

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 14 June 2023

Chair:

Councillor Mark McGeever

Councillors Present:

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor Ralph Barker, Councillor Janine Calikes, Councillor Maureen Chalmers, Councillor Ross Clark, Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Colin Dewar, Councillor Elise Frame (*substitute for Councillor John Anderson*), Councillor Ross Gowland, Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, 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 Margaret B Walker

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Joe Fagan (ex officio), Councillor Monique McAdams, Councillor Bert Thomson

Attending:

Community and Enterprise Resources

D Booth, Executive Director; K Allan, Sustainable Development Officer; A Brown, Head of Enterprise and Sustainable Development; F Carlin, Head of Planning and Regulatory Services; T Finn, Planning and Building Standards Manager (Headquarters); C Park, Head of Roads, Transportation and Fleet Services; G Simpson, Development Adviser

Housing and Technical Resources

J Forbes, Head of Property Services; J Read, Strategy and Policy Advisor

Finance and Corporate Resources

J Davitt, Public Relations Team Leader; P MacRae, Administration Adviser; K McLeod, Administration Assistant

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 26 April 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3 Update on South Lanarkshire Council Motion to 'Cut Fuel Bills, Cut Carbon Emissions, Kick Start the Green Economy'

A joint report dated 25 May 2023 by the Executive Directors (Housing and Technical Resources) and (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted on progress in relation to the motion considered by the Council on 7 December 2022 entitled 'Cut Fuel Bills, Cut Carbon Emissions, Kick Start the Green Economy'.

At its meeting on 7 December 2022, the Council approved a motion for Council services to consider opportunities to further improve energy efficiency and sustainability standards within its domestic and non-domestic estates. The motion included a range of actions for improving energy efficiency with the aim of:-

- ◆ saving money for front line services
- ◆ reducing the Council's risk regarding future energy price increases
- ◆ cutting carbon emissions
- ◆ improving wellbeing
- ◆ reducing fuel poverty
- ◆ kick starting the green economy

The motion comprised the following 3 sections:-

- ◆ produce an energy demand reduction plan for Council buildings
- ◆ adopt the highest standards of energy efficiency for all South Lanarkshire Council funded building projects and in the forthcoming Residential Design Guide
- ◆ actions to kick start the local green economy

An update on progress had been provided on the various actions in relation to the above sections of the motion.

It was proposed to provide further reports on progress made in relation to all aspects of the motion as well as local and national developments being implemented. This included the next Local Development Plan and the new statutory requirements for the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy.

The Council would continue to maximise opportunities to enhance sustainability within its new domestic and non-domestic buildings within the budget parameters available and through identifying appropriate external funding opportunities.

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

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the update on progress to the South Lanarkshire Council motion to 'Cut Fuel Bills, Cut Carbon Emissions, Kick Start the Green Economy' be noted; and
- (2) that the proposal to provide further updates on progress in relation to the motion and wider regulatory or legislative changes in this area be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 7 December 2022 (Paragraph 16)]

4 Area Wide Emissions Route Map

A report dated 25 May 2023 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted on consultancy work carried out in respect of area wide carbon emissions.

A successful application had been made to the Council's Climate Emergency Fund for £35,000 to appoint an industry expert to advise on how to measure and reduce area wide carbon emissions in South Lanarkshire. Following competitive tender, Aether Limited had been appointed. As part of the scope of the works, 2 workshops were held to inform Aether's final report, the first involving internal stakeholders and the second with external stakeholders. The list of invited attendees and participants was provided at Appendix 1. Officers confirmed that East Kilbride Housing Association had attended the stakeholder engagement.

The project brief detailed that the final report should:-

- ◆ identify and baseline the biggest contributors to South Lanarkshire's emissions
- ◆ outline the scale of reduction required to meet net zero by 2045
- ◆ provide details of cost effective, carbon effective and transformational action required to meet net zero
- ◆ outline the Council's scope of influence to reduce emissions through its regulatory powers and policies

The final report would provide the foundation for area wide emissions reduction.

