

ITEM 1

5th February 2019



Glasgow City Council

Environment, Sustainability & Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods & Sustainability

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PROPOSALS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

Purpose of Report:

To present draft terms of reference to the Committee for a Climate Emergency Working Group.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee considers:

- (a) The draft terms of reference for a Climate Emergency Working Group.
- (b) A preferred model through which to progress this work.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1. Background

- 1.1 The Committee has considered a range of reports which relate to climate change issues since it was established 18 months ago. These are in line with key commitments in the Council Strategic Plan to grow a greener Glasgow and make the transition to a carbon neutral city. A motion on climate issues was also considered at the meeting of the full Council on 1 November 2018, the minute of which can be viewed at:

<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewSelectedPack.asp?c=P6J5FQ0GZLDN81NT>

- 1.2 Elected members will be aware that the city and the Council as a distinct organization have both met their carbon emissions reduction targets for 2020. This is good news, but there is now a significant challenge to drive emissions further down. Such action will ensure that Glasgow plays its part in supporting the ambitions stated by the Scottish Government for a lower carbon nation. A more sustainable Glasgow and Scotland will be better places in which to live and do business, and they will also make a contribution to global efforts to reduce emissions and thereby reduce the dangers of climate change.

- 1.3 The gravity of the situation facing the world in the age of climate change has been re-emphasised recently. A report was issued by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on 8 October 2018, which sets out in stark terms the extraordinary nature of the challenges facing the planet and the unprecedented level of action needed to tackle them. Elected members can access a summary of this report at:

<https://www.ipcc.ch/2018/10/08/summary-for-policymakers-of-ipcc-special-report-on-global-warming-of-1-5c-approved-by-governments/>

- 1.4 The IPCC is the United Nations body which was established to assess the science related to climate change. It therefore represents the most credible and cogent body of scientific opinion on this matter from a global perspective. Its latest report states that:

- There may only be around a dozen years left in which to limit global warming to a rise of no more than 1.5 degrees Centigrade.
- Urgent action is needed to ensure that the Earth's temperature is kept within this temperature range.
- The consequences of global temperatures rising beyond 1.5 degrees are severe.

The message of the IPCC report is, in essence, that it is still just about possible within the laws of chemistry and physics to keep global warming to safe limits. However, that will require major action and commitment from a range of state actors, businesses and communities - and time is running out.

- 1.5 More than half the world's population now lives in cities, so any sustainable solutions to these challenges will have to be developed as a key element of

urban policy. Glasgow has made real progress in addressing the climate change agenda and the IPCC report now offers members an opportunity to reflect on whether the pace and intensity of local action is sufficient.

2. Working group

- 2.1 The Council is currently revising its Energy & Carbon Masterplan for the city, which will establish further emissions reduction targets beyond the year 2020. This is taking place through the development of a new Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES), which will be completed by the end of this year. The Council Strategic Plan also makes a commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by the year 2037.
- 2.2 On a national level, the Scottish Government has stated its intentions for carbon emissions to reduce significantly over the coming years. It introduced a new Climate Change Bill to the Scottish Parliament on 23 May 2018, which sets out targets for carbon reductions in order to show how the nation will meet its obligations under the Paris Agreement. One of the key proposals in this Bill is a 90% emissions reduction target for 2050, with a commitment to becoming a net zero emissions nation as soon as possible.
- 2.3 Other major UK cities are considering the implications of the IPCC report for their own approach to delivering on emissions reductions and moving towards carbon neutrality. Bristol City Council, for instance, has declared a climate emergency and agreed to accelerate its own efforts towards carbon neutrality. Leeds has previously established an independent Climate Change Commission for the city, whilst Manchester has a multi-sectoral Climate Change Board to oversee work towards its own climate change strategy.
- 2.4 In this light, the Committee may wish to consider whether a Climate Emergency Working Group should be established in order both to accelerate action towards the city's existing sustainability objectives and potentially to set more demanding targets. This would be convened for a specific period and with specific purposes, as proposed below. Potential arrangements for taking forward its recommendations would be a matter for further consideration by the committee.

