Item 5

16th January 2024

Glasgow City Council

Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee

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Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance Annual General Meeting

Purpose of Report: To provide Committee with an update on Glasgow's membership of the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance and reflections from the 2023 Annual General Meeting.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee;

1) Notes the contents of this report

Ward No(s):	Citywide: ✓
Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐	consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1 Background

1.1 The Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance (CNCA) is a collaboration of leading global cities working to achieve carbon neutrality in the next 10-20 years – the most aggressive GHG reduction targets undertaken anywhere by any city.

1.2 The mission of the CNCA is to mobilise transformative climate action in cities in order to achieve prosperity, social equity, resilience, and better quality of life for all on a thriving planet.

1.3 The CNCA has seven key strategic priorities which align well with the strategic priorities and climate ambitions of Glasgow, as listed below;

- Funding transformative climate action to mobilise the development, adoption, and implementation of game-changing climate policies in cities.
- Exerting collective influence on and advocate for policies from other decision-makers to reduce emissions not directly controlled by cities.
- Advancing methodologies, standards, and governance tools for carbon neutrality planning, implementation, impact measurement and continuous improvement.
- Fostering peer learning among climate vanguard cities, so they can learn from each other and go further and faster together.
- Cultivating transformational leadership so city sustainability directors can excel in their roles as change-makers.
- Helping cities communicate more effectively to advance their carbon neutrality work.
- Prioritising a just carbon neutral future by integrating climate justice into ambitious climate action.

1.4 The member cities of the CNCA are selected through a nomination process by existing members, with nominated cities being invited to be interviewed by the CNCA Steering Committee who then decide if a city should be invited to become members. Glasgow was nominated to join the CNCA in 2020 by New York City following our collective work around Resilience. Following a successful interview Glasgow was invited to become a member. Membership to the CNCA cost an annual fee of $10k.

1.5 Following continued membership of the CNCA, Glasgow was invited to sit on the Steering Committee alongside Vancouver, Sydney, Portland, and Rio, and is represented by the Head of Sustainability. Glasgow is also represented on monthly European calls with the European members of the CNCA.

1.6 Due to the pandemic, international travel was severely restricted, which resulted in the 2021 AGM being held online and the 2022 AGM being split into three meetings which could be facilitated through lifting of some travel restrictions. These meetings were hosted in Central Europe, America, and Australia. The

2023 meeting was the first in-person meeting of the entire CNCA since the pandemic and was hosted by the city of Toronto.

2 Benefits of CNCA Membership

2.1 Membership of the CNCA affords Glasgow many benefits. Most significantly, it allows the city to be part of an international cohort of cities working towards a common goal, ensuring that Glasgow continues to be informed on developments in cities across the world, as well as maintaining its position as a leader and influencer in the fight against climate change.

2.2 In addition, the CNCA, through initiatives like the 'Game Changer Fund', secures funding to be made available to support member cities working on selected challenges in the race to net zero. The fund invites submissions from cities which are evaluated for funding by a selection panel. Glasgow has been successful in securing $50k to support the co-designing of a collaborative system with local people to embed participatory democracy and support delivery of a just transition in Glasgow

2.3 Most recently, Glasgow has been working with the members of the Steering Group to evaluate the registration of the CNCA in Europe to facilitate more effective integration with EU funding and with other consortiums working in this space.

2.4 The CNCA is also developing online resources, with the most recent being the development of an online course as a comprehensive introduction for cities to life cycle assessment, embodied carbon, biobased materials, and circularity in construction in partnership with One Click LCA.

3 Annual General Meeting

3.1 The 2023 AGM was held in October in Toronto over 3 days and include a full agenda.

3.2 Across the three days, there was a mix of 'deep dive' sessions and site visits. The deep dive sessions were designed to allocate time for cities to present on specific work in relation to a series of themes. The themes covered were;

- Climate justice
- Adaptation
- Resilience
- Nature Based Solutions
- Democratization of Energy Supply
- Youth Engagement Strategies
- Leveraging Municipal Assets
- Mobility Hubs/Urban Freight
- Carbon-neutral Tourism

- Built environment
- Building City-Regional and Whole of Government Approaches, and
- Consumption Based Emissions & Food Systems

3.3 Each of the above deep dives started with a short presentation by member cities. All presentations have been made available to the members. There followed discussion about the work being done by cities in these areas, the challenges experienced, and opportunities for working together in future, including designing future funding opportunities.

