

Item 4

26th September 2019



Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

**Report by Councillor Susan Aitken, Leader of the Council and
City Convener for Inclusive Economic Growth**

Contact: Annemarie O'Donnell Ext: 73977

**United Nations Climate Change Conference – the 26th Conference of the
Parties (COP26)**

Purpose of Report:

To inform Committee about the council's role and responsibilities following Glasgow's selection as the UK's host of the United Nations Climate Change Conference – the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26).

Recommendations:

The committee is asked to:

- note the contents of the report;
- approve the Council's role in planning for the conference with the relevant partners; and
- note that regular update reports will be brought to committee.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

1 Background

- 1.1. The United Nations Climate Change Conferences are annual summits organised by the UN where members agree and monitor actions to reduce man made climate change. They are generally referred to as Conference Of the Parties followed by the number in the series. The 2020 conference will be the 26th of its kind, hence the name COP26.
- 1.2. Notable previous conferences are COP3, held in Kyoto in 1997 and COP21, held in Paris in 2015.
- 1.3. The dates for COP26 are likely to be the 9th to 19th November 2020.
- 1.4. Following a bidding process the UK Government has been nominated as the host for COP26, a decision which is due to be formally ratified at COP25 in December in Santiago, Chile.
- 1.5. The Scottish Event Campus (SEC) was selected by the UK Government following a rigorous selection process and will be the venue for the conference, with many other venues in the city and beyond also being used for a variety of purposes.
- 1.6. The UK Government highlighted the reasons Glasgow was selected as including:
 - the SEC campus and its self-contained site;
 - the Council's progressive work on reducing emissions and Sustainable Glasgow;
 - the Scottish Government's progressive targets and achievements to date on sustainability;
 - Glasgow's Global Destination Sustainability rankings (7th in 2019); and
 - the amount of accommodation available within an hour travel time.
- 1.7. The scale of the conference is vast and will be the largest and most complex event ever to be held in Scotland. With around 170 states involved, most of whom bring delegations to the COP including their Heads of State, there will be total participation of more than 22,500 people over a 10 day period.
- 1.8. Other client groups include the United Nations themselves in significant numbers, specialised agencies and relation organisations, intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, observer organisations, and more than 1000 media representatives.
- 1.9. The accommodation requirements for the conference will be significant, utilising Glasgow, the whole of the Central Belt and beyond.
- 1.10. The conference also traditionally attracts substantial organised protests which can be expected to attract tens of thousands of participants.

2. Planning

- 2.1. The Council has a key role in ensuring that the city is ready to host a safe and successful Conference, which will be the largest gathering of world leaders ever to be held in the UK. Keeping the city moving and ensuring vital business as usual services can operate during it are key responsibilities.
- 2.2. The Council also plays a vital role in ensuring that communities and businesses are informed, engaged and supported both before the Conference and during it.
- 2.3. The UK Government is responsible for the delivery of COP26, with the Cabinet Office providing strategic leadership across the various interested Whitehall Departments and Agencies.
- 2.4. Police Scotland, the emergency services and the Council have begun planning. The detailed governance and delivery structures are currently being designed to deliver the Conference in partnership with a wide range of agencies and organisations. This work draws on the Council's extensive experience in this area following events such as the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, the 2010 Papal Visit and the Glasgow 2018 European Championships.

3. Benefits to Glasgow

- 3.1. Hosting the largest gathering of world leaders ever to be held in the UK at a key time for the climate change agenda is a significant opportunity for Glasgow.
- 3.2. Direct benefit from the Conference will be significant with the approximate economic benefit for the hospitality sector from delegate spend estimated to be £73 million.
- 3.3. Exposure on an unprecedented scale on the world stage is also a significant opportunity from which to promote the international strand of the Economic Strategy, and the city brand People Make Glasgow to assist in meeting the targets of the Glasgow Tourism Action Plan 2023.
- 3.4. The Conference is also a platform from which to promote and accelerate the city's plans to tackle the climate emergency as laid out in the Council's Strategic Plan, including the drive to become carbon neutral by 2037. The aims contained within the current Climate Emergency Working Group report should also be considered in this context.
- 3.5. There is also the opportunity to deliver a significant legacy for Glasgow, Scotland and the UK by seeking to attract additional resource and funding for existing and future plans to contribute to Scotland's target for zero carbon emission by 2045, and the UK's by 2050. There is also an opportunity to continue to rise in the Global Destination Sustainability rankings by identifying key areas for improvement.

4. Governance and delivery structure

- 4.1. The Council's structure will complement those of Police Scotland and other agencies to ensure as integrated, efficient and effective delivery as possible. A COP26 Project Board has been established and is chaired by the Chief Executive.
- 4.2. A Council COP26 Team, reporting into the Project Board, has been formed and will consist of a number of workstreams including:
- Traffic and Transport
 - City Services
 - Convention Support
 - Business Support
 - Resilience
 - PR and Engagement
 - Destination Marketing
 - Business as usual
 - Policy and legacy

5. Budget

- 5.1. It is understood that the Cabinet Office will hold the overall budget for delivery of COP26. Planning and delivery budget scoping has commenced. The Council is operating on the assumption of full cost recovery from the UK Government.

6. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Planning and delivery budget scoping has commenced. The Council is operating on the assumption of full cost recovery from the UK Government.
<i>Legal:</i>	None
<i>Personnel:</i>	The Council has formed a team to support the delivery body for COP26 and will require to allocate the appropriately skilled resource from across the Council family as appropriate.
<i>Procurement:</i>	Any procurement required will be done following Council procedures and possibly in partnership with other

agencies where frameworks allow to ensure best value.

Council Strategic Plan:

A Sustainable and Low Carbon City
A Thriving Economy

**Council Strategic Plan
Priorities:**

8. Support the hospitality, events and conference market, maximising business and employment opportunities through the Economic Strategy and Glasgow Tourism and Visitor Plan.

11. Develop the international strand of the Glasgow Economic Strategy to promote Glasgow's economy, commerce, world class heritage and events globally and learn from other international cities.

67. Become a carbon neutral city by 2037, reviewing our energy carbon masterplan in 2019, and investigating membership of international networks, the Carbon Neutral Alliance and C40.

70. Review the River Clyde Flood Management Strategy and continue to invest in the drainage infrastructure across the city to support climate resilience.

**Equality and Socio-Economic
Impacts:**

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22

Council action on climate change seeks to address the potential negative impact on existing inequalities and disadvantage in Glasgow, in particular in relation to flood events which puts the city at a higher than average climate disadvantage compared with the rest of Scotland.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

The hosting of COP26 has the potential to impact on the business as usual arrangements for services in the city run by the Council and other partners. The Council will play

a vital role in ensuring that communities and businesses are informed, engaged and supported both before the Conference and during it and that vital services continue to be delivered.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

Hosting COP26 will further support the council's priorities around building more climate resilient places and communities.

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental:

COP26 provides an opportunity for the council and its partners to highlight and add momentum to their collective action on further emissions reductions and adapting to the local impacts of global climate change.

Social including Article 20 opportunities:

Climate justice will be a major element of the COP26 discussions, which will help to inform the city's own approach to ensuring that sustainability and social justice are delivered together for the city.

Economic:

COP26 provides direct benefits for the city's growing reputation as a host for green and sustainable events and tourism. It also presents a more general opportunity to engage with the business community on green economic growth and the challenges of a just transition to a low carbon economy.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:

None

6 Recommendation

6.1 The committee is asked to:

- note the contents of the report;
- approve the Council's role in planning for the Conference with the relevant partners; and
- note that regular update reports will be brought to the Council Administration Committee.