

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 28 February 2024

Chair:

Councillor Mark McGeever

Councillors Present:

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Ralph Barker, Councillor Walter Brogan (*substitute for Councillor Mo Razzaq*), Councillor Maureen Chalmers, Councillor Ross Clark, Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Colin Dewar, Councillor Ross Gowland, Councillor Gavin Keatt, Councillor Richard Lockhart, Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Julia Marrs, Councillor Lesley McDonald, Councillor Elaine McDougall, Councillor Carol Nugent, Councillor Kirsten Robb (Depute), Councillor John Ross, Councillor Graham Scott, Councillor Helen Toner, Councillor Kirsty Williams

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Joe Fagan (ex officio), Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, Councillor Ross Lambie, Councillor Monique McAdams, Councillor Mo Razzaq, Councillor Bert Thomson, Councillor Margaret B Walker

Attending:

Community and Enterprise Resources

J Birkin, Biodiversity Officer; A Brown, Head of Enterprise and Sustainable Development; F Carlin, Head of Planning and Regulatory Services; K Carr, Head of Facilities, Waste and Grounds; C Park, Head of Roads, Transportation and Fleet Services; C Reid, Grounds Manager; A Wallace, Sustainability Adviser; M Wilkie, Performance and Policy Development Manager

Education Resources

L Sherry, Head of Education (Support Service and School Estate)

Finance and Corporate Resources

K McLeod, Administration Assistant; S Somerville, Administration Manager

Housing and Technical Resources

J Forbes, Head of Property Services; J Smith, Strategy Team Leader (Built Environment)

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee held on 29 November 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy Action Plan Quarter 2 Progress Report

A report dated 8 February 2024 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted on the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy (SDCCS) Action Plan Quarter 2 Progress Report 2022/2023, for the period 1 April to 30 September 2023.

The Council's SDCCS covered a 5-year period from 2022 to 2027. Delivery of actions within the Strategy provided the main focus for sustainable development activity over the period and enabled the Council to fulfil its duties under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and other associated environmental legislation.

The SDCCS Action Plan for 2023/2024 contained 21 performance measures towards the Strategy's outcomes, together with 111 improvement actions. The measures were rated using a traffic light system of green, amber or red, while the improvement actions were rated using green, amber or red as well as blue, which indicated that an action had been completed. Of the 21 measures within the SDCCS:-

- ◆ 2 had been achieved or were on course to be achieved (green)
- ◆ 1 had minor slippage against timescale or minor shortfall against target (amber)
- ◆ 4 would be reported later when data was available
- ◆ 14 were contextual and provided a health check for South Lanarkshire

Of the 111 improvement actions within the SDCCS:-

- ◆ 8 had been completed (blue)
- ◆ 80 had been achieved or were on course to be achieved (green)
- ◆ 8 had seen some minor slippage against targets (amber)
- ◆ 15 would be reported later when data was available

For the 8 amber improvement measures that had minor slippage, 6 related to revision of timescales for the delivery of associated plans, guides and strategies. One action's categorisation related to the Council-wide website redesign currently under review. The final one related to the slight delay in implementation of a new app in schools which was now due later in the month.

Progress on all objectives, actions and measures were contained in the Quarter 2 performance report for 2023/2024, attached as an appendix to the report.

Officers responded to members' questions in relation to the following:-

- ◆ the percentage of trips made by bike
- ◆ a study undertaken by a PHD student
- ◆ the Council's carbon footprint feasibility studies
- ◆ managing and monitoring food waste in schools
- ◆ Active Travel funding
- ◆ plans for progressing net zero

The Head of Roads, Transportation and Fleet Services gave an undertaking to share a link to a website called uSmart which provided cycling and walking count data across the country. This data was collected from a network of counters, including those in South Lanarkshire.

The Committee decided: that the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy Action Plan Quarter 2 Progress Report 2022/2023 be noted.

