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Glasgow City Council

Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction  
City Policy Committee

Item 1

8th June 2021

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods,  
Regeneration & Sustainability

Contact: Gavin Slater Ext: 78347

**GLASGOW'S CLIMATE PLAN: OUR RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE &  
ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY**

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Committee on the Climate Emergency Plan, including Public Consultation and present the revised Plan with proposed future actions.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (1) Notes Glasgow City Council's action in response to the recommendations made by the Climate Emergency Working Group and by the Ecological Emergency Working Group;
- (2) Notes the outcome of Public conversations and response to those;
- (3) Discusses the proposed plan and recommends that this is referred to the City Administration Committee for approval.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

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### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 There is global consensus that climate change is the greatest challenge of our lifetime. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that if we are to keep global warming to safe limits, major transformative action and commitment will be required from a range of state actors, businesses, communities and individuals.
- 1.2 The Climate Emergency Working Group, which included representation from all political groups of the Council as well as a range of representation from key sectors, was established shortly after the meeting held by Committee on 5 February 2019. The Council declared a climate and ecological emergency at its meeting of [16 May 2019](#).
- 1.3 Members previously considered a report on the draft Climate Emergency Implementation Plan and response to the recommendations of the Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) at the meeting of the Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2020. That report can be accessed [here](#).
- 1.4 The report proposed 52 actions in response to the CEWG recommendations, with a target for the city to achieve carbon neutrality by the year 2030.
- 1.5 Members requested that the Council undertook a public consultation, including a series of climate conversations on the proposed plan and associated actions, returning to Committee with a revised plan. This Committee meeting represents the earliest opportunity to deliver on that commitment.

### 2 Ecological Emergency Working Group

- 2.1 Glasgow was the first Scottish City to declare an ecological emergency in May of 2019. The Council acknowledged the significance of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Global Assessment Report 2019 which indicated biodiversity loss was increasing due to land-use change, the impact of climate change, pollution, invasive alien species and the exploitation of natural resources.
- 2.2 The establishment of an Ecological Emergency Working Group was agreed at the Environment Sustainability and Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2019. The report can be accessed [here](#).
- 2.3 The group's remit was to ensure ecological aspects of the Climate Emergency Working Group's recommendations form an integral part of the city's current strategies and action plans and that these are aligned with the emerging Climate Emergency Action Plan.
- 2.4 The Ecological Emergency Working Group published its report to Committee on [24 November 2020](#) containing 25 recommendations seeking to address the decline in habitat, highlight the need for the Council and partners to work together to enhance biodiversity across the city as well as the need to provide further opportunity to promote ecological issues to all our Glaswegians..

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### **3 Public Consultation on the draft Climate Emergency Implementation Plan**

- 3.1 In order to foster a meaningful city conversation with local institutions, communities and businesses, the City Council began a public consultation on the draft Climate Emergency Implementation Plan on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 until 24<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
- 3.2 As part of the consultation process, local communities, individuals, private, public and voluntary sector organisations were invited to participate and share their views on the proposed plan, via the following means:
- Online survey;
  - Climate conversations- online workshop sessions;
  - Email submissions.
- 3.3 Participants in the consultation included both individuals and organisations in the city. Some of the organisations responding and or attending the climate conversations were Glasgow Disability Alliance; Scottish Power Energy Networks; Glasgow Centre for Population and Health; SPT; Get Glasgow Moving; Living Rent; Unison; Scottish Green Party; Woodlands Community Trust; South Seeds; Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Green Network; NatureScot; Freewheel North; Church of Scotland; Salvation Army and others listed in the appended consultation report.
- 3.4 There were three climate conversations aimed at communities, stakeholder organisations, and individuals in the city. These events were held on 12th, 13th and 14th January 2021. And a total of 64 individuals attended.
- 3.5 A total of 572 responses were received to the online survey; 14 organisational responses were submitted by email and 180 identical individual submissions were received via the Scottish Greens mailing list.
- 3.6 In summary the key points from the consultation are: -
- Generally, well received ambition to bring forward a place-based Climate Emergency Implementation Plan to address the climate and ecological emergency and deliver a just transition to a low carbon city.
  - General agreement that the target of carbon neutrality by 2030 is appropriate, but it was not always clear what this means and what it includes.
  - There was general consensus that the 2045 target was confusing and ambiguous.
  - General support of the themes but highlighted that the document is challenging to navigate and at times leads to duplication.

