

Report

Report to:	Climate Change and Sustainability Committee
Date of Meeting:	31 August 2022
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy 2017–2022 Achievements Report
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ update the Committee on some key achievements of the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy 2017-2022

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the achievements of the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy 2017-2022 be noted.

3. Background

3.1. The Council's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy (SDCCS) that covered a five-year period, 2017 to 2022, was approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 6 December 2017. The Strategy set out outcomes and actions organised around three sustainable development themes:-

- ♦ Sustainable Council
- ♦ Sustainable Environment
- ♦ Sustainable Communities

3.2. Delivery of actions within the Strategy provided the focus for the Council's sustainable development activity and also enabled the Council to fulfil its duties under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and the Council's contribution to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

3.3. The sustainable development and climate change agenda has progressed over recent years. The Scottish Government declared a Climate Emergency in May 2019 following a special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2018. This is an acknowledgement that we need to take urgent action on the causes and impacts of climate change. The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 was amended by the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, increasing the ambition of Scotland's emissions reduction targets to net zero by 2045. In response to the new net zero target, the Climate Change Plan 2018-2032 was updated in 2020 setting new policies and milestones.

4. Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy 2017-2022 Update

- 4.1. The Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy (2017–2022) set out the Council’s approach to sustainable development and addressed the challenges and opportunities of climate change. It had three main themes (Sustainable Council, Sustainable Environment, Sustainable Communities) and eight outcome areas as outlined below:-

Sustainable Council

Outcome 1.1	The Council’s carbon emissions are managed and reduced
Outcome 1.2	The Council is environmentally responsible in the procurement, use and disposal of resources
Outcome 1.3	Climate change mitigation and adaptation are further embedded in service delivery and partnership working

Sustainable Environment

Outcome 2.1	South Lanarkshire’s natural environment is protected, enhanced and respected
Outcome 2.2	South Lanarkshire’s enhanced environment provides health and wellbeing benefits to local communities

Sustainable Communities

Outcome 3.1	Homes and communities are energy efficient, environmentally sustainable, and fuel poverty is minimised
Outcome 3.2	The Council’s strategies plans and policies support communities in reducing carbon emissions and adapting to a changing climate
Outcome 3.3	Local communities are supported in taking action to be more environmentally responsible

- 4.2. The Strategy has been successful in embedding climate change action and sustainability into all Resources’ and Services’ delivery. Its five-year term has now ended, and it has been updated with a new Strategy, covering the period 2022-2027, which was approved by South Lanarkshire Council at its meeting on 15 June 2022. The new Strategy builds on the success and key achievements from the previous Strategy. Some of the key achievements, over the last 5 years are outlined below. These include, although not limited to:-

4.2.1. Sustainable Council

Outcome 1.1: The Council’s carbon emissions are managed and reduced.

- ◆ We reduced our carbon footprint by 50% between 2017 and 2021. This reduction is partly due to changes to service provision throughout 2020 and 2021 because of Covid, but also due to a sustained and successful effort to reduce energy and fuel consumption and implement more energy and fuel-efficient technologies. This has included an ambitious street lighting replacement programme which saw all lanterns replaced with LED. This reduction in our carbon footprint builds on earlier successes when we reduced our carbon emissions by 28% over the period 2005 to 2017.
- ◆ The Council’s vehicle emissions have continued to fall, and it is on target to replace the entire fleet of diesel/petrol cars and small vans with fully electric vehicles by the end of 2024. 28% of the car and small van fleet (202 of 711) are now fully electric.
- ◆ Central Energy Efficiency Fund (CEEF) projects have progressed including upgrading of LED lights within principal offices.

- ◆ We now have Solar Photovoltaic Panels (PVs) on 63 council buildings with an estimated annual electricity generation of 1.2 million kWh.

Outcome 1.2: The Council is environmentally responsible in the procurement, use and disposal of resources.

- ◆ Several single-use plastic items were removed from the procurement catalogues in accordance with the EU directive banning certain single-use items (including plastic cutlery, straws and cups).
- ◆ There has been a consolidation of purchase orders to reduce deliveries to establishments which has resulted in reducing mileage travelled across the council and a reduction in carbon emissions.
- ◆ Hamilton Grammar School's Young Enterprise Company, Revitalise, were supported in selling personalised reusable water bottles in a bid to reduce single use water bottles. Revitalise also won the Lanarkshire Regional "Company of the Year" Award in April 2020.
- ◆ We have reduced embodied carbon in the construction of our road network through reducing volumes of new construction materials and reduction in lorry movements; some of the different methods have included in-situ recycling processes such as 'retread' and trialling the use alternative materials – for instance used tyre bales in the road formation.

