



Glasgow City Council

Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring Committee

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods Regeneration and Sustainability

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ANNUAL REVIEW OF GLASGOW'S CLIMATE PLAN

Purpose of Report:

To submit a progress update on Glasgow's Climate Plan to Committee for discussion and consideration.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1) Notes the progress update of Glasgow's Climate Plan.
- 2) Requests a further update in 12 months' time.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Glasgow's [Climate Plan](#) was unanimously approved by the City Administration Committee [in June 2021](#).
- 1.2 The Plan represents a key step to address the Climate and Ecological Emergency. It outlines the City's approach, pathway, and strategic actions towards net zero carbon emissions, healthy biodiversity, and climate resilience.
- 1.3 It includes a target for the City of Glasgow to achieve Net zero carbon emissions by 2030, where any residual emissions that cannot be removed are negated by carbon sinks in the City.
- 1.4 The plan sets out the City's ambition to reduce emissions through direct mitigation, while also adapting to the impacts of climate change and addressing the ecological emergency, all of which will provide carbon offsetting opportunities, whilst improving quality of life and place for all in the City.
- 1.5 The Climate Plan adopted an iterative approach, including a commitment to undertake an annual progress review and provide an update to committee on successes, challenges, recommended additional action or support required.
- 1.6 This update report includes a summary of progress towards the City's 2030 net zero targets and the 59 strategic actions, and 5 key themes included in the plan, particularly prioritising actions planned for 2021/22, but also providing an update on longer term actions.
- 1.7 Future reports will be underpinned by information and data gathered by the newly formed Climate & Sustainability Programme Management Office (PMO) and presented via a dashboard format.

2.0 Action Plan Progress to Date

- 2.1 A full review of progress in relation to the Action Plan is found in Annex 1.
- 2.2 As stated above, the Plan includes 59 actions, across 5 key themes, these include a number of short-medium- and long-term actions and this review includes a progress RAG scoring for each:
 - 40 are currently progressed as planned and are therefore shown as Green.
 - 19 actions are currently show as Amber which reflects some progress, but not as much as planned.

- 2.3 Where actions are marked as amber, and therefore not progressing as planned, this is due to a number of factors such as lack of resources and need for external input such as regulations and guidance.
- 2.4 No actions have been identified as Red.
- 2.5 Below is a summary of key highlights and key challenges in implementing the plan in the last year. Note that these incorporate multiple actions across the five themes in the Climate Plan:
- 2.6 **Theme 1 - Communication and Community Empowerment** aims to engage communities not just on the challenges presented by our changing climate, but also the solutions, fostering meaningful participation, and collaboration, therefore enabling local action to address the climate and ecological emergency.
- 2.7 Delivering net zero is both a technical and societal challenge. According to CAST (Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations), public concern for climate change is at an all-time but there is still a general lack of awareness about some of the key changes that are required to deliver net zero.
- 2.8 Meaningful citizen engagement, therefore, plays a crucial role in raising awareness and involving citizens in the solutions, raising awareness, and promoting an understanding about why changes are happening, building consent for the changes that must occur in the next 8 years and beyond. Effective public engagement and participation can, therefore, impact the pace, scale, cost, and success of net zero delivery.
- 2.9 **Highlights include:**
- 2.10 **Education & Engagement** - COP26 was the largest gathering of world leaders in Scottish and UK history – there were 120 world leaders in attendance at the gathering which took place in the Kelvingrove Art Gallery on Monday 1 November 2021. In the lead up to and during COP26, the City Council developed positive collaborations with multiple local partners, international networks, local communities, including young people and the Scottish Government, which have lasted beyond COP, having a positive impact on the City's ability to work towards achieving our ambitious targets. The Sustainable Glasgow partnership, for example, was re-launched in early 2020 - with the impending arrival of COP26 adding both momentum and a clear timeline to its work. Such work was very much aligned with the themes of the UK Presidency for COP and continues to link closely to the Glasgow's Climate Plan and the climate goals of the Scottish Government.

