

# CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 15 May 2024

## **Chair:**

Councillor Mark McGeever

## **Councillors Present:**

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

## **Councillors' Apologies:**

Councillor Joe Fagan (ex officio), Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, Councillor Monique McAdams

## **Attending:**

### **Community and Enterprise Resources**

D Booth, Executive Director; A Brown, Head of Enterprise and Sustainable Development; C Park, Head of Roads, Transportation and Fleet Services; K McCafferty, Sustainable Development Officer (Funding); A Wallace, Sustainability Adviser; M Wilkie, Performance and Policy Development Manager

### **Finance and Corporate Resources**

K McLeod, Administration Assistant; S Somerville, Administration Manager

### **Housing and Technical Resources**

G McParland, Property Manager (Assets and Estates); J Read, Strategy and Policy Advisor; J Smith, Strategy Team Leader (Built Environment); S Turner, Section Leader (Legislative)

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## **1 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

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## **2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee held on 28 February 2024 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

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## **3 Good Food Strategy Update – Q4 2023/2024**

A report dated 24 April 2024 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted on the Good Food Strategy actions and measures at Quarter 4 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:-

- ◆ 4 actions were complete (blue)
- ◆ 12 had been achieved or were on course to be achieved (green)
- ◆ 1 had minor slippage against timescale or minor shortfall against target (amber)

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 Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) gave an undertaking to respond to members' questions in relation to:-

- ◆ what the Council's percentage spend was on Fairtrade products
- ◆ what checks were undertaken to ensure allotments were utilised and details of contractual arrangements put in place
- ◆ the frequency of checks to ensure food businesses were compliant with food safety statutory requirements

**The Committee decided:** that the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 28 February 2024 (Paragraph 4)]*

*Councillors Cooper and Dewar joined the meeting during consideration of the above item of business*

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#### **4 Carbon Management Interim Update 2023/2024**

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A report dated 24 April 2024 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted providing an update on the mid-year position with respect to South Lanarkshire Council's carbon emissions for 2023/2024.

The Scottish Government had set climate targets within legislation to reduce all greenhouse gas emissions Scotland-wide by 75% by 2030, 90% by 2040 and a total reduction from the 1990 baseline by 2045.

Following the Scotland's Climate Change Committee's annual report indicating that the Scottish Government would not meet its statutory 2030 goal to reduce emissions by 75%, the Scottish Government had announced that the 2030 target and annual carbon targets would be replaced with a system measuring emissions every 5 years.

To align the Council's carbon management reporting with the Public Sector Climate Change Duties Compliance report, going forward all Council carbon management related reports would categorise the Council's corporate emissions as Scope 1 (direct emissions), Scope 2 (energy indirect) or Scope 3 (other direct emissions).

Figure 1, at paragraph 4.2 of the report, provided an overview of the scope of the Council's carbon footprint and which category those aligned with.

The Council's interim 2023/2024 carbon emissions from April to September 2023 were detailed and compared with the same corresponding period for 2022/2023. Those figures demonstrated that an overall reduction of 4.49% had been achieved so far for 2023/2024 Scope 1 to 3 emissions, and 8.08% had been achieved for Scope 1 emissions. The reasons for those reductions were detailed.

Discussions had taken place across Resources to establish achievable carbon reduction targets for 2024/2025. Based on the information, it was proposed that a percentage reduction target was not set for 2024/2025 and, instead, the Council should continue to aim to reduce as much as possible compared with the previous year.

While the Council had a zero direct emissions target by 2038, it did not have a route map in place to achieve this target. This route map was now being developed and a series of reports would be produced which would form the basis for it.

In addition, it was expected that the new Climate Intelligence Service (CIS) would provide a joint approach to councils meeting Scotland's national commitment to net zero by 2045.

Furthermore, the Enterprise and Sustainable Development Service was looking to undertake a feasibility study on energy and income generating opportunities for the Council through renewable technologies.

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

**The Committee decided:** that the mid-year position in relation to the Council's carbon emissions for the year 2023/2024, as detailed in paragraph 5.2 of the report, be noted.

*Councillor Toner joined the meeting during consideration of the above item of business*

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## **5 Non-Domestic Buildings - Net Zero Feasibilities**

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A report dated 24 April 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted providing an update on:-

- ◆ the outcome of 7 feasibility studies, conducted to assess the investment required to achieve national net zero standards for the Council's primary school and wet leisure estate
- ◆ the estimate of total capital investment required to meet national net zero standards for the council's non-domestic property estate based on the outcome of the feasibility studies

Through the proposed Heat in Building's Bill, currently under development, the Scottish Government intended to legislate for non-domestic buildings in the public sector to be using clean heating systems by the end of 2038. This meant that no Council building would be permitted to burn fossil fuels to generate energy for heating or hot water systems. Currently, just under 300 of the Council's non-domestic properties were heated using fossil fuels.