3.4 In addition to the above deep dive sessions, there were a series of guest talks and site visits, which included:

3.4.1 Presentation of the work of local artists in relation to communicating the climate emergency and promoting action in support of changing behaviours towards those which support a more sustainable lifestyle and economy. This included a presentation from internationally renowned artist Benjamin Von Wong, whose work has been displayed at climate events across the world including at COP and concentrates on using existing materials to challenge the ways in which we consume and dispose of materials (https://www.vonwong.com/).

3.4.2 Much like Glasgow, Toronto has a large motorway running through the centre of the city. The Toronto City Government has worked hard with local stakeholders to activate the spaces underneath the motorway. This includes the establishment of food growing areas that utilise water run-off from the motorway, through passive filtration systems and into planters. This space was also activated as an arts space, with information presented in various formats about the city's climate work. High efficiency lighting was also used to create interesting and safe spaces to ensure safety for citizens in the city.

3.4.3 A tour was organised to visit a former area of vacant and derelict land next to the major railway line bringing people into the city. An agreement was set up with a development agency to develop this land which, due to the former industrial usage, was not fit for conventional commercial or residential development. This agency set up the Stackt Market (https://stacktmarket.com/), a development made from shipping containers re-purposed as small shop fronts for small start-ups and pop-up businesses looking for short-term leases. The principles behind this development are based in circularity and showcase how the principles of a circular economy can result in innovative and successful businesses. Such is the success of Stackt that they have included more food and drink provision with small local businesses, as well as providing community benefits through developing ground for sports such as basketball and pickleball. This development exemplifies ways in which Glasgow could enhance the circular economy in the city.

3.4.4 There was also a site visit to and presentation by Toronto University, who have installed ground source heat pumps in the green space on their campus as a way to capture renewable heat and feed it into the heating system in the Toronto, which is connected to the city's district heating and cooling network. In addition to this, there was another presentation by local utility company

Enwave, who have built a network that uses a deep lake cooling system to provide cooling to the city. Both projects were of specific interest to Glasgow as the show ways in which existing assets can be integrated into heating and cooling networks and link well with the aims and ambitions of Glasgow's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy.

3.4.5 Finally, there was a site visit to look at how Toronto has shaped development along the lakeside to ensure that flood prevention is included within the design of both new buildings and civic realm, including the use of nature-based solutions and natural assets as adaptation measures.

3.5 The meeting ended with a discussion on the challenges the member cities are facing and how the strategy for the CNCA in 2024 should be shaped to support these problems.

4. Next Steps

4.1 There is great interest amongst the CNCA cities for Glasgow to host either the 2024 or 2025 AGM. Stockholm have also expressed an interest in hosting 2024. Discussion are ongoing to determine who the hosts will be for the next meetings with Glasgow highly likely to be host on one of these years. It would be reasonable to allow Stockholm to host in 2024 and put Glasgow in position to host in 2025, aligning the meeting with the city's 850th celebrations.

5 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial:	Membership of the CNCA costs $10k p.a. and is paid for from Sustainability budget in NRS.
Legal:	This report raises no new legal issues.
Personnel:	This report raises no personnel issues
Procurement:	This report raises no new procurement issues

Council Strategic Plan: This work supports the key aims of Grand Challenge 3, Mission 2 of the Council Strategic Plan.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes	N/A

2021-25? Please specify.	
What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?	No significant impact from this report.
Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.	No significant impact from this report.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:	The work of the CNCA supports all actopins within the Climate plan, as well as supporting the work of the circular economy, the Just Transition, the Adaptation Plan, the LHEES, and the City Development Plan
What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?	Lessons learned and relationships developed from and with other member cities will provide support to climate projects. GCC will continue to seek more opportunities to secure funding from the CNCA to support climate projects.
Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?	Yes
Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:	This report has no immediate impacts upon privacy or data protection.

6 Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that Committee;

1) Notes the contents of this report