



Glasgow City Council

**Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring
City Policy Committee**

**Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of
Neighbourhoods and Sustainability**

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Item 3

27th May 2025

NET ZERO MISSION CITIES SUBMISSION

Purpose of Report:

To provide Committee with an update on Glasgow's successful submission to the European Union's Net Zero Cities Mission.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to:

- 1) Note the contents of this report;
- 2) Note that further updates will be provided in Summer 2026.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2019, Glasgow declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency and established a working group to develop recommendations for the city to reach Net Zero.
- 1.2 Following this, Glasgow City Council published its [Climate Plan](#) in 2021 which was based upon the recommendations of the Climate Emergency Working Group. Through this work, the city set a target of achieving Net Zero Carbon by 2030.
- 1.3 Glasgow has made significant progress on its trajectory towards Net Zero Carbon by 2030, achieving a 45.7% carbon emissions reduction in 2022 from a 2006 baseline year.

2. Background

- 2.1 As part of the Horizon Europe programme¹, the European Union launched an ambitious mission for [“100 Climate-Neutral Smart Cities by 2030”](#) in September 2021. Alongside the objective of carbon neutrality by 2030, the Mission sought to ensure participating cities could act as innovation hubs to inspire other European cities to follow a similar trajectory.
- 2.2 [NetZeroCities](#) was established to support this mission by providing expert advice and tailored guidance to cities looking to establish a pathway towards net zero by 2030. The objective for NetZeroCities was to support European cities in developing a robust plan to reach Net Zero.² As a Mission City, this plan is called a *Climate City Contract*.
- 2.3 Upon successful submission and approval of a Climate City Contract, applicant cities would be granted a Mission Label that intends to unlock access to a wider range of climate related European funding schemes and private investment opportunities.
- 2.4 At time of writing, 112 cities are taking part in the NetZeroCities programme, more can be found out about the cities [here](#). Within the UK, Glasgow and Bristol are the only cities who have successfully submitted applications.
- 2.5 Glasgow City Council has now received confirmation of a successful application to become a Mission City. The Council was granted the Mission Label status at an award ceremony in Vilnius, Lithuania in May 2025.

¹ Horizon Europe is the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation. It aims to tackle climate change, help to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and boost the EU's competitiveness and growth.

² In addition, 12 non-EC nations were invited to join to Net Zero Cities Mission, taking the total up to 112.

3. Progress Update

3.1 To achieve 'Mission Label' status, applicant cities are required to submit three key components, a Climate Neutrality Commitment, Action Plan, and Investment Plan. The following bullet points present more detail on each and Glasgow's approach to them:

- **Climate Neutrality Commitment.** The 2030 Climate Neutrality Commitment which outlined agreements from local, regional, and national stakeholders, contributing to Glasgow's climate goals. Glasgow's Climate Neutrality Commitment builds on the [Sustainable Glasgow Charter](#) and will be supported through stakeholder networks like the Sustainable Glasgow Partnership.
- **Climate Neutrality Action Plan.** This plan details strategies to achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2030, covering governance, policy integration, and implementation. Glasgow's submission built on ongoing city initiatives and aligned with the Net Zero Routemap (discussed in section 4.2 below).
- **Climate Neutrality Investment Plan.** This plan outlines Glasgow's financial needs for achieving Net Zero Carbon by 2030, helping structure investment strategies and mobilise funding. This work is seen as a supporting element of the ongoing development of the [model for climate investment](#).

3.2 Glasgow City Council submitted its application into the Net Zero Cities initiative in September 2024. Early in 2025, it was confirmed that Glasgow's submission had passed an initial 'completeness check' and had been passed to the European Commission for a full review and formal decision. Glasgow City Council received confirmation of a successful application on the 30th of April 2025.

3.3 As a result of achieving Mission Label Status, Glasgow is now able to access tailored support on all aspects of the Net Zero transition including; technical specialist input, governance, social innovation, citizen engagement, and finance. All elements of support are offered through the [Climate City Capital Hub](#), an initiative delivered under the banner of NetZero Cities. The Capital Hub is split into two key components:

- **Technical Assistance Programme.** In collaboration with the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Capital Hub works with cities to prepare their projects for financing. Cities can submit their projects for technical support and the NetZeroCities team, in collaboration with the EIB will support in getting projects 'investment ready'.
- **Capital Facilitation.** The Hub will support cities to identify the most appropriate financial structure for their project, considering all available public and private financing options. By leveraging diverse sources of

capital, including public, private and philanthropic funding, the fundability of city climate initiatives are enhanced. This support will enable cities to capitalise on a broader scope of funding opportunities.

