

The background of the slide features the Falkirk Council Coat of Arms. It is a shield divided into four quarters. The top-left quarter shows a saltire (X-shaped cross) on a blue field. The top-right quarter shows a stag's head facing left on a red field. The bottom-left quarter shows a three-masted sailing ship on a blue field. The bottom-right quarter shows a crowned eagle with wings spread on a red field. Above the shield is a crown with four fleurs-de-lis. Below the shield is a ribbon with the motto 'A'NE FOR A'.

## **Agenda Item 7**

**Review of How the Climate is  
Changing in the Falkirk Area and  
Actions in Place to Adapt**

**Falkirk Council**

**Title:** Review of how the climate is changing in the Falkirk Area and actions in place to adapt  
**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 29 October 2019  
**Submitted By:** Director of Development Services

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. At its meeting of 27 August, the Executive requested a review of how the climate is changing in the Falkirk area and the development of a strategy on how the Council can help adapt services and spaces to ensure that the council area remains a pleasant place to live, work and visit.

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1. The Executive is requested to:**

- 1) Note the progress of work to develop a Local Climate Impact Profile**
- 2) Endorse that consideration of adaptation requirements (to be highlighted in an adaptation strategy) be embedded in all Council projects & initiatives.**
- 3) Endorse that climate change risk assessments are embedded in future service delivery provision and budget considerations.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1. As the world's climate is changing so too is the local climate in the Falkirk council area:

- average summers have been getting hotter and drier;
- average winters have been getting milder and wetter;
- sea levels have been rising; and
- extreme weather events have been increasing in their intensity and frequency.
- extreme weather events are occurring frequently during seasons where they are unexpected and therefore lead to higher levels of disruption.
- The Falkirk area has increasingly seen damage and disruption due to these events.

- 3.2. Appendix 1 highlights the number of times weather has been reported to the Council and in the local media as having had negative impacts in the Falkirk area, and what those negative impacts have been, recorded by month for the period 2010-2018.

- 3.3. Between 2010 and 2018, the negative impacts of snow and ice have been reported on in the local media more than any other weather type, followed by extreme rainfall and flooding (which the Falkirk area is particularly vulnerable to), then by storms and wind.
- 3.4. While only one instance of negative impacts of high temperatures is reported, the risk of these, and drought is expected to increase over the coming summers.
- 3.5. Of these negative impacts, transport disruption is most frequently reported, followed by cancellation and postponement of events. Closure of Council buildings (including schools and nurseries), disruption to waste collection, power supply, care services and public health impacts are also reported.

#### **4. Considerations**

##### **4.1. Falkirk Council's adaptation obligations:**

- 4.1.1. The Council has a duty to deliver a climate change adaptation programme under Section 44 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme (SCCAP) was laid before Scottish Parliament in May 2014 and enacts this duty. Statutory obligations require the Council to;
- Understand the effects of climate change and their impacts on the natural environment
  - Support a healthy and diverse natural environment with capacity to adapt.
  - Sustain and enhance the benefits, goods and services that the natural environment provides.
  - Understand the effects of climate change and their impacts on buildings and infrastructure networks.
  - Provide the knowledge, skills and tools to manage climate change impacts on buildings and infrastructure.
  - Increase the resilience of buildings and infrastructure networks to sustain and enhance the benefits and services provided.
  - Understand the effects of climate change and their impacts on people, homes and communities
  - Increase the awareness of the impacts of climate change to enable people to adapt to future extreme weather events
  - Support our health services and emergency responders to enable them to respond effectively to the increased pressures associated with a changing climate.
- 4.1.2. The Council reports on its progress in meeting the above mentioned obligations within its yearly statutory return to Scottish Government, the Public Bodies Duty Report (PBDR).

- 4.1.3. The Climate Change Bill was recently passed and has strengthened the obligations listed above and to ensure that Councils in future embed adaptation and the principle of Climate Justice into service delivery. Climate Justice requires that decisions regarding service provision recognise those who will be worst affected by the changing climate, and afford them the greatest priority.
- 4.1.4 The Scottish Government released the Climate Ready Scotland: Adaptation Programme 2019-2024, on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019. This programme is an outcome based plan that sets out the direction that the Scottish Government intend to take in embedding adaptation to prepare Scotland for the challenges faced through climate change.
- 4.1.5 The outcomes are broken into 6 categories and will form the basis of monitoring of public bodies within the statutory PBDR return. The outcomes which our performance will be measured against are:
1. Our communities are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe in response to the changing climate.
  2. The people in Scotland who are most vulnerable to climate change are able to adapt and climate justice is embedded in climate change adaptation policy.
  3. Our inclusive and sustainable economy is flexible, adaptable and responsive to the changing climate.
  4. Our society's supporting systems are resilient to climate change
  5. Our natural environment is valued, enjoyed, protected and enhanced and has increased resilience to climate change.
  6. Our coastal and marine environment is valued, enjoyed, protected and enhanced and has increased resilience to climate change.
- 4.1.6 In the coming months the Climate Change Team within Development Services will take the requirements of the Climate Change Act, as amended, the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan 2018-2032 and the Climate Ready Scotland Adaptation Programme and build these into climate change related strategies.