4 Good Food Strategy Update – Q2 2023/2024

A report dated 8 February 2024 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted on the Good Food Strategy actions and measures at Quarter 2 of 2023/2024.

The Good Food Strategy had been approved by the Executive Committee on 4 December 2019 and covered a 5 year period from 2020 to 2025. It set out outcomes and actions organised around 6 key themes as follows:-

- ◆ good food at home and in the community
- ◆ good food in the public sector
- ◆ good food economy
- ◆ good food growing
- ◆ good food for the environment
- ◆ good food governance

The Good Food Strategy contained an action plan which set out specific actions to progress the objectives in the Strategy. It contained 22 performance measures towards the Strategy's outcomes, together with 17 improvement actions. The measures were rated using a traffic light system of green, amber or red while the improvement actions were rated using green, amber or red as well as blue, which indicated that an action had been completed. Of the 22 measures within the Strategy:-

- ◆ 12 had been achieved or were on course to be achieved (green)
- ◆ 10 would be reported later when data was available

Of the 17 improvement actions within the Strategy:-

- ◆ 17 had been achieved or were on course to be achieved (green)

No measures or improvement actions had seen major slippage against timescale or major shortfall against target.

Progress on all objectives, actions and measures was detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 20 September 2023 (Paragraph 5)]

5 The Biodiversity Strategy (2024 to 2030) and Biodiversity Duty Implementation Plan (2024 to 2026)

A report dated 8 February 2024 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted on the Council's new Biodiversity Strategy and Biodiversity Duty Implementation Plan (BDIP) as required under the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011.

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 placed a duty on public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity. The Biodiversity Strategy and BDIP set out how the Council and the biodiversity partnership would contribute to the targets set out in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and identify priorities for action.

The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 required every public body in Scotland to produce a publicly available report on compliance with the biodiversity duty. This must be completed every 3 years. The latest biodiversity duty report had been approved by this Committee on 29 November 2023 and submitted to the Scottish Government thereafter.

The Council's previous Biodiversity Strategy covered the period 2018 to 2022. A summary of achievements and key actions against strategic objectives was presented in Appendix 1.

The new Strategy, covering the period 2024 to 2030 and aligned with guidance from the Scottish Government, was attached as Appendix 2 to the report. Direct Council delivery of the biodiversity duty was managed and monitored through the Council's BDIP which was attached as Appendix 3 to the report.

The new Strategy took a long-term approach to ecosystem conservation and restoration, with short and medium-term actions contributing towards the long-term aims and overall vision of the Strategy. The ecosystems identified in South Lanarkshire were:-

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| ◆ freshwater and wetland | ◆ upland |
| ◆ lowland and farmland | ◆ urban |
| ◆ peatland | ◆ woodland |

The Strategy also considered the following cross-cutting themes:-

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| ◆ key sites | ◆ climate change |
| ◆ invasive non-native species (INNS) | ◆ people and nature |
| ◆ soils and geology | |

Officers responded to members' questions in relation to the:-

- ◆ Ash Dieback Recovery Plan
- ◆ Nature Restoration Fund and potential projects, subject to receipt of funding
- ◆ review of grassland management

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the summary of achievements and key actions from the Biodiversity Strategy 2018 to 2022 be noted;
- (2) that the Biodiversity Strategy, covering the period 2024 to 2030, be approved; and
- (3) that the Biodiversity Duty Implementation Plan (BDIP), covering the period 2024 to 2026, be approved and submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 March 2024.

[Reference: Minutes of 29 November 2023 (Paragraph 3)]

6 Update on Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy

A report dated 8 February 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted providing an update on progress with the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) and the stakeholder and public consultation.

The development of an LHEES brought together key priorities around the reduction of carbon emissions, improvement of domestic and non-domestic building stock and the need for a reduction in fuel poverty.

In May 2022, the LHEES (Scotland) Order placed a duty on local authorities to prepare, publish and update an LHEES Delivery Plan.