Outcome 1.3: Climate change mitigation and adaptation are further embedded in service delivery and partnership working.

- ◆ Following the UK and Scottish Government's declaration of a climate emergency we established a Climate Change and Sustainability Committee in 2020 to oversee and make strategic decisions on how to accelerate the pace and scale of action needed in response to the climate emergency.
- ◆ The Council established a fund that supports work in relation to the climate emergency. The £2m investment fund enables the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee to prioritise match funding for external funding applications that contributes to tackling climate change.
- ◆ The Council is a member of Climate Ready Clyde, which is a regional partnership that has developed the first Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Glasgow City Region. The Strategy aims to ensure Glasgow City Region's economy, society and environment is not only prepared for, but continues to flourish in the face of the impacts arising from the climate crisis. [Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan \(climatereadyclyde.org.uk\)](https://climatereadyclyde.org.uk)
- ◆ The Council was a core partner in the Green Heat in Greenspace project which was led by Greenspace Scotland. This project was set up to identify and quantify specific opportunities in green and blue spaces within urban settlements across Scotland to support low carbon heat solutions (heat pumps and district heating networks). This project was primarily focusing on solutions for decarbonising the public sector.
- ◆ Community Planning Partners across Lanarkshire joined both North and South Lanarkshire Councils and the Improvement Service in an event to further embed climate change in community planning. The event focussed on the climate emergency, a green recovery, a just transition, and policy coherence for climate change. Findings from the discussion have been reported back to the Community Planning Partnership Board with recommendations on how to further embed climate change across community planning.

4.2.2. Sustainable Environment

Outcome 2.1: South Lanarkshire's natural environment is protected, enhanced and respected.

- ◆ We implemented the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy 2018-2022 with input from all members of the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership, alongside the Council's own Biodiversity Duty Implementation Plan 2018-2022.
- ◆ The adopted South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 makes provision for the designation of 16 new Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) at locations across the Council area. In February 2022, the Council completed the declaration of the 16 new LNRs, together with doubling the area of the existing LNRs.
- ◆ The Council has been able to develop its Nature Restoration Programme by bringing together its Scottish Government Nature Restoration Funding with the Council's Climate Emergency Fund. The focus of this Programme is on improving the biodiversity of various council land sites, and the enhancement and management of woodland, grassland, peatland and wetland habitats. Creating pollinator friendly grasslands and enhancing tree canopy cover are key strategic actions for the Council. Undertaking access and habitat improvements in the new Local Nature Reserves is a key priority for this programme.
- ◆ The Council has installed a tree asset management software system that allows the recording of the quantity, quality, nature, and condition, of the Council's tree assets along with the value they provide in terms of ecosystems. The software will help manage, protect and enhance council trees and support the Clyde Climate Forest.
- ◆ Green Flag status was awarded to many of our parks throughout the period and we continued to develop safe and accessible walking and cycling routes throughout South Lanarkshire.
- ◆ New woodland creation at Chatelherault has contributed to the initiation of the Clyde Climate Forest with the planting of 120 trees consisting of oak, sycamore and beech in March 2021.

Outcome 2.2: South Lanarkshire's enhanced environment provides health and wellbeing benefits to local communities.

- ◆ We undertook a range of air quality improvement projects and an education programme involving communities, businesses and schools throughout the 5-year period. The development of a [story map](#) displayed on the Council website has helped spread knowledge and understanding of the need for good air quality and the actions taking place.
- ◆ Beat the Street active travel games have taken place in Lanark, East Kilbride, Hamilton and Blantyre and Cambuslang and Rutherglen. Over 34,500 people took part with participants walking, running and cycling over 450,000 miles.
- ◆ The introduction of a treasure trail game App for Lanarkshire was downloaded more than 1,100 times during the summer of 2021. The trail around Strathclyde Country Park and Hamilton Palace Grounds was accessed via a free App WALKCYCLE4AIR, produced by South and North Lanarkshire Councils and launched to celebrate Clean Air Day.
- ◆ The former landfill site of Glen Esk, East Kilbride was rejuvenated as a community greenspace, using the Scottish Government Vacant and Derelict Land Fund. It was opened in December 2019 and now includes new native woodland and wildflower planting, paths, artwork, an outdoor classroom, and a junior mountain bike track.

