

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

18 December 2019

INTERIM CLIMATE EMERGENCY REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

Report by Depute Chief Executive (Chief Operating Officer) (Report No. 19/362)

In June 2019 Perth & Kinross Council agreed a Motion committing the Council to lead by example in accelerating the transformational change required to address the Climate Emergency, declared by the UK and Scottish Governments.

The Interim Climate Emergency Report and Action Plan (Appendix 1) sets out an initial routemap to meeting the ambitions of the Council Motion, as well as highlighting the targets, challenges, and the action the Council is already taking to address climate change.

The report provides a basis to develop our engagement with partners and communities – giving an opportunity for the Council, partners and all citizens to play a part in designing and delivering a low carbon and climate resilient Perth & Kinross.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The urgency of action on climate change was brought sharply into focus in 2018 by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which published a report ([click here](#)) stating that we must limit global warming to 1.5°C. Even with a rise of 1.5°C, IPCC reported that there would be risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth. A rise of 2°C or higher would be even more catastrophic.
- 1.2 The IPCC warns that we only have a limited period left (2030) to take the decisive and serious action required to avert this crisis and avoid the worst impacts.
- 1.3 In June 2019 Perth & Kinross Council passed a Motion committing the Council to lead by example in accelerating the transformational change required to address the Climate Emergency, which had been declared by both the UK and Scottish Parliaments earlier this year. The Chief Executive was requested to set out a route map to deliver a low carbon Perth & Kinross, through co-production with citizens and other stakeholders.
- 1.4 Recent legislation ([Climate Change \(Emissions Reduction Targets\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#)) sets out a new target for Scotland to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. This means that we must reduce emissions to a level which are equal to or less than the ability of our natural ecosystems (i.e. our woodlands and peatlands) to absorb and retain these emissions. There is clear role for the Council to work with its citizens and businesses to ensure that the whole Perth & Kinross contributes to this zero carbon target by 2045 at the latest.

1.5 For several years the Council has been undertaking activities to promote sustainable development and tackle climate change. Our successes include :-

- We have attracted over £49m in external funding since 2010 for projects contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- We have reduced the total energy consumption from our buildings by 17% from 2012 levels, despite increasing the number of buildings we operate
- We have reduced the average level of general household waste collected per week by 46% since 2013
- There are over 80 Electric Vehicle Charging Points available to the public in Perth & Kinross

2. PROPOSALS

2.1 The Interim Climate Emergency Report and Action Plan (Appendix 1) sets out initial proposals for fulfilling the ambitions set out in the June Council Motion. It is deliberately an interim document, as it forms the basis to start the conversation with our partners and communities, to share in the design and delivery of a low carbon and climate resilient Perth & Kinross.

2.2 The Report sets out our current status, by highlighting:

- a) the size and complexity of the challenge, as it relates to the Council as an organisation, and the wider Perth and Kinross area.
- b) the increasing range of international, national and local policies, targets, and legislation; and how they will direct and influence our activities over the next decades.
- c) the extensive activity the Council and partners are already carrying out, to address climate change mitigation and adaptation; as well as short, medium, and longer-term actions, and options, which demonstrates our commitment to accelerate our climate change progress.
- d) Suggestions for taking forward comprehensive engagements on climate change as part of the emerging Perth & Kinross Offer, to develop a shared vision, strategy and actions, which will be essential for the entire Perth and Kinross area to achieve a net zero carbon future.
- e) our commitment to “just transitions”, to ensure that climate change actions progress hand in hand with fairness and equality; and that no one in a vulnerable situation is disadvantaged by climate change transformation.

- f) how we are currently organised to work together, and how that close working can evolve to ensure future climate change action remains unified, focussed and effective.
- 2.2 The Interim Report addresses both mitigation (actions to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation (the actions we need to take to adjust to the impacts of climate change).
 - 2.3 The Interim Report identifies that only 3% of carbon emissions in Perth and Kinross are attributable to the Council's activities. Therefore, this highlights the significant role that all our communities will need to play if we are to be successful in reaching a zero carbon Perth & Kinross. Achieving the necessary significant changes, cannot be successfully delivered without lifestyle changes on a range of key behaviours like personal travel, recycling waste and home heating.
 - 2.4 Therefore with our ambition to reduce carbon emissions to net zero, we recognise the need for the public, as citizens and consumers, to have a much larger role in shaping our collective future actions. This is consistent with the emerging work on the Perth & Kinross Offer where the Council co-produces solutions with communities and stakeholders, to support everyone in the area to live life well.
 - 2.5 We will carry out widespread engagement during February to April 2020, to develop and describe a shared vision for Perth & Kinross, identify the main actions we all can take, and start the conversation about targets for the Perth & Kinross area. We will engage with all households and businesses within Perth & Kinross, as well as other public bodies and the third sector.
 - 2.6 To ensure the ongoing commitment and involvement of all parts of the community in local climate change action, several Councils have established Climate Change Commissions, with a wide range of local representation. These Commissions bring together key organisations and advocates for change, from across the area, from local communities, as well as the public, private and third sectors.
 - 2.7 It is proposed to establish a Climate Change Commission for Perth & Kinross. The Commission will be an independent voice for the area, providing authoritative advice on steps towards a low carbon, climate resilient future, to inform our shared vision and shape the actions of local stakeholders and decision makers. It will monitor progress towards meeting the area's carbon reduction targets and recommend actions to keep the area on target, as well as advising on climate-related adaptation opportunities.
 - 2.8 Ensuring a fairer Perth & Kinross is at the heart of the Council's Corporate Plan and the Community Plan, as we seek to promote fairness and give equal opportunities for all. We need to ensure that the actions we take on climate change mitigation and adaptation are fair for all, minimise potential for inequalities, and maximise the economic and social advantages.

