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Glasgow City Council

Environment, Sustainability and Carbon
Reduction City Policy Committee

Item 1

6th October 2020

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods &
Sustainability

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Climate Emergency Working Group Implementation Plan

Purpose of Report:

To update Committee on Glasgow City Council's response to the recommendations of the Climate Emergency Working Group and present the Climate Emergency Implementation Plan with proposed future actions.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (1) Notes Glasgow City Council's action in response to the 61 recommendations made by the Climate Emergency Working Group;
- (2) Agrees that a series of Public Conversations should be undertaken on the proposed Climate Emergency Implementation Plan;
- (3) Discusses the proposed Climate Emergency Implementation Plan and recommends this is referred to the City Administration Committee for approval upon completion of the Public Conversations.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 There is global consensus that climate change is the greatest challenge of our lifetime. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that if we are to keep global warming to safe limits, major transformative action and commitment will be required from a range of state actors, businesses, communities and individuals.
- 1.2 The Climate Emergency Working Group, which included representation from all political groups of the Council as well as a range of representation from key sectors, was established at the meeting of the Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee on [5 February 2019](#). The Council declared a climate and ecological emergency at its meeting of [16 May 2019](#).
- 1.3 Members previously considered a report on the recommendations of the Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) at the meeting of the Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee held on 27 August 2019. That report can be accessed [here](#).
- 1.4 The report made 61 recommendations, with a target for the city to achieve carbon neutrality by the year 2030 at its heart.
- 1.5 Members requested a report from the Council responding to these 61 recommendations made by the CEWG. This Committee meeting represents the earliest opportunity to deliver on that commitment.

2 Climate Challenge for Glasgow

- 2.1 Glasgow City Council has the ambition to become one of the most sustainable cities in Europe. The City has already achieved (and exceeded) its carbon reduction targets to date through a combination of energy efficiency measures and local energy generation. To date this progress represents the realisation of a number of the “quick wins”. However, there is much more to be done. We must consider where and why action has not been taken and seek to identify the reasons or barriers behind this. We must also continue to push to resolve those more complex challenges that remain.
- 2.2 In this light, it is recognised that there needs to be a sharp increase in the scope, scale and intensity of action to set Glasgow on course for achieving our target for 2030.
- 2.3 We are also aware of the need to build resilience to the local weather impacts resulting from global climate change. Parts of the city are already at risk of flooding; and climate change threatens to bring the number of homes and businesses in danger of being flooded to almost 60,000 by 2080. Attention must therefore be paid not only to reducing our carbon emissions, but to adapting the city and increasing resilience to the effects of global warming.
- 2.4 In addition to those known impacts of climate change, the City is faced with the unprecedented challenges presented by the Covid 19 pandemic. The long term impacts of this pandemic are still to be seen but it is clear that we must ensure

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that we focus on a green recovery for our City, addressing sustainability and creating a more resilient city moving forward. This CEIP and the actions within will support this green recovery for the city. Action to address climate change at a global level also provides a positive impact on the prevention of transmission of zoonoses (such as coronaviruses) between animals and humans and therefore will have a further positive effect on prevention of emerging viruses in the future.

- 2.5 In order to achieve our ambitious carbon reduction targets, build adaptive capacity to climate change and bring about a green economic recovery from Covid-19, bold leadership and substantial investment is required. We have to openly acknowledge that our current momentum, though laudable, will not result in sufficient action to ameliorate the impacts of climate change and reverse the clearly evident weather trends.
- 2.6 The pace of this change is central to Glasgow being able to meet its targets and to meaningfully contribute to reversing climate change. CO₂ emissions persist in the atmosphere for around 100 years. This means that action to save CO₂ now is 100 times more impactful than action taken to save CO₂ a century later. In effect, ambitious early intervention taken now will make almost double the impact compared with a slower rate of change. Time is of the essence and time is not on our side, thus rapid action needs to be taken right now.
- 2.7 Effective climate action can also bring about better, more equitable, health and wellbeing, a stronger and inclusive economy, and more resilient communities. Climate-smart places, adapted and low-carbon, also generate thriving economies. Glaswegian communities already experience many inequalities around income, opportunity and discrimination. The Council believes that sustainability and social justice are intrinsically linked and should be seen as a single combined issue.
- 2.8 The proposed Climate Emergency Implementation Plan will therefore be underpinned by two fundamental principles:
 - Action to address the climate crisis must not further disadvantage people and communities who already experience significant inequalities.
 - Action to create a safer and more sustainable city should also be aimed at building a just and more equal city.

3 Climate Emergency Implementation Plan (CEIP)

- 3.1 In response to the 61 recommendations presented by the Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG), the Council established a collaborative cross departmental working group. This internal group has enabled consideration of the 61 recommendations, including what actions have been taken to date, and what is planned for the future. This group have also worked together to determine how the Council can best exercise a leadership role for the city in drawing together the collective action of other agencies, businesses and

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especially communities. The proposed Climate Implementation Plan seeks to capture all of this work.