4.2.3. **Sustainable Communities**

Outcome 3.1: Homes and communities are energy efficient, environmentally sustainable, and fuel poverty is minimised.

- ◆ More than 1,300 affordable and green homes were built throughout the term of the Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022.
- ◆ All South Lanarkshire Council new-build homes are built to the Silver Greener Standard as set out in Section 7, Silver Level, of the 2011 Building Regulations in respect of both Carbon Dioxide emissions and Energy for Space Heating. Modern construction methods are utilised as far as possible to help minimise adverse environmental impacts.
- ◆ We continued to improve the energy efficiency of Council housing stock with 1,147 homes having external wall insulation fitted contributing to a total of 98% of council homes meeting the Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (EESH1) by March 2022.
- ◆ We continued to increase the number of council properties utilising decarbonised heating sources, with a total 239 homes receiving air sources heat pumps, bringing the total to 1,624. All pitches within the council's two Gypsy/Traveller sites also received new infra-red heating systems.
- ◆ We administered the 'Energy Company Obligation' and 'Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Schemes' national grant schemes which provide national funding for energy efficiency improvements to private homes across South Lanarkshire. This included a total of 5,536 improvements across 2,603 properties with measures including new efficient heating and internal and external insulation.

Outcome 3.2: The Council's strategies, plans and policies support communities in reducing carbon emissions and adapting to a changing climate

- ◆ We developed and launched the Council's first Good Food Strategy in 2019 which includes a key theme of 'Good food for the environment'.
- ◆ We expanded food growing allotments sites throughout South Lanarkshire and the development of a [Food Growing](#) story map to promote the benefits of homegrown.
- ◆ The new long-term residual waste contract has enabled a large proportion of our non-recyclable waste to be sent to the Energy from Waste plant in Dunbar, not only reducing landfilled waste but creating electricity.
- ◆ The introduction of the contamination service standard for waste services in October 2018, coupled with a communications campaign and the training of crews working with processors, has led to a significant improvement in quality of paper and card delivered to the recycling processor. April 2018 – 54.82% rejected; April 2019 – 3.9% rejected; April 2020 – 0.76% rejected. This has resulted in both environmental benefits and financial benefits.
- ◆ To support the transition to electric vehicles South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 requires all new development to include electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The Supporting Planning Guidance has been developed to assist developers meet these requirements in terms of the type and number of electric vehicles charging points. It also sets out the information required to be submitted with a planning application to address this.
- ◆ The electric vehicle charge point network within South Lanarkshire is expanding and we are continuing to look at ways to improve and develop the infrastructure further. Our focus thus far has been on the introduction of Electric vehicle charging hubs with an aim for all residents of South Lanarkshire to be living

within a short distance of a charge point. To date the Council has installed 139 publicly available charge points throughout the area.

- ◆ The introduction of a fully segregated cycle network in East Kilbride. The project has been phased over several years, commencing construction in 2019. Three phases have been completed with the next 2 phases due to commence in late 2022 / early 2023. The project is intended to encourage cyclists of all abilities to consider cycling a viable option for all or part of their journey. The project is consistent with our Cycling Strategy ([Cycling Strategy 2015-2020 Transport and streets - South Lanarkshire Council](#)) and the East Kilbride Active Travel Study ([Transport and streets - South Lanarkshire Council](#)).
- ◆ The Cambuslang Park and Ride car park opened in July 2021 making multi modal travel a viable option and encouraging public transport use for residents of Cambuslang and the surrounding area. The project involved transforming the derelict site to provide a dedicated park and ride car park which features 257 spaces including 20 electric vehicle charging spaces and cycle parking with 4 electric cycle charging points. This provides options to travel to the park and ride facility sustainably prior to the onward journey by rail. The introduction of the park and ride facility is consistent with our Park and Ride Strategy ([Park and Ride Strategy 2018-2027 - South Lanarkshire Council](#)).

