

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

SKYPE MEETING, 16 FEBRUARY, 2022

Present: Councillors I Taylor (Chair), I Davidson (Vice-Chair), N Baillie, R Cassie, S Dickinson, M Ford, A Kloppert, A Ross and A Wallace.

Officers: Head of Service (Transportation), Team Leader (Environment and Sustainability), Planning Service Manager (Planning and Economy), Sustainable Development Officer, all Environment and Infrastructure Services; Business Partner, Finance (Moirra Beverly), Principal Energy Management Engineer (Property & Facilities), Solicitor (Lynsey Kimmitt) and Senior Committee Officer (Niall David), all Business Services.

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chair asked Members if they had any interests to declare, in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. No interests were declared.

2. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In making decisions on the following items of business, the Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 148 of the Equality Act 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (2) to consider, where an equality impact assessment has been provided, its contents and to take those into consideration when reaching a decision.

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE OF 10 NOVEMBER, 2021

On consideration of the circulated Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 10 November, 2021, Members **agreed** to approve it as a correct record.

4. PROGRESS WITH OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There was circulated a report by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services, which updated Members on progress with actions agreed at previous meetings of the Sustainability Committee held since 19 May, 2021.

After consideration, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to note the current position in respect of the actions arising at previous meetings; and
- (2) that those actions which had been completed be removed from the list.

5. ROUTE MAP TO 2030 ARCADIS PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation from Mr Paul Bekkers and Mr Rob Banes, both Arcadis, which provided a development update on the Route Map to 2030.

The presentation highlighted that the current position was in the middle of delivering Phase 2 of the Council's Zero Carbon Road Map. The presentation included a summary of 2022/23 planned and current opportunities, CO₂e reduction and estimated costs.

The presentation concluded by explaining that a bottom-up and top-down approach to developing the future carbon budget was being taken.

The Committee **agreed** to concur with the Chair in thanking Mr Bekkers and Mr Banes for an informative presentation.

6. ROUTE MAP 2030 DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

There was circulated a report dated 5 February, 2022, by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services which provided an update on progress with regard to the Route Map 2030 development that Aberdeenshire Council officers had been working on with the support of consultants. The project was looking at what was required across the Council to reach its 75% reduction in emissions by 2030 target.

The report reminded Members that Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e) emissions and financial estimates were being made for all projects identified. A part of this work a toolkit was being developed to identify a complete view of decarbonisation progress against planned CO₂e reduction. This included a review of the capital/revenue impact and cost effectiveness (£/tCO₂e) of each reduction project so that the Council could analyse the impact on the overall budget and prioritise project selection. In parallel to this work, the team was also working on the draft Carbon Budget for 2022-23 which had been developed with a current list of projects totalling an estimated 1626 tCO₂e saving. It was being brought to the Sustainability Committee for consideration before going to the meeting of Aberdeenshire Council on 9 March, 2022.

Following discussion, the Committee **agreed** to acknowledge:-

- (1) the Route Map 2030 Development Update (Appendix 1); and
- (2) the proposed draft Carbon Budget 2022-2023 (Appendix 2).

7. CALL FOR VIEWS SUBMISSION: FINANCING AND DELIVERING A NET ZERO SCOTLAND

There was circulated a report dated 2 February, 2022, by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services which detailed the Council's response to the Scottish Parliament's Call for Views on "The Role of Local Government and its Cross-Sectoral Partners in Financing and Delivering a Net Zero Scotland".

The report explained that a comprehensive response from a number of officers was collated and demonstrated examples of good practice already in place but also the challenges facing local authorities in being able to fully support and embed the delivery of a Net Zero Scotland.

The report highlighted that the inquiry aimed to seek out the main barriers at a local level to Scotland reaching its net zero targets. It would consider what practical steps Councils were taking to break them down, in partnership with business, the voluntary sector, and local communities. It would also highlight areas where change would be needed if Councils were to play a full role in the helping us achieve the goal of a Net Zero Scotland.

The report concluded by explaining that the Council was able to provide a comprehensive response which demonstrated examples of good practice already in place but also the challenges facing local authorities in being able to fully support and embed the delivery of a Net Zero Scotland. The full response to the consultation was included as an appendix to the report.

Following discussion, the Committee **agreed** to acknowledge the Aberdeenshire Council submission to the Call for Views by the Scottish Parliament on Financing and Delivering a Net Zero Scotland which was submitted under delegated powers and following internal consultation.

8. LOCAL HEAT AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY STRATEGIES DRAFT ORDER CONSULTATION

There was circulated a report dated 5 February, 2022, by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services which detailed the Council's response to the Scottish Government on the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) Draft Order Consultation which placed a duty on local authorities to produce a LHEES and Delivery Plans by 31 December, 2023, and subsequently on a 5 yearly cycle. The consultation response from Aberdeenshire Council was to support this Order.

The report explained that the consultation was issued on 6 January, 2022, with a closing date of 2 February, 2022 and the Council was encouraged to submit a collective response. Officers also attended a workshop on the 27 January, 2022 to provide verbal feedback on the Order on behalf of the Council. The full consultation document and the response were included as appendices. As specified by the Scheme of Governance, due to the scheduled dates of Sustainability Committee meetings, the draft response was sent to the Chair, Vice Chair, and main opposition Spokesperson of the Committee for consultation and review prior to submission.

The Committee **agreed** to acknowledge the Aberdeenshire Council submission to Scottish Government on the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies Draft Order Consultation which was submitted under delegated powers, following consultation.

9. REGIONAL LAND USE PLANNING PARTNERSHIP – NORTH EAST REGION PILOT PROJECT

There was circulated a report dated 21 January, 2022, by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services on progress with the Regional Land Use Partnership Pilot, informing of the recent decision from Infrastructure Services Committee, and outlining next steps for the pilot.

The report explained that, since last reporting to Sustainability Committee on this matter in August 2021, engagement had been carried out with the North East Scotland Agricultural Advisory Group and its partners and most recently a report was presented to the meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee on 20 January, 2022. The Infrastructure Services Committee report set out the proposed governance structure, and future expectations on how the pilot would work with identified established regional partnership groups in the North East Region.

The report highlighted that the programme of work for the pilot was set out in the Scottish Government Project Specification which had previously been shared with the Committee.

The Committee **agreed** to note recent progress on the pilot project.

10. CLOSING STATEMENT BY CHAIR

As this was the final meeting of the Sustainability Committee before the Local Government Election on 5 May, 2022, the Chair thanked the Vice-Chair, Members and Officers of the Committee for their contributions to the work of the Committee during the current Council term.