- 3.2 Whilst this plan was being developed, new guidance was issued by the UK Committee on Climate Change (CCC) in its recent annual report to the UK Parliament. The CCC set out urgent steps that must be taken to begin a green and resilient COVID-19 recovery. The report states that a green recovery is the only option to ensure that a low carbon, resilient economy can arise from what is expected to be the biggest economic shock in a generation.
- 3.3 In other developments, the Scottish Government published their Programme for Government on the 3rd of September 2020. The First Minister announced investment for enhancing our biodiversity, promoting active travel, green jobs and cleaner energy transition, stating that 'we must treat the COVID challenge, not as a brake on our ambitions, but an accelerant.'
- 3.4 The attached [CEIP](#) provides Glasgow City Council's interim response to the Climate Emergency. It outlines the progress which has been made to date, sets a course for further work, and describes the means by which the city and its people will face the extraordinary challenges of the global climate emergency.

4 Climate Emergency Implementation Plan – Key actions

- 4.1 The CEIP was prepared taking into account the following key framework documents:

- The CEWG 61 recommendations
- The Council's Strategic Plan
- The UK Committee on Climate Change report
- The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- 4.2 It is of note that the CEIP has been aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, which have been designed and adopted by the United Nations. Embracing this framework gives us common points of reference when addressing the various actions required to deal with the climate emergency situation on a local, national and global scale.

- 4.3 The CEIP presents five main themes. These have been identified by the Council as key themes that the City must address based on the priorities outlined in the key strategic documents outlined in section 4.1. These themes are:

- Communication and Community Empowerment
- Just and Inclusive Place
- Well-connected and thriving city
- Health and wellbeing
- Green Recovery.

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- 4.4 Each of the five themes is supported by a series of ambitious actions detailed in the CEIP Action Plan.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 The Climate and Ecological emergency is undoubtedly one of the biggest challenges faced by the Council and its partners. Recent events surrounding the COVID 19 pandemic have created significant impact and disruption in our society but also offer potential opportunities to support a truly green and resilient recovery. Addressing both emergencies, will require very significant changes in the approaches taken towards policy-making, service delivery and performance management as well as key behavioural changes in our citizens.
- 5.2 The Council cannot solve this challenge alone. It must be through collaboration with all our city partners; public and private sector organisations and our communities that we tackle these enormous challenges ahead of us. This will involve the City Council taking a lead role to support and influence organisations and individuals across the city. If Glasgow is to be successful in tackling climate change and “build back better”, we have to do it together.
- 5.3 In this light, members are asked to discuss the attached Climate Emergency Implementation Plan (CEIP) and agree a series of Public Conversations should be undertaken to ensure that this response continues to be reflective of the needs of the citizens of the city and addresses the key actions required to make Glasgow a just, resilient and sustainable city.
- 5.4 The Ecological Emergency Working Group has been established to provide guidance to the City on the ecological aspects of the climate emergency. The group’s report and recommendations will be published later in 2020 and combined with this plan to provide a single source of information in response to the climate and ecological emergency.
- 5.5 Members are subsequently asked to recommend the proposed Climate Emergency Implementation Plan is referred to the City Administration Committee for approval upon completion of Public Conversations the City Administration Committee for relevant approval.

6 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial:

There are very significant implications for the ways in which the Council sets and assesses its budgets. There will be the need for new or reassigned resources to be sought in support of the implementation plan.

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Legal: There are several areas where the Council seeks to acquire and/or exercise new or existing powers in support of its proposed action, for example, this could include the setting up of a local Energy Services Company or exercising planning powers.

Personnel: There are very significant implications for the ways in which Council officers undertake standard working practices including the need to incorporate new priorities. There will be the need for some new or reassigned staff resources to be sought in support of the proposed actions under the climate emergency implementation plan and related policies.

Procurement: The Climate Emergency Implementation Plan will support a review of current procurement practices, specifically relating to sustainable and circular practices and the procuring of low carbon goods and services.

Council Strategic Plan: The proposed implementation plan specifically relates to all of the themes and priorities of the Council Strategic Plan. Themes include:

A Thriving Economy
A Vibrant City
A Healthier City
Excellent and Inclusive Education
Sustainable and Low Carbon City
Resilient and Empowered Neighbourhoods
Well Governed City that Listens and Responds

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

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

Yes. The CEIP is generally supportive of the Council's equality outcomes, specifically equality outcomes 8, 9 and 10;

8. Service users with protected characteristics are provided with targeted, improved and more accessible information about the services provided by the council family.

9. Barriers to participation in arts, learning, physical activity, learning and culture have been

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reduced for people with protected characteristics.

10. People with protected characteristics are more regularly and systematically involved in service delivery design by the Council family.

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

Positive impact – an EQIA screening has been undertaken. Climate Change impacts all of society however this can disproportionately impact on those most vulnerable communities. We must ensure that our actions minimise the negative impacts that climate change has on our most vulnerable communities, whilst also maximising their ability to participate and benefit from a just transition to a low carbon economy.

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

The Climate Emergency Implementation Plan proposes a people centered approach. Through the recommended five themes, action will be focused around the need to address the climate and ecological emergency while also bridging the gap on deep socio-economic and health inequalities in the city.

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental:

The Climate Emergency Implementation Plan seeks to enable the city to reduce its carbon emissions more rapidly and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Social, including opportunities under Article 20 of the European Public Procurement Directive:

The proposals within the Climate Emergency Implementation Plan are strongly linked to equality and social justice, with implications for the Council's community empowerment agenda.

Economic:

The plan includes proposals for a Just Transition and greening the economic development agenda.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:

No immediate impacts.

7 Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

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