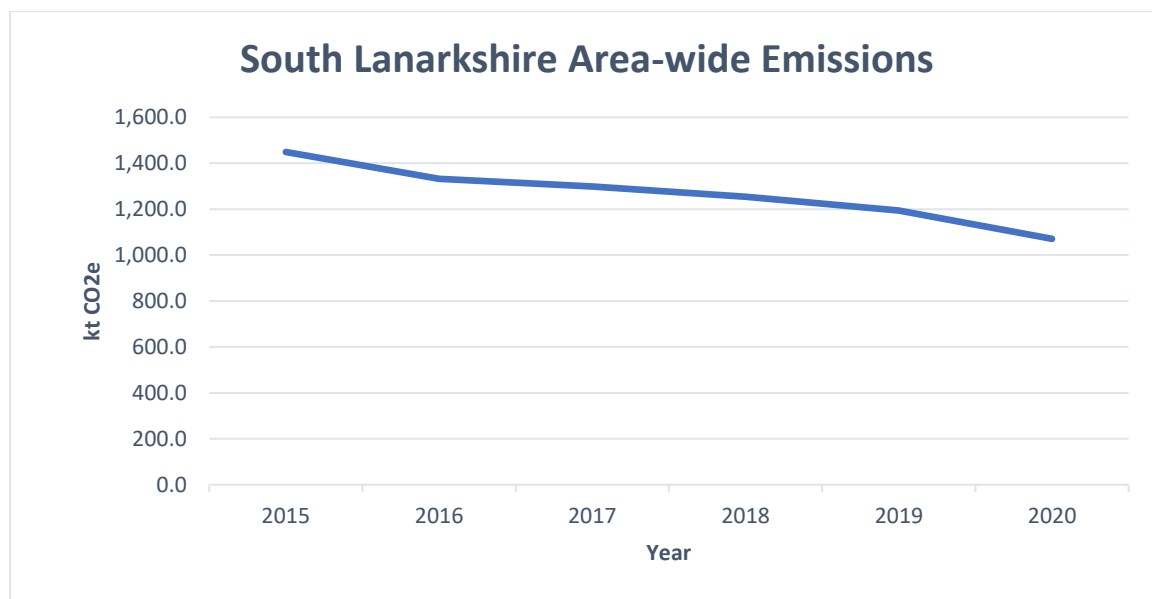
Outcome 3.3: Local communities are supported in taking action to be more environmentally responsible

- ◆ We launched a £200,000 Community Grants Scheme at the start of 2022 to help groups and partner organisations develop climate change and sustainability focused projects within the community. By the end of June 2022, 20 applications had been approved with over £46,000 paid out in grants.
- ◆ We launched the Food Strategy Community Grants in January 2022. Over £19,000 has been paid out to community groups and organisations to introduce or develop food growing activities on council land or within council facilities. Projects include developing community orchards, polytunnels and rain harvesting at existing sites and the development of school and nursey growing areas.
- ◆ A Young People's Sustainability Forum has been established to discuss how young people can lead on aspects of climate change and sustainability within the school curriculum but also how they can influence decision making across the authority. An offshoot of the Forum has been the Climate Emergency Newsroom (CEN) that took place during COP26. The young people reported on events and decision making to their primary school audience. There were more than 1 million views of CEN tweets, and the work was acknowledged in a motion to the Scottish Parliament.
- ◆ A schools' version of South Lanarkshire's State of the Environment report was developed for use on GLOW, this resource allows teachers and pupils to use local environmental data as part of their learning and environmental projects.
- ◆ Over the last five years (2017-2022), more than 19,000 days of environmental volunteering has been recorded. This is important in supporting access improvements and management, habitat management, citizen science monitoring and community management. Using National Lottery valuation this level of voluntary activity is worth about £1m. These volunteers are a key resource in managing the Local Nature Reserves.

- ◆ With help from local volunteers, and in partnership with Buglife, the Council has created 12 pilot pollinator friendly sites in the Clyde Valley and 3 pilot Butterfly Conservation sites in Hamilton/Blantyre. Case studies on the pollinator and butterfly sites are being developed for possible roll-out across Council landholdings.
- ◆ The Council and One Carlisle Area Network was involved in a pilot for the newly developed national Place Standard Tool through a climate lens. The pilot involved using the newly developed tool as a framework for a community event to discuss the development of a community-led neighbourhood plan that will incorporate action that will address local needs as well as help to tackle climate change.