3. Terms of reference

- 3.1 It is proposed that the terms of reference for a working group - or the Committee's preferred model for addressing these matters - should be:
 - To scrutinise the development of new carbon emissions reduction targets for Glasgow beyond 2020, particularly through the LHEES work.
 - To consider the effectiveness of planned activities to meet the city's 2037 carbon neutrality commitment.
 - To look at the potential for bringing forward the 2037 commitment to an earlier year.
 - To propose new actions to achieve the above, drawing out budgetary and other resource implications for the Council and city.

- To suggest oversight and review mechanisms in order to ensure progress towards targets.
 - To collate and consider good practice from other cities and local authorities from the UK and internationally.
 - To consider how the powers which city and regional agencies currently possess can be better used to achieve the above and where further asks need to be made of national government.
 - To ensure that its work is fully informed by the need to address inequalities across Glasgow's communities in relation to climate issues.
 - To draft recommendations by no later than the end of the summer recess.
- 3.2 Cross-party membership of such a group will reflect the significance of the issues which it will address. Members will also be able to include external partners, third sector bodies and community voices as they see fit.
- 3.3 Such an approach offers a good opportunity to engage with Glaswegian residents in ways which can support the Council's community empowerment ambitions. The UN, for instance, has been commending the use of a Talanoa dialogue for such purposes. This is an open, participative and creative means of seeking to make wise decisions for the collective good. It has its origins in community practice in Fiji and other Pacific islands and has been adopted by the UN for the purposes of getting parties together to talk about climate change issues. It is being actively promoted by the UN as part of a collective conversation about how the main aims of the Paris climate agreements are progressing. Further detail can be found here: <https://unfccc.int/topics/2018-talanoa-dialogue-platform>

4. Equality impacts

- 4.1 Members considered an equality impact assessment on these issues at the last committee meeting, which related to the city's annual return for the Scottish Climate Change Declaration. It can be accessed here: <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=43306&p=0>. A more detailed impact assessment will be undertaken once the proposals for a working group are confirmed.
- 4.2 The climate justice agenda was particularly noted at the last committee meeting, in relation both to local communities and on a global scale. In summary, the main impacts of climate change are already and will be:
- In Glasgow, acting as an additional stress on vulnerable communities in the city, particularly around flood risk and increased summer heat.
 - Across the world, reinforcing a wide range of existing inequalities in countries affected by changing weather systems and associated resource conflicts.
 - For non-human species, bringing about devastating effects on habitats on land and in the seas.
- 4.3 It is clear that climate change is very strongly gendered in its impacts. Girls and women are often the first to have to deal with the effects of changing

weather on their families' security and wellbeing and the first to suffer from the effects of conflict. It is therefore proposed that the working group should look to reflect this key dimension of climate change in its own composition and ensure equal gender representation on the group.

5. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: None (within existing resources)

Legal: None

Personnel: There will be implications for existing priorities in providing officer resources for this work.

Procurement: None

Council Strategic Plan: This work supports the Sustainable City theme of the Council's Strategic Plan and in particular commitment 67.

Equality Impacts:

EQIA carried out: Not at this stage – a previous related EQIA can be viewed at:
<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=43306&p=0>

Outcome: Positive impacts on all equality groups from a low carbon and climate adapted city.

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental: A lower carbon city will support both local and global efforts to combat climate change.

Social: A more sustainable and carbon neutral city can be a major contributor to enhancing urban quality of life for residents and allow Glasgow to support global efforts to reduce the risks of climate change.

Economic: Sustainability has become a key element for any city looking to support competitiveness and inclusive economic growth.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee considers:

- (a) The draft terms of reference for a Climate Emergency Working Group.
- (b) A preferred model through which to progress this work.