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- General suggestion that there is a disconnect between narrative and action and that proposed action is not always sufficiently ambitious;
- There was a call for clearer scope and objectives, milestones and indicators;
- Responses highlighted the need for more open and collaborative approaches to community engagement;
- Suggestion that Climate Justice should cut across all actions in the plan;
- Responses suggested a few key areas where action is missing or insufficient, these include: -
  - Transport, including public transport and active travel;
  - Waste and Waste Reduction;
  - Circular Economy;
  - Food, including local food growing and sustainable, affordable, healthy food;
  - Ecological emergency and local biodiversity action.

3.7 The appended consultation report provides more detail about the key comments received during the different components of the consultation.

## 4 Developing the Proposed Plan

- 4.1 In response to the 61 recommendations presented by the Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) and the 25 recommendations presented by the Ecological Emergency Working Group, the Council established a collaborative cross departmental working group. This internal group has enabled consideration of all recommendations, including what actions have been taken to date, and what should be done in the future. This group have also worked together to determine how the Council can best exercise a leadership role for the city in drawing together the collective action of other agencies, businesses and especially communities. The proposed Plan seeks to capture all this work, while also considering the responses received during the consultation period.
- 4.2 Whilst this plan was being developed, guidance was issued by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) in its recent annual report to the UK Parliament. The CCC set out urgent steps that must be taken to begin a green and resilient COVID-19 recovery. The report states that a green recovery is the only option to ensure that a low carbon, resilient economy can arise from what is expected to be the biggest economic shock in a generation.
- 4.3 In other developments, the Scottish Government published their Programme for Government on the 3rd of September 2020. The First Minister announced investment for enhancing our biodiversity, promoting active travel, green jobs and cleaner energy transition, stating that 'we must treat the COVID challenge, not as a brake on our ambitions, but an accelerant.' And the Just Transition Commission published their report containing 24 recommendations for

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Scottish Ministers and other agencies to ensure that Scotland delivers a Just Transition to a Zero Carbon Nation.

### 5 Proposed Changes

- 5.1 With a view to reflecting the recommendations from the Ecological Emergency Working Group and consultation responses, this section will outline the key changes proposed to the plan.
- 5.2 It is proposed that, to better reflect the remit and aspirations of the Council and the city's ambition, it is renamed Glasgow's Climate Plan: our response to the climate and ecological emergency.
- 5.3 In order to add clarity to the remit and scope of the plan and help navigate the document, we propose to add: -
- A summary statement setting out high level principle aims and objectives, as well as clarifying the challenge.
  - A number of diagrams providing overview and portraying the hierarchy of the key components of plan; outlining supporting plans and policies which help address the climate emergency and CEWG recommendations, including transport and housing plans.
  - A route map for the various actions in the plan to get an overview of the timescale and how the various components complement each other.
- 5.4 We propose one clear target for 2030. Highlighting what level of reduction is required between now and 2030 in order to achieve net zero carbon and setting out that the city will offset residual emissions only, striving to reduce, avoid and mitigate as much of the city's emissions as possible.
- 5.5 We will clarify the Council's scope of influence, targets and ambition at the beginning of the plan. Also stating that the city aims to address the climate emergency by: -
- Adjusting the Council's own working practice and estate to become climate ready and future proof.
  - Ensuring that all the Council's decisions, policies and development proposals are climate ready.
  - Supporting organisations across Glasgow to become more climate ready.
  - Raising public awareness of climate change.
  - Enabling and supporting local climate action.
- 5.6 We propose to indicate clear timescales, milestones and indicators for each action, improving clarity and accountability.