To better understand the practical challenges and financial implications from this proposed legislation, Housing and Technical Resources undertook a range of feasibility studies across the Council's non-domestic estate, aiming to quantify what would be required to achieve net zero within those building types.

Four primary schools and 3 wet leisure properties were selected, with the intention to cover a range of build contractor, geographical location and year of construction. In total, those property types accounted for approximately 48% of carbon emissions from all the Council's non housing buildings.

Table 2 in the report provided a summary of the outcomes, combining the results for all 4 schools. Table 3 combined the results for the 3 wet leisure facilities. This suggested that significant energy and carbon reductions could be achieved by investing in the measures identified in Table 1 in sequence. However, operational cost reductions, which would typically be used to financially appraise investment decisions, were far less significant.

The findings from those 7 feasibility studies were extrapolated across the Council's non housing estate to estimate the level of investment required to transition those properties towards net zero. The result of this exercise suggested around £927 million of capital investment would be required at 2023 prices for the existing non-housing portfolio.

The Council had a fabric first approach to improving the energy efficiency of its non-domestic buildings which aimed to reduce energy consumption, leading to reduced operating costs and lower carbon emissions. Due to the capital costs and running cost increases from currently available clean heating systems, the Council did not have a programme for the replacement of its fossil fuel system across its non-domestic estate at present.

The outcomes of the feasibility studies and modelling for the council's other non-domestic properties would be incorporated into the South Lanarkshire Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy, subject to approval at Executive Committee on 26 June 2024.

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

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the outcome from the feasibility studies completed be noted;
- (2) that it be noted that, based on the outcome of the feasibility studies, the updated estimate of total capital investment that would be required to achieve national net zero standards was £927million;
- (3) that it be noted that the Scottish Government intended to legislate that all non-domestic buildings in the public sector should be using clean heating systems by 2038 which would require the Council to replace fossil fuel heating systems at around 300 properties; and
- (4) that the Council's existing fabric first approach around retrofit investment decisions be noted.

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## 6 Energy Demand Reduction Plan Update

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A report dated 24 April 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted providing an update on the work undertaken to date on the development of an Energy Demand Reduction Plan, contained within the motion approved by the Council on 7 December 2022 entitled 'Cut Fuel Bills, Cut Carbon Emissions, Kick Start the Green Economy'.

An analysis of the total energy use in the non-domestic estate was undertaken which identified the properties with the highest energy consumption. Leisure facilities, secondary schools, homes for the elderly and nursery schools were omitted from the exercise for various reasons, as outlined in the report. Following the analysis, where it was safe to do so, a temperature reduction of 1°C was implemented in buildings.

In order to test the concept, a pilot had commenced in 30 buildings across the Council's non-domestic buildings estate to monitor the energy consumption over a 6-month period prior to rolling out to other facilities.

An update was provided on action taken on the following areas:

- ◆ energy champions
- ◆ energy audits
- ◆ vacant properties
- ◆ Central Energy Efficiency Fund

It was also intended:-

- ◆ that the heating season be reduced to commence from 1 October and run until 31 March each year, however, this would be weather dependent
- ◆ that the current pilot be extended to identify an Energy Champion on each site with responsibility for ensuring that energy use was limited, where possible, and promoting changes in behaviour
- ◆ to work with teachers and pupils on school sites regarding education on energy use
- ◆ to develop a staff behavioural change programme in relation to energy awareness
- ◆ to engage with IT Services to ensure that PC shutdown software was in place across the Council's estate
- ◆ to ensure continuous monitoring and management of energy use

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report, including communications and promotion of practical tips to save energy.

### **The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the update on progress made to date on the Energy Demand Reduction Plan and the proposed action going forward be noted; and
- (2) that the actions detailed in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 14 June 2023 (Paragraph 3) and Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 7 December 2022 (Paragraph 16)]*

*Councillor Toner left the meeting during consideration of the above item of business*

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## **7 Scottish Government Consultations on the Social Housing Net Zero Standard in Scotland and Heat in Buildings Bill**

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A report dated 25 April 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted providing:-

- ◆ an overview of 2 recent Scottish Government consultations on a proposed new net zero standard for social housing and the new Heat in Buildings Bill
- ◆ a summary of the Council's response to the consultations, submitted to the Scottish Government on 8 March 2024

In 2021, the Scottish Government published a Heat in Buildings Strategy which committed to:-

- ◆ review the existing standards for improving energy efficiency within social housing across Scotland
- ◆ introduce new legislation to phase out the need to install new or replacement fossil fuel boilers across all domestic and non-domestic buildings in Scotland, while also requiring building owners to improve the energy efficiency of buildings to help achieve net zero targets

Consultations on each of those commitments were launched by the Scottish Government in early 2024 and an overview and summary of the Council's responses to both was provided.

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

### **The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the overview of the consultations on the proposed new net zero standard for social housing and Heat in Buildings Bill be noted; and
- (2) that the summary of the Council's response to each consultation be noted.

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## **8 Urgent Business**

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There were no items of urgent business.