The full report produced by Aether Limited was attached as Appendix 3 to the report and key messages included:-

- ◆ the biggest contributors to area wide emissions were from transport (31%) and domestic energy (31%)
- ◆ the scale of action required for area wide emissions reduction was extensive
- ◆ the timeframe for meeting national net zero targets was unachievable within current levels of resourcing
- ◆ the potential for the Council to use its powers of influence and policy was extensive
- ◆ the proportion of the area's carbon footprint which came from Council services was minimal
- ◆ engagement with local businesses, developers, organisations and communities was key to future area wide emissions reduction
- ◆ the potential for local businesses to invest in Council led offsetting opportunities was significant but the appetite for this was unknown
- ◆ examples of good practice in other Scottish local authority areas could be used to inform how South Lanarkshire could reduce area wide emissions

The report could be used to engage and work with wider stakeholders to plan and develop emissions reduction projects and actions to best assist in South Lanarkshire achieving net zero by 2045.

Next steps in reducing area wide emissions were detailed in Appendix 3 to the report and included:-

- ◆ agreement, subject to clarity on who had primary duty, on how to engage with key stakeholders and involve them in area wide emissions reduction
- ◆ agreement, in conjunction with key stakeholders, on set targets for area wide emissions reduction
- ◆ consideration of how to link area wide emissions reduction with the Net Zero Town project and Town Centre Visioning project and other key Council strategies, policies and projects
- ◆ ensuring that due consideration was given to climate justice and that the transition to net zero did not exacerbate poverty or inequalities

There followed a discussion during which officers:-

- ◆ responded to members' questions
- ◆ undertook to update members in the Clydesdale area in respect of the Clydesdale Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the progress on baselining area wide carbon emissions be noted; and

- (2) that the proposed next steps to reduce area wide carbon emissions, as detailed in the report, be approved.

5 The Role of Planning and Building Standards

A report dated 24 May 2023 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted on recent changes to national spatial planning policy and Building Regulations and the role of the Planning and Building Standards Service in delivering the Council's climate change and sustainability ambitions.

Specific measures had recently been implemented by the Scottish Government to assist in achieving climate change and nature targets, together with the decarbonisation of homes and buildings. Those included:-

- ◆ changes to the Building Regulations in February 2023 covering energy performance, overheating and ventilation for new buildings
- ◆ adoption of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), also in February 2023, which represented the national spatial strategy for Scotland to 2045
- ◆ further changes, introduced on 5 June 2023, involving a requirement for electric vehicle charging to serve new buildings and those subject to major renovation

Those changes had been anticipated during the preparation of the Council's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy 2022 to 2027 and several of the priorities in the associated action plan reflected the role of the Planning and Building Standards Service in delivery of the Strategy.

Details were given on:-

- ◆ the main changes to the Building Regulations
- ◆ the aim and outcomes of NPF4
- ◆ the overarching principle of NPF4, which was to ensure that future places would be net zero and nature positive, designed to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change as well as protecting, enhancing and restoring the natural environment

Details were also given on future actions for the Planning and Building Standards Service in delivering climate change and sustainability including:-

- ◆ work on the Local Development Plan 3 (LDP3), taking account of NPF4 as well as the Council's Community Plan
- ◆ incorporating Scottish Government Guidance into the preparation of the LDP using evidence to develop policy options which would reduce climate change causing emissions and support adaptation while promoting nature recovery and restoration
- ◆ preparation of the Open Space Strategy (OSS)
- ◆ a review of the existing Residential Guide incorporating a joint planning and building standards approach to the design and layout of new housing sites to ensure energy efficiency and net zero emissions as an integral part of the process

Officers responded to members' questions on the report.

The Committee decided: that the information contained in the report in terms of national spatial planning policy and Building Regulations, together with details of the role of the Planning and Building Standards Service in delivering the Council's climate change and sustainability ambitions, be noted.

6 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.