

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2023 at 10.15 am

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE** to be held in **COMMITTEE ROOM 5 - WOODHILL HOUSE, WESTBURN ROAD, ABERDEEN, AB16 5GB**, on **WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2023, at 10.15 am**

This meeting will be live streamed and a recording of the public part of the meeting will be made publicly available at a later date.

Tuesday, 9 May 2023

Director of Business Services

To: Councillors S Dickinson (Chair), J Gifford (Vice-Chair), G Hall, P Johnston, F Joji, A Kloppert, S Payne and I Taylor

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B U S I N E S S

1	Sederunt and Declaration of Members' Interests	
2	Public Sector Equality Duty	3
	Consider, and if so desired, adopt the following resolution:-	
	(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.	
	(2) where an Integrated Impact Assessment is provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching a decision.	
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PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY – GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS

What is the duty?

In making decisions on the attached reports, Members are reminded of their legal duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:-

- (i) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (ii) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (iii) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The “protected characteristics” under the legislation are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; and (in relation to point (i) above only) marriage and civil partnership.

How can Members discharge the duty?

To ‘have due regard’ means that in making decisions, Members must consciously consider the need to do the three things set out above. This requires a conscious approach and state of mind. The duty must influence the final decision.

However, it is not a duty to achieve a particular result (e.g. to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination or to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups). It is a duty to have due regard to the need to achieve these goals.

How much regard is ‘due’ will depend upon the circumstances and in particular on the relevance of the needs to the decision in question. The greater the relevance and potential impact that a decision may have on people with protected characteristics, the higher the regard required by the duty.

What does this mean for Committee/Full Council decisions?

Members are directed to the section in reports headed ‘Council Priorities, Implications and Risk’. This will indicate whether or not an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been carried out as part of the development of the proposals and, if so, what the outcome of that assessment is.

An IIA will be appended to a report where it is likely, amongst other things, that the action recommended in the report could have a differential impact (either positive or negative) upon people from different protected groups. The report author will have assessed whether or not an IIA is required. If one is not required, the report author will explain why that is.

Where an IIA is provided, Members should consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision. Members should also be satisfied that the assessment is sufficiently robust and that they have enough of an understanding of the issues to be able to discharge their legal duty satisfactorily.

For more detailed guidance please refer to the following link:-

https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.equalityhumanrights.com%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Ftechnical_guidance_psed_scotland.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

VIRTUAL MEETING, 23 FEBRUARY, 2023

Present: Councillors S Dickinson (Chair), J Gifford (Vice-Chair), G Hall, P Johnston, F Joji, A Kloppert, G Owen (as substitute for Councillor S Payne) and I Taylor.

Apologies: Councillor S Payne.

Officers: Head of Environment and Sustainability, Team Leader (Environment and Sustainability), Roads and Landscapes Service Manager, Sustainable Development Officer, Greenspace Project Officers, all Environment and Infrastructure Services; Business Partner, Finance (Moira Beverly), Principal Solicitor (Arlene Gibbs) and Committee Officer (Kasia Balina), all Business Services.

INTRODUCTION

At the outset of the meeting the Chair recognised the work of 45 Aberdeenshire schools that had taken a proactive stance on climate and sustainability issues by successfully registering as Eco-Schools.

She also highlighted several important upcoming events with sustainability themes and all Members were asked to share awareness through their social media channels.

The first event - Fairtrade Fortnight, would take place from 27 February to 12 March, 2023 inclusive. The Aberdeenshire local communities and schools would be hosting a variety of fairtrade events to increase awareness of fairtrade products.

Climate Week North East taking place between 24 March and 2 April, 2023 would have events designed in a fun and interesting way to raise awareness of climate change and show what everyone could do to make a difference and reduce their carbon footprint, live sustainably and increase biodiversity.

The last event was the Keep Scotland Beautiful Spring Clean running from 17 March to 17 April, 2023. Members of local communities were to be encouraged to organise a litter pick and to help tidy up their villages, towns and shorelines.

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 integrated impact assessment has been provided, its contents and to take those into consideration when reaching a decision.

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF 30 NOVEMBER, 2022

On consideration of the circulated Minute of the Meeting of the Committee of 30 November, 2022, Members **agreed** to approve it as a correct record, subject to one amendment to the attendance list at the meeting, whereby Councillor Hall be included and Councillor Brown be removed from the attendance list.

4. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

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

The Environment and Sustainability Team Leader introduced the report and provided the Committee with an update on each of the 6 outstanding actions and confirmed that (1) Items 1, 3 and 6 were on target and would remain on the list, and (2) Items 2, 4, and 5 were complete and, if agreed, could be removed from the list.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed**:-

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

5. UPDATE ON GREENSPACE PROJECTS -PRESENTATION

A presentation was made to the Committee on the Greenspace Projects by Elizabeth Stanyer and Tajana Telišman Šošić, Greenspace Project Officers, on the Council's greenspace projects and the important part they played in improving the variety of plants, animals and insect-life in Aberdeenshire.

