

EX63. Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Place Services which sought approval of the Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030 and of the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) and Delivery Plan. A Climate Emergency Action Plan (2022-2030) was agreed by the Executive at its meeting of 22 February 2022. This plan set out a number of actions to support delivery of the organisational net zero target and the national interim target of 75% reduction in emissions by 2030. One action was to draft a Climate Change Strategy.

There were three key themes which underpinned the strategy:-

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Adapt to climate change; and
- Secure a just transition and green economic recovery.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan was a live document which provided annual updates on progress and was appended to the Strategy. The plan updated on the following key areas:-

- Council's Vehicle Replacement Programme – now 124 electric vehicles in the fleet, up from 50 vehicles
- Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) trial for Heavy Goods Vehicles
- Non-domestic building upgrades – solar panels and LED installation in several High Schools during 2023
- Waste to energy – this would significantly reduce the Council's waste emissions.

LHEES set out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving energy efficiency across the area. LHEES was primarily driven by Scotland's statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction and fuel poverty. The purpose of the LHEES Strategy was to present the evidence base that identified what needed to be done across the area to change buildings and infrastructure by 2045 to fulfil the Scottish Government's objectives. Accompanying the LHEES Strategy was the Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan set out actions enabling work towards delivery of the LHEES Strategy. The Delivery Plan clarified Council's role in delivering the LHEES, focussing on how to build on existing plans and policies and coordinate across local partners to create decarbonisation projects.

Falkirk Council's emissions were 7% less than they were in 2021/22, which (excluding 2020/21) was the largest annual reduction achieved since the Council started reporting on emissions in 2013/14. In 2022/23 emissions were 36,963 tonnes CO₂e compared to 39,795 tonnes CO₂e in 2021/22, this was a reduction of 2,832 tonnes CO₂e. The main reason for this reduction was the Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) trial in 2022/23. HVO had lower emissions than diesel so in vehicles using HVO rather than diesel there was a 90% reduction in emissions.

Councillor Deakin, seconded by Councillor Garner, moved that the Executive:-

- (1) agrees the Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030;
- (2) notes the progress made with actions since the Climate Emergency Action Plan was agreed on 22 February 2022;
- (3) notes the work outlined in the Climate Change Project Register;
- (4) notes the update on the Council's progress toward net zero targets, and
- (5) approves the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan.

As an amendment, Councillor Bundy, seconded by Councillor Kerr, moved the terms of the motion subject to the replacement of clause (5) with the following:-

- (5) agrees to the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan on condition that it is complemented with a public information campaign that informs people about all the subsidies, grants, and loans available to improve the energy efficiency of their house.

The Executive adjourned at 11.40am and reconvened at 11.50am with all members present as per the sederunt.

Councillor Deakin, with the consent of the Convener and Councillor Garner, as his seconder, altered the terms of the motion to incorporate the terms of the amendment. The amendment accordingly fell.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) agreed the Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030;**
- (2) noted the progress made with actions since the Climate Emergency Action Plan was agreed on 22 February 2022;**
- (3) noted the work outlined in the Climate Change Project Register;**
- (4) noted the update on the Council's progress toward net zero targets, and**
- (5) agreed to the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan on condition that it was complemented with a public information campaign that informed people about all the subsidies, grants, and loans available to improve the energy efficiency of their house.**