- 2.11 **Theme 2 - Just and equitable City** aims to ensure that the transition to a net-zero society is a catalyst for building a fairer, healthier, prosperous, resilient, and greener city for all.
- 2.12 Supporting those most vulnerable in our communities and society through the transition to net zero and climate resilience, is not only the right thing to do, but also vital to making the political case and securing consent for sustained and bold climate action. As evidenced in research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, our lowest income communities have contributed least to the climate emergency but are facing the greatest risks from the impacts of climate change, while also being the least able to afford the costs of the transition to net zero.
- 2.13 Failing to address existing inequalities and failing to capitalise on the opportunities that a transition to net zero can bring about, can maximise not only the social benefits, but also returns on climate action investment.
- 2.14 In essence, we need a just transition to net zero to ensure that no harm will come to those on low incomes, while also eliminating these socio-economic inequalities. The just transition must consider: (1) a fair distribution of costs; (2) a just transition of the workforce and (3) equitable investment in climate adaptation and resilience measures.
- 2.15 **Highlights include:**
- 2.16 **Just Transition Working Group** – With a view to coordinating engagement with the Scottish Just Transition Commission and other national and UK stakeholders, Glasgow City Council has established a cross party Just Transition Working Group (JTWG). The working group will have its first meeting in Autumn 2022. It is proposed that the JTWG will enhance the evidence base on the implications of, and opportunities for ensuring a just transition for the City, including through a call for evidence to local stakeholders and citizens.
- 2.17 **Just Transition Skills Action Plan** - The council, in collaboration with Skills Development Scotland, developed a draft Just Transition Skills Action Plan, working with Universities, Further Education, Colleges, and climate planners from across the region.
- 2.18 **Theme 3 - Well Connected and Thriving City** aims to support the development of low-carbon retrofits and new buildings that are fit for the future, help to strengthen energy networks and support decarbonisation of transport systems by helping to improve infrastructure for walking, cycling, wheeling, and reducing the need to travel.

- 2.19 Glasgow is Scotland's renowned post-industrial city. It is the metropolitan centre of a unique and diverse regional housing system which has changed significantly over the past quarter of a century. There are unique opportunities and challenges linked to decarbonising Glasgow's built heritage and industrial legacy.
- 2.20 In addition to the above, the transport sector accounts for a third of the carbon emissions produced by the city and if we are to decarbonise the sector, major changes are required to how people move about in the city. This sector is also directly linked to health inequalities and socio-economic deprivation.
- 2.21 Glasgow is faced with a complex set of challenges in decarbonising our transport and our buildings, while also addressing deep inequalities, aware that the solutions available to us don't always address climate change, energy efficiency and fuel poverty simultaneously.
- 2.22 Thus, key to achieving the city's net zero targets, will be transformative and urgent action to decarbonise transport and buildings, particularly heat, in the city. This action will contribute to improving our built infrastructure, including domestic buildings and transport infrastructure, enabling access to affordable and warm homes, as well as good quality infrastructure for walking, cycling, wheeling, as well as access to equitable, affordable, clean and reliable public transport.
- 2.23 **Highlights include:**
- 2.24 **Net Zero Plan** – the City made some progress towards our 2030 net zero target. Acknowledging the need to accelerate and upscale action towards net zero, the City are committed to an evidence based and data driven process. With this goal in mind, the City Council secured a further £500k towards the development of a net zero feasibility study for Glasgow. This will set out a clear benchmark to measure progress against, and fundamentally set out a clear, evidence-based pathway towards achieving the systems change required for reaching Glasgow's 2030 target.
- 2.25 **Horizon Europe Mission on Climate Neutral and Smart Cities** - The City has successfully secured participation in this European Funded programme which is developing an overarching investment alongside the wider systems innovation needed to reach net zero emissions.
- 2.26 **Decarbonising Transport** - The Glasgow Transport Strategy Policy Framework was adopted in March 2022. It sets out a comprehensive framework to reduce car dependency, car vehicle kilometres and a shift towards

sustainable travel choices. A number of indicators are set out in the Policy Framework and will be monitored subject to data availability in coming years.

- 2.27 **Theme 4 - Health and Wellbeing** aims to protect and enhance local habitat connectivity and biodiversity in the city, supporting the creation and maintenance of good quality, multifunctional open space to help reconnect communities with nature, while supporting equitable access to good quality open space and green infrastructure in the city.
- 2.28 Climate change presents significant challenges to both human health and biodiversity. An increase in extreme climate events, such as heatwaves or flooding, threaten human health and wellbeing, both directly and indirectly, through impaired ecosystem functioning and reduced ecosystem services.
- 2.29 Climate change is increasingly acknowledged as a major public health issue. It has become one of the most significant contemporary challenges to health and wellbeing and could potentially be as serious, if not more so, as the Covid-19 pandemic, in its long-term impacts.
- 2.30 Simultaneously, there is evidence that quality natural environment in urban areas can affect how people feel, affecting their physical and mental health. The benefits are varied, including physical benefits from green infrastructure, for example improved air quality, reduced noise pollution and reduced risks from flooding and heatwaves, as well as benefits for recreation and interaction with nature.
- 2.31 In summary, if we look after our natural environment, it will be better equipped to look after our communities' health and wellbeing. Thus, addressing the climate and ecological emergency goes hand in hand with enhancing health and wellbeing of our local people.
- 2.32 **Highlights include:**
- 2.33 **Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL)** - The council has secured £75k funding through the Scottish Government VDL fund to carry out a viability study, cost benefit analysis, design, and statutory approvals of a 2.5ha PV Biodiversity Park on council owned land. The project hopes to secure a further £1.25m of VDL funding to deliver the project 2023/2024, with further sites planned, if successful.
- 2.34 **Local Biodiversity** – the City approved the creation of 22 additional proposed Local Nature Reserves for future designation. Furthermore, the Glasgow Green Urban Connectors project received £88,419.65 from the Biodiversity Challenge Fund (BCF) Round 3 with the project completed in March 2022. The project

