



Glasgow City Council

Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring Committee

Report by Director of Regional Economic Growth

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Item 7

27th February 2024

COP28 update

Purpose of Report:

To present an update to the Committee on the city's participation at the COP28 United Nations Climate Conference.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to note the benefits of Glasgow's participation in the COP process.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Glasgow hosted the COP26 United Nations Climate Change Conference in November 2021 on behalf of the United Kingdom. The city has continued to engage in legacy activities from this event as well as to connect globally with a range of key partners in the annual COP process, particularly through its urban peer networks. Glasgow has also been an active participant in the next COP events in the two years following its own host city status. In this light, members of the Committee previously considered a [report](#) on the legacy of such work at their meeting of 17 January 2023, which included reflections on Glasgow's attendance at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.
- 1.2 COP28 was held in December 2023 under the presidency of the United Arab Emirates, with Dubai being selected as host city. Glasgow was represented by the Leader of the Council, with officer support, and there was also a delegation from key local partners such as the universities and the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, thereby ensuring a strong team approach from the city.

2.0 Participation at COP28

- 2.1 The main period of attendance for the Glasgow delegation was 1-6 December, these dates having been identified in the light of the UAE COP Presidency themes for each day and their relevance to city priorities. The event began with a strong presence from sub-national leaders, particularly at city level, to go alongside those days traditionally allocated for national leaders to gather. The Local Climate Action Summit was hosted by Bloomberg Philanthropies in conjunction with the UAE Presidency and covered areas such as the key role of urban and regional leaders, climate finance, the equity agenda, and how to progress high ambition around climate issues.
- 2.2 Discussion had taken place on activities and a speaker programme for the Council with key contacts established from previous COP events. They included other city networks and private sector partners, as well as global bodies through the United Nations. This led to a programme of formal speaking engagements for the Leader at COP28, principally in the Blue Zone and across a range of sustainability issues related to the Council's own agenda.
- 2.3 One of the strongest relationships for the Council in its local work on the sustainability agenda and for COP is with the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. It worked with the British Chambers of Commerce to create a programme of events at COP28, in which the Council actively participated. This reflects the leading role which the Glasgow Chamber plays in the British Chambers network on green issues and around the Climate Chamber City mission on responsible and sustainable trade opportunities. The Glasgow Chamber will also host its second Congress of Business event in May this year as a key legacy of its participation in the COP process and as a major element of the business sector's contribution to the city's climate ambitions.
- 2.4 As at COP27, the Council worked with the 3Ci collaboration to shape speaking engagements and opportunities to meet with potential investors. 3Ci is the

Cities Commission for Climate Investment and it is a key legacy from Glasgow hosting COP26, having been established for that event. It brings together the UK Core Cities, Scottish Cities Alliance and other local authorities to make a shared case to national government and the private markets for support in their decarbonisation plans.

2.5 The UK Government hosted a national pavilion in the Blue Zone and the Scottish Government again co-sponsored a sub-national pavilion on multi-level action with the LGMA constituency (local government and municipal associations). The Scottish Government had signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Arab Emirates shortly before COP28, which relates to co-operation and trade and investment opportunities around clean education and technology and the transition to clean energy.

2.6 Key outputs from COP28 for Glasgow were:

- An announcement at the event of lighthouse city status being awarded to Glasgow in a nature-friendly urban project led by the UN Environment Programme, ICLEI and World Bank. This drew on an earlier announcement by UNEP of Glasgow being selected as a role model city for its Generation Restoration project, using its experience of urban nature-based solutions in support of a programme of work with cities from the Global South. As a lighthouse city, Glasgow will be given access both to potential funding for its own local activities and learning from a Mayors' Forum of urban leaders.
- The inclusion of two pilot areas in the city (Possilpark and Govanhill) by 3Ci for its Net Zero Neighbourhoods project, announced at an event co-hosted at COP with KPMG. This looks to take an area-based approach to decarbonisation of both the built environment and transport and to address the complex issues of governance around how to meet costs across different tenure and construction types in ways which respect the need for equity and help to define the role of a local authority. It will lead to publication of a pitch book of proposals for the markets in summer 2024 and a fully developed business case and delivery programme in time for COP29.
- Discussion with the Global Resilient Cities Network at COP28 confirmed that it wishes to appoint the Leader of the Council to its board. Glasgow has been an active member of this network since its creation in 2013 and its agenda is very much focused on issues of urban equity, climate resilience and municipal action. The network has almost 100 cities in 40 countries around the world and offers a range of opportunities for Glasgow to partner with these cities and access funding. In this light, there is the potential for the Leader to be asked by the Network to support its input to future COP events with other city mayors.
- The Leader was also able to meet Mayor Olaksandr Sienkevych of Mykolaiv, Ukraine at COP28 prior to the Council considering a formal twinning arrangement with his city at its meeting on 7 December.