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- 5.7 There are actions where more ambition is required and possible considering national legislation, such as banning gas boilers in all new buildings in the city, which will be brought forward to 2025.
- 5.8 We propose additional actions on a number of areas, for example: -
- Food- supporting Glasgow Food Plan, Food Growing Strategy and ensuring that the city supports the availability of sustainable, healthy, tasty, accessible and local food for all; supports local food suppliers through public procurement and develops a communications and education campaign about the benefits of plant-based diets.
  - We propose to work with local organisations and communities of identity, place, and interest to co-develop a communications strategy for the city.
  - The action on divestment proposes that SPFO lead by example in developing and implementing Climate Change Strategies as well as disclosing climate risks as part of their support for the Task Force on Climate related Financial Disclosure (TCFD).
  - New actions to reflect the recommendations of the Ecological emergency working group, including climate and ecological emergency training for staff, outdoor and biodiversity education, peat free procurement policy and Urban Woodland Strategy.
- 5.9 We propose to add more detail and clarity around each theme, for theme 3- Well connected Thriving City, for example, clarity is to be added in relation to the Housing challenge and transport challenges, as well as proposed solutions via this plan and others currently being developed or requiring review. We will refine the narrative around each of the 5 themes to better align the narrative to the action plan and increase transparency.
- 5.10 To improve transparency and strengthen monitoring and evaluation, we propose to set clear milestones and measurements to enable action progress to be tracked year on year. Furthermore, the city is setting up a Climate Resilience and Sustainability Project Management office which will be the governance mechanism to resource, implement and monitor progress against the actions in the plan.
- 5.11 The attached Plan provides Glasgow City Council's response to the Climate and Ecological Emergency. It outlines the progress which has been made to date, sets a course for further work, and describes the means by which the city and its people will face the extraordinary challenges of the global climate and ecological emergency.

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### 6 Climate Plan – Key actions

6.1 The Climate Plan was prepared considering the following key framework documents:

- The CEWG 61 recommendations
- The EEWG 25 recommendations
- The Council's Strategic Plan
- The Committee on Climate Change report
- The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

6.2 It is of note that the Climate Plan has been aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, which have been designed and adopted by the United Nations. Embracing this framework gives us common points of reference when addressing the various actions required to deal with the climate emergency situation on a local, national and global scale.

6.3 The Climate Plan presents five main themes. These have been identified by the Council as key themes that the City must address based on the priorities outlined in the key strategic documents outlined above. These themes are:

- Communication and Community Empowerment
- Just and Inclusive Place
- Well-connected and thriving city
- Health and wellbeing
- Green Recovery.

6.4 Each of the five themes is supported by a series of ambitious actions detailed and described in the attached Climate Plan. They include: -

- To develop a net zero plan for the city.
- To develop a programme to rapidly accelerate the delivery of the LBAP, PP, OSS.
- To accelerate implementation of the GCVGN Blueprint for the city and city region, providing opportunities to connect habitats, biodiversity and people.
- To develop an urban woodland strategy for the city.
- To better utilise Vacant and Derelict Land in the city to meet the needs of local communities: connection to nature, health & wellbeing, energy and active travel.
- To develop a comprehensive active travel network for the city.
- To develop a Peat Free Procurement Policy for the City Council.
- To ban Gas boilers in all new buildings in the city.
- To develop innovation districts piloting low carbon technologies, rewilding and climate adaptation approaches that can be rolled out across the city.
- To develop a Green New Deal for Glasgow helping to deliver green financial models for the city and support the creation of green jobs, and local skills.

