

EX24. Climate Emergency Update

The Executive considered a report by the Acting Director of Development Services which presented an initial programme of measures proposed to be taken forward to help expand and coordinate actions to tackle the climate emergency. An initial climate change action programme was appended to the report. The report outlined work regarding:-

- Council of the Future Workstreams
- Climate Change Action Cross Party Working Group
- Carbon budgeting requirements
- Carbon literacy knowledge
- Carbon sequestration requirements.

The Executive previously considered a carbon literacy training programme for Elected Members and senior officers with the aim of becoming climate leaders/champions. The training was delivered by Keep Scotland Beautiful and would enable the Council to achieve Carbon Literate accreditation status (ranging from Bronze to Platinum dependant on the proportion of employees to achieve accreditation).

The Conference of Parties (COP21) Paris Agreement, to which the UK and Scotland subscribed, came into effect on 4 November 2016 and bound nations to hold global temperature rise by 2050 to under 2°C. In the Paris Agreement each local authority was advised of a limit of emissions which they could emit each year whilst keeping below the 2°C limit. This figure was called a 'carbon budget'. The implementation of carbon budgeting Council wide created an organisational mechanism for monitoring and reporting progress toward national and organisational targets. To progress this approach, work would be undertaken by external advisers to identify appropriate techniques and budgets to be applied by Services.

It was unlikely that the Council would be able to achieve net zero for its own emissions and as such would require to sequester carbon from the atmosphere. Falkirk Council had total potential sequestration value of 8,710. If the council was able to achieve the total potential sequestration value it would still have a shortfall.

The next steps in progressing sequestration would be to prepare a more in-depth study of land use and potential land use change which would help to identify Council land assets suitable for sequestration proposals. This would help to close data gaps and develop a schedule of works in terms of sequestration infrastructure.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the progress being made on the Council's response to the climate emergency;**

- (2) agreed the initial Climate Change Action Plan attached at appendix 1 to the report as a means to embed climate change obligations within the Council;**
- (3) agreed the plan of work proposed in relation to carbon sequestration and carbon budgeting;**
- (4) noted that a programme of carbon literacy training had commenced and agreed that this be extended at a cost of £8,400 for elected members and staff with the aim of achieving a minimum of Gold standard for the Council, and**
- (5) agreed that a post of Energy and Climate Change Co-ordinator was created to ensure the above recommendations were progressed effectively and delivered at pace.**