The presentation covered aspects including information on: community partnerships; examples of current work with communities, groups and volunteers; planting events; greenspace project guidance; partnerships with Landscape Services, Countryside Rangers, Environmental Planners, Education and Children's Services, Housing and Social Services, Properties and Facilities, Transport, Area Teams and Sustainability

Champions; and also the strategy and plans for future direction and partnership building.

There followed a question and answer session during which Members made comments on the ongoing monitoring and maintenance regime; approaching the community groups; examples of local projects; educational aspects of green spaces maintenance; and the cooperation with Social Juice, a project initiated by Zero Waste Aberdeen. In addition, it was noted how changes in mowing habits and allowing plants to occasionally go through their life cycle could have had a hugely beneficial effect on butterflies and moths, with a positive anecdotal response to the butterfly population observed in Stonehaven.

Thereafter, the Committee concurred with the Chair in thanking Ms Stanyer and Ms Šošić for an excellent and informative presentation.

6. ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL ROUTE MAP TO 2030 AND BEYOND PROGRESS UPDATE

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of Aberdeenshire Council of 29 September, 2022 (Item 14), when approval had been given to the Aberdeenshire Council Route Map to 2030 and Beyond, there was circulated a report dated 8 February, 2023, by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services, which (1) provided an update on progress to date of the Aberdeenshire Council Route Map to 2030 and Beyond, (2) covered progress to date in the Council's emission reductions and future Carbon Budget targets, and (3) set up the 11 recommendations in the Route Map including how they were being prioritised, the estimated timeline for action and the activity required to complete the action.

Members were informed about the opportunities to reduce emissions from operational buildings, fleet and street lighting, as well as looking at additional energy efficiency and resource interventions and made comments on the heat management of the Council's building stock; the need for ongoing pace and focus on the targets; setting up the future carbon budgets to reach the targets; supply chain capacity and capability gap analysis; opportunities to generate Council's own renewable electricity through, for example, air-source heat pumps, additional solar panels, wind generation, solar farms, and battery storage for excess energy; and how the recommendation in the Route Map should be prioritised for action.

Thereafter the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge Aberdeenshire Council's progress towards its internal operational emission reduction targets and future Carbon Budgets required to meet a 75% reduction in emissions by 2030/2031 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) to acknowledge Aberdeenshire Council's progress towards addressing the recommendations, as set out in the Route Map to 2030 and Beyond in Appendix 2 to the report; and
- (3) that the Head of Environment and Sustainability shall scope and arrange a workshop prior to summer recess which shall facilitate the Committee's

awareness and understanding of the programme of activity which underpins the Route Map to 2030.

7. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON A 2035 HEAT NETWORKS TARGET

There was circulated a report dated 8 February, 2023, by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services, which detailed Aberdeenshire Council's draft response to the Scottish Government on the consultation on a proposal to introduce a 2035 target for the supply of thermal energy by heat networks in Scotland.

Members were informed that the consultation had been issued by the Scottish Government on 16 December, 2022, with a closing date of 11 March, 2023. A proposed response had been prepared which included feedback and views from officers within the Services of Environment and Sustainability, Housing and Building Standards, Property and Facilities and Planning and Economy.

Members made comments regarding the challenges with the delivery of the target for the combined supply of thermal energy from heat networks in rural areas and asked that the response reflect this. They also discussed the achievable target in Aberdeenshire; the cost of providing the consultation response and how best to fund those ambitions, as well as seeking clarification on what was included in the heat network.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) note the Aberdeenshire Council's draft response to the 2035 Heat Networks Target consultation, as presented in Appendix 2 to the report; and
- (2) delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services, following consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokesperson, to submit the finalised response by 11 March, 2023.

8. THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ITS CROSS-SECTORAL PARTNERS IN FINANCING AND DELIVERING A NET ZERO SCOTLAND

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of Aberdeenshire Council of 16 February, 2022 (Item 7), when Members had provided 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, there was circulated a report dated 8 February, 2023, by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services, which provided a summary of the recommendations within the report 'The role of local government and its cross-sectoral partners in financing and delivering a net-zero Scotland' prepared by the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee and published on 23 January 2023, for consideration and comment.

Members were informed that the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee of the Scottish Parliament had launched its first major inquiry of the new session on 24 November 2021. The inquiry looked into the role of local government and its cross-

sectoral partners in financing and delivering a net-zero Scotland. As part of that inquiry, a call for views had been launched and Aberdeenshire Council submitted a collective response by the closing date of 21 January, 2022.

The report recognised the importance and key roles of local government in delivering a Net Zero Scotland. The Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee was encouraged by the progress to date but also highlighted the challenges facing local government and the impact on resources and skills during a challenging financial period.