involved Glasgow City Council working in collaboration with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland (RSPB Scotland), working with local volunteers and community groups in practical conservation/biodiversity enhancement activities thus providing green skills and training.

- 2.35 **Theme 5 - Green Recovery** aims to support a transition towards a circular economy, supporting tree planting and maintenance, peatland restoration, and green infrastructure, while also supporting improved infrastructure for walking, cycling and remote working.
- 2.36 Covid-19 highlighted the importance of local greenspace and the natural environment for all of us. There is a common thread running through both the Covid-19 and climate emergencies, showing the perilous disruption and imbalance between our lives and that of other planetary species and ecosystems.
- 2.37 We need revisit these relationships and fundamentally reset our place within them. This will require investing in more collaborative approaches and supporting our natural ecosystems to build future resilience. It essential that we develop action to create a more balanced relationship between us and other species, ultimately leading to a healthier, more attractive and equitable city, whilst addressing our climate and ecological emergency.
- 2.38 Protecting and improving Glasgow's natural environment is a major part of mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.
- 2.39 To help achieve this, opportunities for greening and rewilding, including tree planting and the effective use of Vacant and Derelict Land sites, will have to be implemented. In turn, helping to realise opportunities to enhance Glasgow's active travel routes, through improved green network linkages and biodiversity corridors.
- 2.40 **Highlights include:**
- 2.41 **Tree Planting** – The City and partners have planted 23,000 trees during 2021/22, including the children's woodland in collaboration with all the schools in the city and creation of five tiny forests in collaboration with NatureScot. Furthermore, work is underway to prepare a Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the City. This will be submitted to Committee for discussion and approval in 2023.
- 2.42 **Active Travel** - Progress is ongoing on delivery of an active travel network, and a new Active Travel Strategy. With a comprehensive City network of active travel infrastructure approved by the City council in March 2022.

- 2.43 **Glasgow Green Deal** – The Green Economy unit has commissioned a review of the economics and finance of the green deal to develop a high level resource mobilisation approach, identifying 7 areas for future development. It is intended for this to be further developed with elected members and presented to committee in the coming months.
- 2.44 **Circular Economy** – The council continues to work with our academic partners, Chamber of Commerce, Zero Waste Scotland, C40 cities and our local partners to transition our local economy from linear to circular, supporting policy makers and local business community in this. The council has worked with the Chamber of Commerce to provide £600k of support to the development of the Circular Economy through the Step up to Net Zero programme - this will provide 40 businesses with circularity assessments and 40 placement opportunities for young people or those changing careers to support businesses to implement them.
- 2.45 **Other highlights include:**
- 2.46 **Staff Recruitment** – Following COP26, the Sustainability Team lost 5 members of the team, having a significant impact upon the deliverability of aspects of this agenda. The team has now recruited to fill those 5 positions and added an additional 3 posts to form a Climate and Sustainability Programme Management Office to oversee the management of the pipeline of projects set to deliver on the Net Zero Carbon target. In addition, the council has appointed a Green Economy Manager, who will lead on the growth of a green economy in the city and develop a green deal for Glasgow, bringing together various funding streams to contribute to the financing of the pipeline of projects developed by the Sustainability Team and governed through the Climate & Sustainability Board. The council is in the process of recruiting a green finance unit to support the Green Economy Manager.
- 2.47 **Governance** – In addition to the PMO, a Climate & Sustainability Board has been established to provide robust and agile governance to the delivery of the Climate Plan. The board is chaired by the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Resilience and Sustainability and is comprised of directors and senior management from across the council and meets quarterly. In addition to the board, a Climate & Sustainability Scoping Group is being established to act as a funnel for all projects related to delivering on the Climate Plan, existing and new, and ensure a fully coordinated approach to delivery.