- 4.3. As stated earlier in this report, the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy, and its accompanying annual action plans, has covered activity related to all aspects of sustainability and climate change. However, reducing carbon emissions has been one of its central aims, and measuring these carbon emissions is central to the Strategy's monitoring framework. The Council's own carbon footprint accounts for approximately 2% of the South Lanarkshire's area-wide emissions. However, the Council has the ability to influence approximately 33%⁽¹⁾ of the area's carbon emissions through its plans, policies, strategies, and regulatory responsibility.
- 4.4. As outlined at 4.2.1, the Council has reduced its own carbon emissions by 50% during the period of the Strategy (2017-2022). In terms of the area wide emissions for South Lanarkshire, there has also been a downward trend over the last 5 years, as outlined in figure 1⁽²⁾. These figures have a two-year lag. Therefore, the most up to date area-wide figures we have are for the period 2016-2020. Aside from the Council's activity in this area, there are obviously other factors which have influenced this decrease in emissions. However, this indicator still indicates progress. Carbon emissions have reduced from 1331.8 kt CO₂e in 2016 to 1071 kt CO₂e in 2020. This is a 20% reduction which is in line with Scotland's overall reduction.

Figure 1



(1) Source of data from Keep Scotland Beautiful Climate Literacy Training July 2022

(2) Source of data from the Department of Business, Energy, and Industry Strategy (BEIS) published June 2022

5. Going Forward

- 5.1. The new Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy, covering the next five years, will not only build on the extensive work from previous sustainable development and climate change strategies but will set the pathway for the decade ahead where the Council will be required to meet some challenging national climate change and sustainable development targets and milestones.
- 5.2. Since the development of the last Strategy there have been many external factors that have impacted the Council's current strategic approach to sustainable development and climate change as well as the pace and scale of implementation required. These factors include changes in legislation, for example the new climate change targets of net-zero emissions by 2045; the declaration of a national climate emergency; Brexit; and changes to the socio-economic landscape due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 5.3. The next step is to prepare the Strategy's five-year action plan. The sustainability team are currently working closely with Services across the Council to agree proposed actions. The proposed action plan will be presented to Committee in February 2023 with actions commencing in April 2023. There will be a transitional action plan prepared for 2022-23 while the five-year action plan is being developed.
- 5.4. The Council's Climate Change and Sustainability Committee will ensure the effective delivery of the Strategy and action plan. The Council's senior management Climate Change and Sustainability steering group will support the work of the Committee.
- 5.5. The new Strategy will be web-based on the Council's website. This will help to keep the Strategy current and reflect any updates or changes, for example, new national targets and policies. The information in this covering report will provide an overview for the website for the work to date.

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. All Resources are required to contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plan to ensure that actions and targets are met. The sustainable development officers and carbon management officer monitor and report the Council's progress.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. Many actions within the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy and associated action plan has previously been funded from existing Resource budgets, however, going forward there will be a need for more investment in order to meet challenging targets and milestones. We will also have to work with the Scottish Government, UK Government and external partners to seek funding to support the delivery of larger net zero projects.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 8.1. The Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy contributes towards the Public Sector Climate Change Duties, the Biodiversity Duty and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1. Failure to build resilience and act to the impacts of a changing climate is included in one of the Council's top risks. The development of the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy and action plan is a mitigation measure of this risk.

- 9.2. The Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy has undergone the Strategic Environmental Assessment process.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 10.1. An equality impact assessment was carried out on the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy.
- 10.2. Public and stakeholder consultation on the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy was undertaken.

David Booth

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

22 August 2022

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

Values

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Fair, open and sustainable

Priorities

- ◆ We will work to put people first and reduce inequality
- ◆ We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places
- ◆ We will work to recover, progress and improve

Outcomes

- ◆ Our children and young people thrive
- ◆ Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live
- ◆ Thriving business, fair jobs and vibrant town centres
- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- ◆ People live the healthiest lives possible
- ◆ Inspiring learners, transforming learning, strengthening partnerships

Previous References

- ◆ Executive Committee report on 6 December 2017 entitled 'Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy'

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report 2018.
- ◆ The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009
- ◆ The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019
- ◆ The climate change update 2020
- ◆ Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy 2017-2022
- ◆ Biodiversity Strategy 2018 – 2022
- ◆ Biodiversity Duty Implementation Plan 2018 -2022
- ◆ Good Food Strategy 2020 -2025
- ◆ UN's Sustainable Development Goals

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Name: Lesley Hinshelwood

Designation: Sustainable Development Officer

E-mail: lesley.hinshelwood@southlanarkshire.gov.uk