

Minute of Meeting Climate Change Sub-Committee

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 19 April 2021	10:00	Teams Meeting,

Present: Councillor Bill Brown, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor John Hood, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Eileen McCartin, Councillor Cathy McEwan, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor John Shaw

Chair

Councillor Iain Nicolson, Chair, presided.

In Attendance

L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Commissioning, A Morrison, Head of Economy and Development, P Moss, Strategy, Policy and Insight Manager, S Edwards, Placemaking Officer, R Robertson, Community Links Team Manager and G Crawford, Senior Communications Officer (all Chief Executive's); G Hutton, Head of Operations & Infrastructure and L Rennie, Operations Manager (both Environment and Infrastructure); F Carlin, Head of Housing, (Communities and Housing Services); J Lynch, Head of Property Services, D Pole, End User Technician, A McNaughton, Senior Committee Services Officer and K O'Neill, Assistant Democratic Services Officer (all Finance & Resources).

Apologies

Councillor Marie McGurk

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Recording of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chair intimated that this meeting of the Sub-committee would be recorded and that the recording would be available to watch on the Council's website.

Climate Emergency – Update on Strategic Responses

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive which provided an update on the work undertaken to develop a strategic programme of work, which demonstrated how all businesses, communities and residents could come together to achieve the ambition of net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. The initial proposals developed by services and funded from the Climate Change Action Fund had largely been identified to support feasibility studies and testing of changes, which allowed the Council to lever in potential significant levels of external funding in the future. There was a particular focus on the development of an Adaptation Plan for Renfrewshire which would set out how Partner organisations would work together to achieve shared ambitions in relation to climate change. A draft outline structure of the Adaptation Plan was attached as Appendix 1 to the report and built on that used within the high-level climate action plan approved at the meeting of the Council held on 27 February 2020.

Key dates for the development of the Adaptation Plan were detailed in Appendix 2 to the report, together with the key priorities which would be progressed over the course of the next three month period.

The Adaptation Plan, which would be developed in full consultation with local people, communities, partners and businesses, would help organisations form the actions needed to manage or reduce their contribution to the global climate emergency, within a strong local context, demonstrating an understanding of the risks and opportunities. The plan would help to prepare for and protect against the impacts of the climate crisis such as flooding, adverse weather conditions and food insecurity.

The proposed structure of Renfrewshire Adaptation Plan detailed in Appendix 1 was summarised into a number of categories: Strategic Context, Strategic Framework, Scope of the Plan, Priorities (Place, Energy, Waste, Transport, Engagement and Governance and Innovation), Monitoring, Measurement and Reporting and Glossary of Terms. Under each priority, there would be an opening statement, outlining the vision for Renfrewshire in relation to the theme, the opportunities and current position as it was understood. There would then be key activities within each category, developed through the engagement and consultation programme. Some of the activities would be actions for Renfrewshire Council, already highlighted through previous reports to Council, but some would be broader, reflecting the wider scope of the Adaptation Plan and would require stakeholders' agreement. These priorities would be obtained through listening events, grouping discussion around each of these themes in order to understand local views, opportunities and challenges.

The Monitoring, Measurement and Reporting category was critical to the successful implementation and linked back to the governance, this section would outline plans for how success was monitored and measured, and how suitable targets and milestones would be identified and reported to stakeholders.

Initially it was intended that the Plan would relate specifically to the activities of Renfrewshire Council, this would now be widened out to include the actions required across Renfrewshire and its communities. Additional engagement with local businesses would also be undertaken in close partnership with Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce prior to finalisation during the second half of 2021. It was emphasised that the Plan was accessible to all stakeholders and set out the key steps

which required to be taken collectively across Renfrewshire to achieve shared climate aspirations and would be linked to local COVID-19 economy recovery plans.

The report advised that the Renfrewshire Adaptation Plan would be informed by both the Scottish Government and Glasgow City Region Plans but would remain a principal focus on

what needed to happen in Renfrewshire to progress climate change aspirations locally.

The Glasgow City Region Adaptation Plan had been developed through Climate Ready Clyde which comprised key officers from member organisations, including the Glasgow City Region local authorities, the National Health Service, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, SGN, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport and Transport Scotland, the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde and the Scottish Government and was managed and delivered by Sniffer, the sustainability charity, who prepared the Adaptation Plan. The draft Plan highlighted 11 key interventions - reshape governance mechanisms; develop ability of all sectors to adapt; financing adaptation; enabling community participation; embedding evaluation and learning into adaptation action; adapting the Clyde Corridor for the twenty-second century; early warning preparedness for floods and heatwaves; ensure homes, offices, buildings and infrastructure are climate resilient; deliver nature-based solutions for resilient places; establish the region as a research and knowledge hub; and transitioning to a climate-resilient economy.

The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the pace at which the climate emergency response had been progressed was detailed in the report. A work programme had been developed to pull together all key strands of the climate emergency response within the organisation and with partners, and regular updates would be provided to the Climate Change Sub-committee on the progress achieved.