The South Lanarkshire LHEES complemented and supported the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy 2022 to 2027. It was a long-term strategic framework for the improvement of the energy efficiency of buildings in South Lanarkshire, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the heating of buildings.

The public consultation on the LHEES would run for an 8-week period, concluding on 10 April 2024. Following the consultation period and amendment of the Strategy and Delivery Plan to reflect comments received, the LHEES Strategy and Delivery Plan would be submitted to the Executive Committee in June 2024 for approval.

Once approved, the LHEES Strategy and Delivery Plan would be published as separate documents on the Council's website.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the update on progress made to date on the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) be noted;
- (2) that the consultation period for the LHEES be noted; and
- (3) that it be noted that the final LHEES would be submitted to the Executive Committee on 26 June 2024 for approval.

Councillor Anderson left the meeting during this item of business

7 Education Resources' Sustainability Report

A report dated 8 February 2024 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on activities ongoing within Education Resources since the last report on 10 February 2021.

In 2021, a Youth Forum on Climate Change and Sustainability was established with representation from all 19 secondary schools, including Additional Support Needs (ASN). The Forum was chaired by the young people and supported by education officers. Its purpose was to allow young people to:-

- ◆ discuss and exchange views on issues which mattered to them
- ◆ enhance the reach of their voice and opinions over time across a wider community partnership
- ◆ influence change within the Council in the way in which it discharged its responsibilities
- ◆ influence the wider school community in learning more about climate change and affecting a positive change in behaviours

Examples of how young people had used their voice to influence others and shape decision-making were given in Section 4 of the report. Section 5 outlined other work undertaken within the Resource, schools or within the wider community to promote climate change and sustainability issues.

Renewed focus on Scotland's Learning for Sustainability Action Plan, officially launched in December 2023, would be taken forward by officers and would form part of the suite of materials available to schools to support curriculum planning and development across all areas, including sustainability.

The funding for the fixed term Primary Science and Sustainability Development Officer post would end in June 2024, however, funding had been identified to allow the post to continue until March 2025. Money allocated from the Council's Climate Emergency Fund had been used to support the administration of the Youth Forum meetings, the newsroom hub, the secondary school waste recycling pilot, primary school food waste project and the JUMP app recently launched and being piloted in 4 secondary schools.

The Head of Education (Support Service and School Estate) responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report and advised that she would raise with the Youth Forum the potential for them to present at a future meeting of this Committee.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the contents of the report relating to the range of activities across Education Resources be noted; and
- (2) that the continued steps for further activity be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 10 February 2021 (Paragraph 8)]

8 Community Climate Action in South Lanarkshire

A report dated 8 February 2024 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted providing an update on community climate action initiatives taking place in South Lanarkshire which had been supported by the Council.

Empowering communities to take action and be more environmentally sustainable was one of the Council's priority actions in its Climate Change Strategy 2022 to 2027.

In June 2022, the Council recruited a Sustainable Communities Engagement Officer for a period of 2 years. The officer had been involved in a number of initiatives aimed at supporting engagement on climate and sustainability focused issues in communities across South Lanarkshire.

Section 5 of the report provided an update in relation to the following key projects and community climate action case studies:-

- ◆ ONECAN Community Climate Conference
- ◆ Bee Line to Nature Project
- ◆ Lanarkshire Regional Climate Hub

Several additional case studies of community climate action ongoing within South Lanarkshire in 2023/2024 were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Climate Change had been added to the list of permanent communications campaigns for the Council. Between February and December 2023, there were 178 social media posts and 29 South Lanarkshire View articles. In addition, a 17-day Communities Sustainable Development Goals campaign ran on the Council's social media channels in the lead up to the Community Planning Partnership's Nature and Climate Event on 24 October 2023.

The fixed-term 2-year Sustainable Communities Engagement Officer post would come to an end in June 2024, however, Community Climate Action would continue to be supported through the relaunch of Community Climate Grants and it was anticipated that communities would continue to engage in climate action through the Climate Hub.

The Committee decided: that the content of the report be noted.

9 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.