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## 7 Next Steps

- 7.1 The Climate and Ecological emergency is undoubtedly one of the biggest challenges faced by the Council and its partners. Recent events surrounding the COVID 19 pandemic have created significant impact and disruption in our society but also offer potential opportunities to support a truly green and resilient recovery. Addressing both emergencies, will require very significant changes in the approaches taken towards policy-making, service delivery and performance management as well as key behavioural changes in our citizens.
- 7.2 The Council cannot solve this challenge alone. It must be through collaboration with our Sustainable Glasgow partnership; all our city partners; public and private sector organisations and our communities that we tackle these enormous challenges ahead of us. This will involve the City Council taking a lead role to support and influence organisations and individuals across the city. If Glasgow is to be successful in tackling climate change and “build back better”, we must do it together. And will engage in a number of community conversations with Glaswegians in the spirit of co-creation and collaboration to build trust, foster collaboration and local action to address both the ecological and climate emergencies.
- 7.3 Members are asked to discuss the attached plan and recommend the proposed Climate Plan is referred to the City Administration Committee for approval.

## 8 Policy and Resource Implications

### **Resource Implications:**

#### *Financial:*

There are very significant implications for the ways in which the Council sets and assesses its budgets. There will be the need for new or reassigned resources to be sought in support of the implementation plan.

#### *Legal:*

There are several areas where the Council seeks to acquire and/or exercise new or existing powers in support of its proposed action, for example, this could include the setting up of a local Energy Services Company or exercising planning powers.

#### *Personnel:*

There are very significant implications for the ways in which Council officers undertake standard working practices including the need to incorporate new priorities. There will be the need for some new or reassigned staff resources to be



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sought in support of the proposed actions under the Climate Plan and related policies.

*Procurement:*

The Climate Plan will support a review of current procurement practices, specifically relating to sustainable and circular practices and the procuring of low carbon goods and services.

**Council Strategic Plan:** The proposed plan specifically relates to all of the themes and priorities of the Council Strategic Plan. Themes include:

A Thriving Economy  
A Vibrant City  
A Healthier City  
Excellent and Inclusive Education  
Sustainable and Low Carbon City  
Resilient and Empowered Neighbourhoods  
Well Governed City that Listens and Responds

**Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22*

Yes. The Climate Plan is generally supportive of the Council's equality outcomes, specifically equality outcomes 8, 9 and 10;

8. Service users with protected characteristics are provided with targeted, improved and more accessible information about the services provided by the council family.

9. Barriers to participation in arts, learning, physical activity, learning and culture have been reduced for people with protected characteristics.

10. People with protected characteristics are more regularly and systematically involved in service delivery design by the Council family.

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

Positive impact – an EQIA screening has been undertaken. Climate Change impacts all of society however this can disproportionately impact on those most vulnerable communities. We must ensure that our actions minimise the negative impacts that climate change has on our most vulnerable communities, whilst also

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maximising their ability to participate and benefit from a just transition to a low carbon economy.

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

The Climate Emergency Implementation Plan proposes a people centered approach. Through the recommended five themes, action will be focused around the need to address the climate and ecological emergency while also bridging the gap on deep socio-economic and health inequalities in the city.

### **Sustainability Impacts:**

*Environmental:*

The Climate Plan seeks to enable the city to reduce its carbon emissions more rapidly and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

*Social, including opportunities under Article 20 of the European Public Procurement Directive:*

The proposals within the Plan are strongly linked to equality and social justice, with implications for the Council's community empowerment agenda.

*Economic:*

The plan includes proposals for a Just Transition and greening the economic development agenda.

**Privacy and Data Protection impacts:**

No immediate impacts.

## **9 Recommendations**

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (1) Notes Glasgow City Council's action in response to the recommendations made by the Climate Emergency Working Group and by the Ecological Emergency Working Group;
- (2) Notes the outcome of Public conversations and response to those;
- (3) Discusses the proposed Climate Plan and recommends that this is referred to the City Administration Committee for approval.