3.4 This support can be offered across a range of thematic areas relevant to Glasgow's Net Zero ambition, including:

- Mobility and transport
- Green industry
- Social Innovation
- Circular economy
- Governance and policy
- Built environment
- Finance and business models
- Nature (NBS, biodiversity, natural resource policy)
- Energy systems
- Adaptation
- Technology and infrastructure
- Participation, culture and democracy
- Learning and capabilities

3.5 Across the thematic areas outlined above, NetZeroCities offer a range of different modalities of support, including:

- **Collaboration and Peer Learning.** This could include (i) peer support, (ii) knowledge sharing, and (iii) facilitated co-creation.
- **Policy and Strategy Development.** This could include (i) policy/governance support, (ii) support on the development of roadmaps and (iii) support on approaches to scaling initiatives.
- **Research and Analysis.** This could include (i) risk analysis (ii) case studies (iii) benchmarking assessments and (iv) evaluation and monitoring.

3.6 Glasgow City Council has received technical support from the NetZeroCities initiative to advance the Council's technical understanding of the [Community Renewable Energy Framework](#) (CREF) initiative.

3.7 In early May the EU Cities Mission hosted a conference for Mission Cities in Vilnius, Lithuania. Glasgow attended the conference which included an award ceremony for successful applicant cities.

3.8 The Capital Hub and Technical Support offers included as a benefit for Mission Cities have been in touch with the Council throughout the process of our application. This support was explored with the view of utilising this in full if we were successful in achieving Mission Status. With that status secured, we are now initiating meetings with our City Advisor and the Capital Hub to

identify how we can integrate that support into actions set out in our Net Zero Routemap and our Model for Climate Investment. This support, as well as the peer sharing through the Mission City network will be of great value the City and our climate ambitions.

4. Next Steps: Integration with Existing Policy

4.1 At present, in relation to the city's ambition to become a Mission City, Glasgow City Council is progressing several key pieces of work that underpin our approach to achieving Net Zero Carbon.

4.2 Glasgow City Council has recently finalised a '**Net Zero Routemap**' for the city. The Routemap will enhance existing strategies by:

- Establishing interim, science-based targets required to reach net zero
- Developing an approach for the city that allows priority emissions areas (such as transport and heating) to be addressed
- Adopting a whole-systems approach to emissions reduction across the city and
- Creating a delivery plan with costed scenario pathways.

Glasgow City Council is currently internalising the outputs of the Routemap to inform next steps and embed within the review of the Climate Plan. This may assist the Council in how it prioritises initiatives for support through Mission Label status.

4.3 A review of our existing **Climate Plan** is underway which will look to:

- identify where there have been changes to the policy and legislative landscape since original publication and
- whether the city needs to reassess its strategic approach to climate change due to deeper knowledge such as that identified through the Net Zero Routemap work.

The updated Climate Plan is scheduled to be presented to this Committee in post-summer recess.

4.4 Glasgow City Council is working on a Model for Climate Investment, which will work to unlock the investment required to realise the Council ambitions around heat decarbonisation and Net Zero Carbon. There are two parts to this proposal that require separate processes to be pursued but are inherently linked. The first is the Delivery Vehicle which will create the conditions that enable the private sector to work with the Council in bringing forward infrastructure projects that are within the Council's control, business case ready and investable. The second is the pursuit of a Climate Investment Vehicle for the city/city region that would be controlled externally. More information can be found [here](#).

- 4.5 The pieces of work discussed above will help the city gain a stronger understanding of where investment or activity needs to be directed and how we plan to secure the investment required to reach our Net Zero target. Achieving the NetZeroCities 'Mission Label' status, alongside our existing program of work, puts the city in a strong position to seek funding/investment from the full range of sources available to Glasgow as a 'Mission' city.

5. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal: There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Personnel: The Net Zero Cities submission is being managed through current staff resources within the Sustainability Team

Procurement: There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report.

Council Strategic Plan: The outputs of the successful Net Zero Cities submission will support the following Strategic objectives of Glasgow City Council:

Grand Challenge 2 Mission 2: Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy.

Grand Challenge 3 Mission 1: Deliver sustainable transport and travel aligned with the city region

Grand Challenge 3 Mission 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify. Yes. The project aims to enable Net Zero activities which should have a positive impact on everyone across the city.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

Positive impact

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

Not directly but through the delivery of net zero projects people experiencing socio economic disadvantage will be supported.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

The achievement of 'Mission Label' status through submission to the Net Zero Cities Mission will support a wider range of actions within Glasgow's Climate Plan including the ambition of net zero carbon by 2030.

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

The Mission label will support a wide range of projects that help reduce the impact from climate and mitigate against the impacts the city is already experiencing.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

The achievement of 'Mission Label' status through submission to the Net Zero Cities Mission will support Glasgow's ambition of net zero carbon by 2030.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report
Y/N

No

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Committee is asked to:

- 1) Note the contents of this report;
- 2) Note that further updates will be provided in Summer 2026.