2.7 The main focus for engagement at COP28 for the Council team was around climate finance and making contact with private sector investors. Such work has followed a previous [update](#) to the committee on this agenda, which noted the significance of the Council reaching out to the private capital markets, and has helped to inform the item tabled for this meeting on climate investment.

Opportunities were therefore taken at COP28, especially through the Chamber programme, to present the city's pitchbook that was created for the event and which includes its ambitions around decarbonisation, as well as investment in the Scottish Event Campus to realise its goal to become the first net zero events campus in the UK. COP28 also came shortly after the announcement by the Leader at the State of the City Economy conference of Glasgow's ambition to develop a model of reaching out to private partners for investment at both scale and pace in its decarbonisation plans. All contacts made at COP28 are being followed up, with further opportunities to continue discussion with them sought through the Council's participation in key events such as the Scottish Cities week in London in January, the All-Energy conference and exhibition at the Scottish Event Campus in May, and the UKREiiF investors' event in Leeds in May.

- 2.8 Whilst the development of links with and potential acquisition of climate investment are key aims of attendance at COP events, other forms of inward investment and trade also formed part of discussions at COP28 - particularly through participation in the Glasgow/British Chambers of Commerce delegation. These have connected to sectors from which the city has identified strengths in its innovation offer, such as life sciences and advanced manufacturing, and have generated further opportunities for a Glasgow team approach to harness both local collaboration and the projection of clear messages to global investors and businesses.

3.0 Next steps

- 3.1 The COP conference schedule rotates each year to a different UN regional area and in 2024 moves to the Eastern Europe Group. The national host of COP29 has been confirmed as Azerbaijan and it has chosen its capital city Baku as the event location from 11-22 November 2024. In 2025 the conference moves to the Latin American and Caribbean Group and Brazil has been agreed as host nation for COP30. It has selected the Amazonian city of Belem as conference location, with the event taking place between 10-21 November 2025. The COP process requires UN member states which are party to the Paris Agreement to report on and update their national emissions reduction and adaptation plans (Nationally Declared Contributions) every five years and COP30 will represent the next major staging point for this agenda.
- 3.2 The Council will continue to participate in discussion with key partners and support the sub-national contribution to the COP process, with consideration on its potential attendance at future COP events to be given in due course. Such discussion will focus particularly on climate finance and the role of urban partnerships, with the latter being given extra momentum through the Leader of the Council participating in the Global Resilient Cities Network.

4.0 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: There are no immediate financial implications from the proposals in this report for the Council.

Legal: There are no immediate legal implications arising from the proposals in this report for the Council.

Personnel: Actions relating to the proposals in this report will be undertaken using existing staff resources.

Procurement: There are no immediate procurement issues relating to the proposals in this report.

Council Strategic Plan: This work underpins Grand Challenge 3 of the Strategic Plan on fighting the climate emergency in a just transition to net zero.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25 The activities described in this report are informed by the work which the Council is undertaking on a just transition and associated equalities analyses.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? The Council's global connections to its urban peers has helped to add other cities' experience of community engagement and climate related inequalities to its own work.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage. The Council's approach to COP events is informed by the values of the Just Transition and the need to tackle existing inequalities.

Climate impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify: The work noted in this report both contributes to and is informed by the key aims of the Climate Plan, with a particular focus on securing climate finance in support of them.

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? Participation in the COP process has enhanced connections for the Council to global policy on both net zero and climate adaptation measures.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? Yes, this work aims to provide further opportunities for the city to pitch its net zero plans and projects to global investors.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts: This report has no impacts upon privacy or data protection.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to note the benefits of Glasgow's participation in the COP process.