#### **4.2. Adaptation strategy and LCLIP**

- 4.1.1. The Corporate Sustainability Working Group agreed to focus on development of an up to date Local Climate Impact Profile (LCLIP). This document will be a comprehensive analysis of weather trends within the area and will be used to inform the development of adaptation strategies and climate risk assessments.
- 4.2.2. Falkirk Council recently employed a full time graduate to support the development of the LCLIP who, with the support of the wider Climate Change team, will map out possible impacts to service delivery in the future.
- 4.2.3. Upon completion of the LCLIP and in line with its findings, the Climate Change team will determine areas of potential risk in the form of service area

climate impact assessments. It is expected that these will become embedded within key projects going forward to mitigate detrimental impacts to service delivery or those whom we serve.

- 4.2.4. In order to put adaptation at the forefront of shaping projects, an adaptation strategy will be developed setting out the Council's strategic approach to future proofing our service delivery. This strategy will complement and enhance existing key strategies within the Council such as the Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES), Local Housing Strategy (LHS), Local Development Plan (LDP), flood risk strategy and the Falkirk and Grangemouth Investment Zone.
- 4.2.5. In order to successfully fulfil the Council's statutory obligations, adaptation has been identified as a corporate risk to the Council and must therefore be embedded in the governance of service delivery across the Council.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1. Wide-ranging consultation with public and private sector stakeholders will be undertaken through each phase of development of the LCLIP and adaptation strategy. This will include private sector consultation and community engagement. The anticipated scale of adaptation to respond to both current climate trends and those projected in the future shall inevitably require difficult choices, and a key aspect of any consultation will be to ensure, through Climate Justice considerations, that all stakeholders contribute to solutions.

## **6.0. Implications**

### **6.1. Financial**

Whilst development of the strategies noted above will not require additional funding, it is to be expected that the findings of the LCLIP and the actions defined under the emerging adaptation strategy will require the Council to consider budget provision to ensure that actions identified are embedded in project delivery going forward, and it is expected that the retrofitting of buildings and infrastructure in particular will require significant investment.

### **6.2. Resources**

There are no immediate resource issues arising from this stage of work. The Council has recently expanded the climate change team including a full time graduate to undertake the initial phases of strategy development. A meaningful Adaptation Strategy will generate the need for clear governance and support within the Council to ensure it is embedded fully within our service delivery models.

### **6.3. Legal**

Failure to report progress within our PBDR, including that of meeting our own defined climate change targets, and failure to comply with the obligations set out above could result in financial penalties and severe reputational damage.

### **6.4. Risk**

Until adaptation is fully embedded within the Council's organisation governance and service delivery structures, the risk of failing to comply with our climate change obligations remains high.

### **6.5. Equalities**

As noted above, an adaptation strategy will embed Climate Justice within its outcomes, ensuring that those affected the greatest are afforded the greatest priority.

### **6.6. Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

- 6.6.1 The very nature the Council's adaptation strategy will ensure that sustainability and environmental impact considerations are embedded throughout all outcomes.
- 6.6.2 The Council's climate change team have worked with various partners to deliver a number of climate related activities during the national climate week (7 to 13 October 2019), with events developed around particular climate themes and sustainability (travel, food, energy & carbon footprints, water, waste and biodiversity) and aimed at helping attendees find out more about climate change and how they can take action, both to reduce their own carbon footprint and to adapt to an already changing climate

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1. Work is currently under way to assess and map out the impact of current and future weather trends within the Council area. The Climate Change Team will assess how these will impact upon the Council's service delivery models, and will produce an adaptation strategy and service based risk assessments which will focus on how the Council can continue to provide its services in the context of increasingly extreme weather events.
- 7.2. The successful delivery of an adaptation strategy and the embedding of service climate risk assessments will rely upon robust governance, senior management and elected member support to ensure that the risks identified are fully considered and factored into budget considerations and service delivery going forward.

---

Director of Development Services

Author – Mari-Claire Morgan, Lead Officer – Climate Change, 01324 594909,  
[mariclaire.morgan@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:mariclaire.morgan@falkirk.gov.uk)

Date: 15 October 2019

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Instances within the Council area of weather reported to have negative impacts, recorded by the type of impact and by month (2010-2018).

**Fig 1: Instances within the Council area of weather reported to have negative impacts, recorded by the type of impact and by month (2010-2018)**

*Reported in local media: Falkirk Herald and Falkirk Council Publications*