The report highlighted the key priorities over the next three months as: establishment of Partnership Forum; recruitment of Renfrewshire Citizen's Climate Forum members; finalisation of Business Audit proposal with Chamber of Commerce; development of further Climate Change Action Fund proposals and exploration of potential to engage academic partner to support the Council to develop a detailed carbon budget which would allow more detailed milestones and targets to be set within the draft adaptation strategy.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the progress achieved to date in terms of the strategic response to the climate emergency be noted;
- (b) That the proposed approach, timetable and outline structure for Renfrewshire's Adaptation Plan be noted; and
- (c) That the key priorities for progression over the course of the next three months as set out in the report be agreed.

Climate Emergency – Policy Update

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive which provided an overview of the key policy updates at a national level since January 2021, the areas covered were: recent legislation; the Scottish Government's plans, strategies and consultations; the Scottish Government's budget and recently announced funding; the Edinburgh Declaration and plans for 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26).

The Heat Networks (Scotland) Bill had been passed by the Scottish Parliament in February 2021, and created a new licencing system to improve standards, new rights for heat network developers to level the playing field and encourage growth and investment and a new consent system to ensure new networks were developed in areas where there would be most benefit and were tailored to local needs. The development of heat networks was further supported by the publication of the Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy, published in February 2021, which outlined actions needed to transform Scotland's domestic and non-domestic building stock to use low and zero emissions heating systems.

In 2018, the Scottish Government published their Climate Change Plan, outlining action to meet Scotland's climate targets. In December 2020, this Plan was updated to reflect the new targets within the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 and the challenges and opportunities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, aligning activity with a green recovery. It was also updated based on progress developing the Green New Deal; following advice and contributions from a range of advisory groups; and in the run up to COP26 in Glasgow. The Plan focused on: electricity; buildings; transport; industry; waste and the circular economy; land use, land use change and forestry; agriculture; and negative emissions technologies – and mapped out key milestones to 2032.

The Scottish Government had consulted on their draft public engagement strategy 'Net-Zero Nation' to ensure that public engagement was as effective and inclusive as possible, the deadline for submission closed on 31 March 2021. The strategy was underpinned by three strategic objectives:- that people were aware of the action that the Scottish Government had taken and how it related to their lives; that people actively participated in shaping the direction of travel in relation to adaptation and mitigation of climate change; and that people take action on climate change, and that this is normalised and encouraged across Scotland. Scotland's Climate Assembly would publish a report with detailed recommendations in May 2021 following the election of a new Scottish Parliament.

The Just Transition Commission had published its recommendations on 23 March 2021 and outlined four key themes with 24 recommendations grouped under each of these. The recommendations in relation to developing green skills; utilising the power of public sector supply chains and public sector pension funds; green participatory budgeting; for local authorities along with the Scottish Government and developers to commit to creating low carbon-communities, were highlighted as being most relevant for local government.

The report advised that the procurement activity of the public sector had a critically important role in supporting Scotland in meeting its climate goals. Following a presentation to the meeting of this Sub-committee by the Council's Strategic Commercial and Procurement Manager on 9 December, 2020 there had been further progress in this area with the cross-sector Climate and Procurement Forum working with Scottish Ministers to develop a policy note and Ministers writing to public sector leaders, including all Council Chief Executives, on 18 March 2021 outlining key messages to further inform and advance public bodies' approach to tackling the

climate emergency through procurement.

Information was provided on the Scottish Government's 2021/22 budget together with details of budget allocated to Low Carbon Fund, Green Jobs Fund, Heat in Buildings, Forestry, Zero-emission Buses, Active Travel and Recycling Improvement Fund. Details of funding in relation to COP26 was also provided.

The report provided details of The Edinburgh Declaration which was an international agreement to ensure action was taken at all levels to protect biodiversity and had been led and supported by the Scottish Government. The Declaration was a statement of intent agreed between subnational, regional and local governments across the world calling on the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) to take bold action to halt biodiversity loss. CoSLA had proposed that they would be willing to formally commit to the Declaration on behalf of all 32 Councils - this would need endorsement by CoSLA Leaders before May 2021.

DECIDED: That the policy update in relation to the climate emergency be noted.

Growing Grounds Initiatives

A presentation was made by the Placemaking Officer, Chief Executive's, which highlighted the relevance of community growing groups on Climate Change. Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership recognised the benefits of these types of opportunities - some of which had been ongoing during the COVID-19 pandemic and some of which had not progressed due to the restrictions in place. The presentation provided details of the number of growing ground forums which operated in Renfrewshire and advised that since the first COVID-19 lockdown started on 23 March 2020, plot waiting lists across Renfrewshire had more than doubled, to just over 100 people.

The benefits of these initiatives was highlighted and included: improved access to fresh fruit and vegetables, helping the environment, local food production, reduced food miles, improvement in mental health, composting of green waste, providing havens for wildlife and improvement in mental health wellbeing.

Renfrewshire Growing Grounds Forum offered key advice and support to existing groups and had an opportunity to support the development of new projects, providing guidance on a number of subjects including – supporting Council services, finding and securing spare land for conversion to community growing facilities and access to technical skills required for site design.

DECIDED: That the presentation be noted.