3.0 Key Challenges

- 3.1 Below is a summary of some of areas which have proven more challenging in the last year.
- 3.2 **Resources & Funding** – The council has faced pressures obtaining staff and financial resources required to bring about the scale and pace of the transformation required to reach our aspirations and targets for net zero by 2030. This can be supported through continued and strengthened partnership work, but also requires additional resources and funding to accelerate and scale up existing action and successful interventions. The council has recently filled the gaps in its sustainability team and is working on more resource and financial support.
- 3.3 **Governance and progress tracking** – key to achieving our bold targets and vision for a more sustainable, low carbon and equitable city is an effective governance mechanism. This will support implementation but, also effective progress tracking and meaningful collaboration. The establishment of the NetZero Committee and the Climate Board provides the primary structures to address this challenge.
- 3.4 **Historic Environment** - There is a need for additional work to take into consideration Historic Environment Scotland's guidelines in relation to reusing, retrofitting, and reimagining historic buildings. Aligning this approach to the Vacant and Derelict Land 'fit for function' work which is starting with spaces but should also cover VDL buildings and the buildings at risk register. This will likely be further supported in various national policies, including NPF4 and the Scottish Government's Investment Strategy. This will be supported by the Built Heritage Commission which is to be established later in 2022.

4.0 Proposed Priority Actions

- 4.1 Procure consultants and progress the **Net Zero Feasibility Study** to develop clear pathways towards the whole systems approach required ensure the delivery of the 2030 target.
- 4.2 Accelerate **heat decarbonisation and implement the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency** Strategy for the city, supporting the decarbonisation of our buildings, particularly existing buildings, ensuring that planning regulations support the technological and innovative interventions required to both achieve carbon reductions and reduce fuel poverty in the city, contributing to reducing the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis currently experienced nationally.

- 4.3 Implement the **Climate Adaptation Plan** and seek to combine it into the Glasgow Climate Plan, thus having one over-arching Climate Plan for the City.
- 4.4 **Forestry and Woodland Strategy** - develop and adopt the strategy, including considerations given to offsetting capacity for residual emissions, flood risk reduction and cooling to help address the impacts of increased temperatures measures, while providing biodiversity and habitat connectivity and opportunities for leisure and play. Allocation of adequate funding and resources will be key for its effective implementation, including long term maintenance and stewardship considerations.
- 4.5 Roll out **Climate Conversations** to enable meaningful citizen participation in climate change decision making and, perhaps most importantly, stimulate local action to address the climate and ecological emergency.
- 4.6 Progress and support **Just Transition Working Group** to implement the recommendations of the Just Transition Commission, **facilitating a just transition to a net zero and climate resilient city**. This includes continuing to collaborate with local and national partners to develop and invest in the skills required to achieve the net zero target for the city, ensuring that local communities and businesses can both participate in and benefit from that transformation.

5.0 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

- Financial:* There will be financial implications to fund the delivery of the actions proposed in Glasgow's Climate Plan. Funding may be required to support studies and research, support action on the ground, as well as communications and capacity building activities.
- Legal:* The delivery of this plan strongly supports the requirement to fulfil the Public Bodies Duties on Climate Change under Climate Change (Scotland) Act (2009)
- Personnel:* There may be resource impacts as actions are developed and passed onto the appropriate areas within the council family for delivery/stewardship.
- Procurement:* There are likely to be procurement implications associated with actions proposed both for developing guidance and policy and potentially

procuring services such as consultancy from academic institutions.

Council Strategic Plan: A Sustainable and Low Carbon City

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.

Yes, the plan aims to ensure that those citizens most vulnerable, due to their socio-economic circumstances or geographical location, are not disproportionately affected by climate impacts or left behind in the transition to a net zero society.

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

The action proposed in Climate Plan will deliver positive equality impacts. The Plan aims to address the impacts of climate change and ensure not only that those most vulnerable in our society are not disproportionately disadvantaged by the costs of the transition to a net zero economy, but also that they don't bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change.

The Plan will continue to work towards meaningful engagement with communities in the City, specifically young people, disability groups, women and residents in geographic areas worst affected by flood or overheating who may at times be disproportionately affected by climate impacts or are likely to bear the costs of interventions disproportionately.

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

Place Based Climate Action is known to provide multiple wider benefits, it supports action to address environmental loss, improve quality of place, helps to reduce socio economic inequalities, and supporting economic prosperity. The Climate Plan has people and a just transition at its core.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

Yes, the proposal supports Glasgow's Climate Plan's ambition to achieve a net zero carbon and climate resilient City, by adopting a more open and transparent approach to monitoring and communicating progress. In particular it addresses action within Theme 1, but provides

and update on all themes and related actions within the plan.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

The Plan focusses on addressing the climate and ecological emergency, supporting the delivery of the 2030 net zero carbon target.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

No data protection or privacy implications.

6.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1) Notes the progress update of Glasgow's Climate Plan.
- 2) Requests a further update in 12 months' time.