that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. The Plan continues to promote sustainable patterns of development that contribute towards minimising carbon and greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change through the policy framework. Provision has been made in the Local Development Plan Proposed Plan for the promotion of the low carbon economy and mitigation and adaptation through sustainable urban drainage and flooding measures and improvements to the water environment.

Procurement

- 4.5 The Council's Corporate Procurement Unit is making a significant impact by actively considering the reduction of greenhouse emissions, energy efficiency and recycling responsibly. Any suppliers for the Council are made fully aware of the Council's commitment to the climate change duties along with clear instructions and expectations set out in terms and conditions.
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5. Climate emergency developments during 2020/21

- 5.1 On 27 June 2019, Renfrewshire Council declared a climate emergency, with many other local authorities across the UK and Scotland also making this declaration. The actions that are required to respond to the climate emergency are potentially complex and multi-faceted, cannot be tackled in isolation and require full collaboration and support by organisations across all of society.
- 5.2 As agreed at the Council meeting in February 2020, a Climate Change sub-committee of the Leadership Board was established to maintain oversight of the progress being made by the Council in achieving its target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030.
- 5.3 Due to the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic and the requirement of officers to focus on the immediate response in the community, it was not possible to progress

climate emergency activity at the pace originally intended. Work on the agenda resumed in late 2020 and has continued to be a priority for the organisation.

- 5.4 A specific element of this work was the development of a Plan for Net Zero for Renfrewshire, outlining how the whole area of Renfrewshire could achieve the 2030 net zero target. An update on the progress of this work programme is provided elsewhere on the agenda for this Sub-Committee meeting, outlining significant progress in the development of our Plan for Net Zero, particularly around the Council's engagement programme, alongside recent cross-service activities to support the Council's own drive for net zero within the organisation.
- 5.5 In the budget approved by full Council on 9 March 2020, £1m of funding was allocated to support the organisation in progressing its response to the climate emergency through a Climate Change Action Fund.
- 5.6 The Climate Change Action Fund is intended to fund innovative projects and initiatives being developed by Council services in response to the climate emergency, providing initial funding to pilot new ideas and approaches, to support engagement and partnership working across Renfrewshire, or to accelerate the pace of change already being delivered through existing initiatives.
- 5.7 The proposals currently being developed include:
- Developing best practice in Zero Energy Buildings (RenZEB),
 - Enhancement of Electric Vehicle Programme,
 - Carrying out a photovoltaic feasibility study,
 - A Community Food Growing Proposal,
 - Identifying and delivering interventions and new links for the Renfrewshire Active Travel Network,
 - Development of Town Centres climate resilience programme,
 - Specialist support to develop 'carbon budget' element of adaptation plan and identify key opportunity areas,
 - Business survey and analysis and Climate Panel survey and recruitment,
 - The introduction of a business support scheme which would provide small grants to local businesses to support the transition to green energy sources and processes,
 - An energy modelling project in Bridge of Weir Primary, the findings from which could be used to inform the refurbishment of other similar primary buildings,
 - Restoration of local peatland, and
 - Appointment of a lead officer to support the climate emergency response in Renfrewshire.

- 5.8 It was recognised that to achieve our ambitious targets, significant changes would be required to the way that people live and work in Renfrewshire, and that the Council alone would not be able to drive this agenda. A number of key actions have commenced to ensure meaningful ongoing engagement with local partners, businesses, residents and communities on their role in tackling climate change and to develop ideas as to how all stakeholders can jointly respond to the challenge.
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6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Renfrewshire Council's annual report for 2020/21 is attached and will be submitted, subject to approval by the Leadership Board, to the Scottish Government, as detailed in section 3.4.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community Planning** - the report details a range of activities which reflect local community planning themes.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - 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 because it is for noting only. 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** – None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk** – None.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
12. **CoSLA Policy Position** – None

13. **Climate Risk** – This annual report details progress made by Renfrewshire Council in assisting in mitigating and adapting to climate change during 2020/21.
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List of Background Papers:

None
