

EX104. Climate Change: Future Actions

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on the current and proposed future actions in response to the Council's Climate Emergency declaration.

Falkirk Council's Carbon Footprint totalled 48.8 kilo-tonnes CO₂ equivalent (ktCO₂e) in 2018-19, 2% higher than the 2017/18 figure (48.0 ktCO₂e) and 1% less than the 2013/14 baseline year. The decreases in electricity consumption and business mileage had been offset by the increase in waste emissions (+25%). The Council's top 4 emission sources were waste management (43%), building energy consumption (40%), vehicle fuel (8%), and street lighting (5%).

The Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) pilot project in Grangemouth and Falkirk town centre assessed the current building stock and determined measures to meet national emission reduction targets. Set out as a 20 year plan, LHEES would soon be mandatory for local authorities. Northern Connections INTERREG was a project that contributed to a shift to a low-carbon economy. To reflect the scale of change required to fulfil the Council's statutory obligations, sustainability/climate change had been raised from medium to high in the Corporate Risk Register.

A list of immediate actions was provided and the first estimate of capital expenditure for Council buildings identified in the LHEES, when extrapolated for the Council area, was c.£165m over a ten year period.

Councillor Garner moved that the Executive:-

- (1) notes the progress of work underway to reduce the Council's greenhouse gas emissions;
- (2) endorses the ambitious emission reduction targets set out in section 4.2 of the report which were required if the Council was to approach the achievement of net zero emissions by 2030 in line with the Climate Emergency declaration;
- (3) notes the considerations set out in section 4.3 of the report, which would contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency;
- (4) notes the potential scale of capital investment required to enable carbon reduction measures such as the retrofitting of existing buildings & infrastructure, decarbonisation of the Council's fleet and carbon sequestration projects, set out in section 6.1 of the report;
- (5) endorses that targets would be reviewed by each Service area to ensure a one Council approach to carbon reduction;
- (6) notes that carbon sequestration was essential to offset the remaining emissions that could not be further reduced to achieve net zero emissions, and recognised that current tree planting and

peatland restoration projects needed to be significantly intensified, with a substantial increase in resource and funding requirements;

- (7) endorses the Climate Emergency declaration call for a cohesive organisational approach which prioritised budgeting, work, travel, and delivering services to minimise impact on the environment;
- (8) notes that by taking the above actions and ensuring that emissions reduction targets were fully embedded within the Council's governance and service delivery, the Council would be taking action to limit the consequences of climate change, with the corresponding benefits to the wider community health and wellbeing;
- (9) agrees to establish a Climate Change Actions Stakeholder Working Group with the following Terms of Reference:-

Climate Change Actions Stakeholder Working Group Terms of Reference

1. Remit

- 1.1 The Climate Change Actions Stakeholder Working Group will prioritise the actions to be taken by the Council and produce an action plan to be considered by the Executive in response to the climate emergency declaration with the aim to achieve net zero emissions by 2030.

2. Membership

- 2.1 The Climate Change Actions Stakeholder Working Group shall comprise of:-

- 6 elected members, two drawn from each political group represented on the Council, and
- High School Pupils, with 1 drawn from each of the high schools in the Council area.

- 2.2 The Environment Portfolio Holder will Chair the Group.

- 2.3 The Group will be supported in its work by professional advisors but these officers will not be members of the Group. Such officers will attend as deemed appropriate by the Chief Executive and/or relevant Director.

As an amendment, Councillor Bissett, seconded by Councillor Nimmo, moved that the Executive agrees to refer the matter to Council.

Following discussion, Councillor Garner agreed to alter the terms of his motion to include an additional clause that, the Executive requests that a seminar is held with all elected members following the first meeting of the Working Group.

Following the alteration of the motion, Councillor Bissett, with the unanimous consent of those present, withdrew the amendment.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the progress of work underway to reduce the Council's greenhouse gas emissions;**
- (2) endorsed the ambitious emission reduction targets set out in section 4.2 of the report which were required if the Council was to approach the achievement of net zero emissions by 2030 in line with the Climate Emergency declaration;**
- (3) noted the considerations set out in section 4.3 of the report, which would contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency;**
- (4) noted the potential scale of capital investment required to enable carbon reduction measures such as the retrofitting of existing buildings & infrastructure, decarbonisation of the Council's fleet and carbon sequestration projects, set out in section 6.1 of the report;**
- (5) endorsed that targets would be reviewed by each Service area to ensure a one Council approach to carbon reduction;**
- (6) noted that carbon sequestration was essential to offset the remaining emissions that could not be further reduced to achieve net zero emissions, and recognised that current tree planting and peatland restoration projects needed to be significantly intensified, with a substantial increase in resource and funding requirements;**
- (7) endorsed the Climate Emergency declaration call for a cohesive organisational approach which prioritised budgeting, work, travel, and delivering services to minimise impact on the environment;**
- (8) noted that by taking the above actions and ensuring that emissions reduction targets were fully embedded within the Council's governance and service delivery, the Council would be taking action to limit the consequences of climate change, with the corresponding benefits to the wider community health and wellbeing;**
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(10) requested that a seminar was held with all elected members following the first meeting of the Working Group.