



Glasgow City Council

Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee

Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Regeneration & Sustainability

Contact: Gavin Slater Ext: 78347

Item 2

21st January 2025

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 2024 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 costs \$10k per annum.
- 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

first in-person meeting of the entire CNCA since the pandemic and was hosted by the city of Toronto in 2023. The second and most recent meeting was hosted by the City of Stockholm in 2024.

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 2024 AGM was held in October in Stockholm over 3 days and included a full agenda.
- 3.2 Ahead of meeting in Stockholm, the CNCA was issued a video created by the City of Stockholm to provide an introduction to Stockholm and its climate ambition. A link to the video, "A Faster Transition For A Climate Positive Stockholm" is provided here to allow committee members to view it. (<https://play.mediaflow.com/ovp/14/80CC4YPFFP>)
- 3.3 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;
 - Centering Equity and Justice
 - Communications & Engagement Training

- The Built Environment: Embodied Carbon Targets & Planetary Boundaries
 - Getting to Net-Zero & Beyond, and
 - CNCA Strategy Setting
- 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 of the CNCA. 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 A introductory tour of Stockholm by boat, highlighting the main points of interest in the City in relation to climate activity. Unfortunately, due to prior commitments, Glasgow's CNCA representative had to get a later flight and was not able to join this boat tour. The boat tour was then followed by an official welcome to Stockholm by the Mayor of Stockholm and held within Princes Gallery at the City Hall, which is part of the venue used to present the Nobel Prize winner. This welcome was concluded by a tour of the City Hall debating chamber.
- 3.4.2 Much like Glasgow, Stockholm is a port City and its history is built upon being so. Also, like Glasgow, Stockholm is affected in changes to precipitation, water management, and flooding, so a site visit was planned to the redevelopment site between Gamal Stan and Sodermalm, called Vattentorget. This point in the City is between two lakes and has become unfit for purpose as changes to transport needs have changes, and the existing infrastructure has become eroded over time. The redevelopment of the site includes a new bridge across the meeting point of the lakes and includes a much bigger priority given to cycle traffic. The redevelopment also includes new restaurant space, terraced meadows and footpaths. The development has had to overcome significant geotechnical and construction difficulties. More detail on these issues can be found at <https://vaxer.stockholm/omraden/stadsutvecklingsomraden/slussen/nytt-fran-projektet/upplev-vattentorget/>
- 3.4.3 A tour was organised to the Stockholm Royal Seaport redevelopment site. This site is situated in the harbour and is adjacent to the Royal National City Park and has been redeveloped for housing and amenity. The result of a concerted effort to take a holistic design approach to redeveloping this area has resulted in a spectacular and vibrant residential area that utilises modern building techniques whilst remaining true to Stockholm's built heritage. The development includes district heating to all properties, built in green and blue assets that direct residents through natural assets, such as canals, geological features, and the boundary of the national park as they move about the area. Waste in the area is handled through a highly efficiency evacuated waste system that uses pipes to move waste that has been segregated at source and

moves it to specific areas for vehicular collection, away from residential properties.

- 3.4.4 The final visit of the meeting was to a district heating plant that has installed an innovative approach to using Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) to capture the residual CO₂ emissions from an already very clean district heating system and, through a chemical process involving reacting pressurised potassium carbonate the emissions, allowing CO₂ to be captured and then liquified at pressure. This biogenic CO₂ is then pumped into disused oil fields where it will be stored. This work has been supported by EU funding and the lessons learned will be shared to allow other countries to consider this technology as part of their net zero strategy.
- 3.5 The meeting ended with a discussion on the challenges the member cities are facing and how the strategy for the CNCA in 2025 should be shaped to support these problems.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 As reported to committee in the last update in 2023, there was a very strong desire from the Alliance to host an AGM in Glasgow. This was put on hold in 2024, with Stockholm taking that year, to allow Glasgow to host in the year of its 850th anniversary.
- 4.2 The 2025 CNCA AGM will be held in Glasgow in the middle of June. Plans have already commenced in preparation for hosting.

5 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Membership of the CNCA costs \$10k p.a. and is paid for from Sustainability budget in NRS.
<i>Legal:</i>	This report raises no new legal issues.
<i>Personnel:</i>	This report raises no personnel issues
<i>Procurement:</i>	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 2021-25? Please specify.

N/A

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 actions 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.

5 Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that Committee;

- 1) Notes the contents of this report