- 2.9 It is acknowledged in the report and action plan that the cost of responding to the climate change emergency will be significant, and there is a risk to delivery if resources are not available to deliver the changes required. An important part of our work will be to ensure that we maximise the funding opportunities which are likely to be made available, to minimise the expenditure pressures on the Council.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Climate change will have a major impact on everyone in Perth & Kinross.
- 3.2 We acknowledge the need for urgent action, and this report sets out the interim measures we are taking, as a basis for much wider engagement with our communities and partners on a shared climate change vision, and action programme.
- 3.3 It is acknowledged in the report and action plan that the cost of responding to the climate change emergency will be significant, and it will be important to maximise other funding sources, to support the delivery of these actions.
- 3.4 Working together, we can share our commitment to climate change, and protecting our area, so we can pass it on, for the enjoyment of future generations.
- 3.5 It is recommended that the Council:
- i) approves the Interim Climate Emergency Report and Action Plan (Appendix 1) as a basis for engagement with stakeholders to produce a shared vision and action programme, and to deliver a resilient and net zero carbon Perth & Kinross.
 - ii) requests the Depute Chief Executive to bring forward a report to the next Council Meeting on proposals for the establishment of a Perth & Kinross Climate Change Commission.
 - iii) requests the Depute Chief Executive to report to the Council after the 2020 summer recess with the results of the climate change engagement activity, and an updated route map for the delivery of a vision and action plan.

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	Yes
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement/ Corporate Plan

- 1.1 This report contributes to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement, and Corporate Plan, in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 At this stage there are no direct resource implications arising from this report. The appended report gives an indication of activities which may require additional funding. Part of our activities will be seeking alternative funding opportunities, for the actions in the interim plan.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no implications at this stage.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no direct implications at this stage. However meeting climate change targets will require further decisions on our property portfolio, including significant enhancements to the energy management of our buildings, and considering our future property requirements.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 The proposal has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- Assessed as relevant for the purposes of EqIA (with both positive and negative likely effects)
- 3.2 The report recognises that the most severe impacts of climate change are likely to be felt by people experiencing greater risks of poverty and disadvantage. It also recognises that by promoting future mitigation measures in the move towards zero carbon, certain groups may be disproportionately impacted. The strategy and action plan seek to create a net zero economy that is fair for all, minimises potential for inequalities, and maximises the socio-economic opportunities for all. As part of the action plan, a decision-making toolkit will be established to consider future climate change mitigation and adaptation actions, to ensure just transitions are prioritised.
- 3.3 With this in mind, a full Equality & Fairness Impact Assessment (EFIA) will be undertaken during the engagement stage of the strategy.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.4 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. The proposal has been considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005:
- 3.5 Screening has determined that there are likely to be significant environmental effects and as a consequence an environmental assessment is necessary. At the present time a scoping report, which will determine the scope of the environmental assessment, is being prepared for submission to the Consultation Authorities.

Sustainability

- 3.6 The proposal has been considered under the provisions of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and it has been assessed that:
- A large number of positive climate change and sustainable development outcomes are likely as a result of this proposal being implemented, across all eleven sections of the Integrated Appraisal Toolkit. All actions proposed are likely to contribute to the provisions of the Act and will be reported as part of the annual Public Sector Climate Change Duties Reporting process. The Integrated Appraisal Toolkit report is available – [click here](#).

Legal and Governance

- 3.7 The Head of Legal and Governance Services has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Risk

- 3.8 Not applicable at this stage. A risk register will be prepared as part of the implementation of these proposals.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Corporate Management Group, the Council's Climate Change Board and the Low Carbon Working Group (officer working groups with service representatives from across the Council) have been involved in the preparation of this report.
- 4.2 Two engagement sessions were held with Elected Members in preparing this report – on 3 September and 25 November 2019.

External

- 4.2 The report has been informed by engagements with three Climate Café activities in, Blairgowrie, Dunkeld and Perth.
- 4.3 The Community Planning Partnership Executive Officer Group has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

5. Communication

- 5.1 A communications plan will be developed as part of the wider community engagement on climate change detailed in the report.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Motion to Council Meeting 29 June 2019.

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Net Zero Perth & Kinross – Interim Climate Change Emergency Report and Action Plan