Members made comments on the substantial costs to Councils involved in responding to consultations; investment in the tools, resources, skills, development of datasets and networks at the national level that would enable the Council to determine the most effective interventions; the possibility of collaborative work between Councils to argue the case, especially for rural areas; how the Scottish Government would allocate additional resources through core funding to help Councils to contribute to net zero targets; carbon revenue credits allocated by the Scottish Government for local authorities for feasibility and planning; the need for building up the links with the Third Sector, social enterprises and local communities; the cost of borrowing on the capital investment requirement being challenging for future revenue budgets; and the capital and carbon revenue credits.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to note the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee's report and the summary of its recommendations, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, on the role of local government and its cross-sectoral partners in financing and delivering a net-zero Scotland, which was published on 23 January, 2023; and
- (2) that the Chair of the Sustainability Committee, following consultation with the Vice Chair and Opposition Spokesperson, write to COSLA acknowledging the recommendations within the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee's report and encourage COSLA to engage with Government to ensure appropriate action is taken.

9. ROAD VERGE MANAGEMENT

With reference to the Minute of the Meeting of the Committee of 15 June, 2022 (Item 10), when (1) approval had been given to the Aberdeenshire Council Pollinator Action Plan 2022-2027, and (2) officers had been instructed to provide a report on road verge maintenance, there was circulated a report dated 10 February, 2023, by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services, which provided background on the current Policy and outlined planned work to review and expand the policy scope.

Members were informed that the Council, as Roads Authority, had a statutory duty to maintain roadside verges. Although roadside trees and hedges were the responsibility of the landowner, the Council was allowed to serve notice on the landowner to cut these back where an obstruction might be caused and to ensure the safety of the road user. The previous policy on the current verge management regime had been approved by the Full Council in 2010. There was already a planned

piece of work to create a holistic policy which would also incorporate “Planting in the road verge”. The development of that Policy would follow the normal governance route with final approval via the Infrastructure Services Committee. That work was planned to be completed in 2023/24.

Members made comments on the reporting procedure and the need for better communication with members of the public through the website. They also queried the current arrangements for cutting the verges and removing the cut materials and the connection between the speed and limited visibility.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) note the existing Policy statement and provide comments, particularly in relation to the Aberdeenshire Council Pollinator Action Plan 2022/2027; and
- (2) instruct officers to bring back the additional information on the difference between the costs for cutting the verges and removing the cut material and leaving it on the verge.

PROGRESS WITH OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AS AT 17 MAY, 2023

	Item Title	Date of Meeting	Action Agreed	Responsible Service	Progress to Date
1.	Resources and Circular Economy Commitment Update	21 09 22	Officers to provide information on progress made in relation to the involvement of the third sector.	Environment and Infrastructure Services	A presentation on the outcomes of the Reuse Feasibility Study which is now complete will take place at the Member Workshop on the afternoon of the 17 May 2023.
2.	Scotland's Councils' Approach to Addressing Climate Change - Audit Scotland Report	31 11 22	Officers to give an update to Members on the 2 other audits/investigations underway.	Environment and Infrastructure Services	The Environmental Standards Scotland report has not yet been published. Audit Scotland published their report – ‘How the Scottish Government is set up to deliver climate change goals’ on the 20 April 2022. Link: https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2023/nr_230420_climate_change.pdf
3.	Aberdeenshire Council Route Map To 2030 And Beyond Progress Update	23 02 23	Head of Environment and Sustainability shall scope and arrange a workshop prior to summer recess which shall facilitate the Committee's awareness and understanding of the programme of activity which underpins the Route Map to 2030.	Environment and Infrastructure Services	This workshop is to be held on the afternoon of 17 May 2023 with presentations from Property and Facilities, Fleet and Waste.

PROGRESS WITH OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AS AT 17 MAY, 2023

4.	Road Verge Management	23 02 23	Officers to bring back the additional information on the difference between the costs for cutting the verges and removing the cut material and leaving it on the verge.	Environment and Infrastructure Services	We've had some initial dialogue around how we could equate this alternative working method. We have carried out cut/collect in 30mph areas and examples in parks after getting new equipment funded by Nature Restoration Fund over the last two years. We're having to be careful however as SEPA haven't confirmed consent with disposal on-site. The alternative is costly transport and disposal off-site initially. That said, if we can cover cut/collect over a 3-4 year period, possibly less, then the remaining grass is much more slender, lower and easier to deal with. Also better establishment of wildflower and other types, such as yellow rattle where trials locally have been effective. Rural verges would be a different ball game altogether as the scale is significant. So still a fair bit of work to do around this one, in terms of attaining a comparison on costs and will provide a further update when available.
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Aberdeenshire Council PB in Schools

We decide...making it happen in Aberdeenshire Schools 2022-2023

Climate Change and Carbon Reduction



Children and Young People
Voting for Change

**Madelene MacSween Youth & Communities Team
Leader**

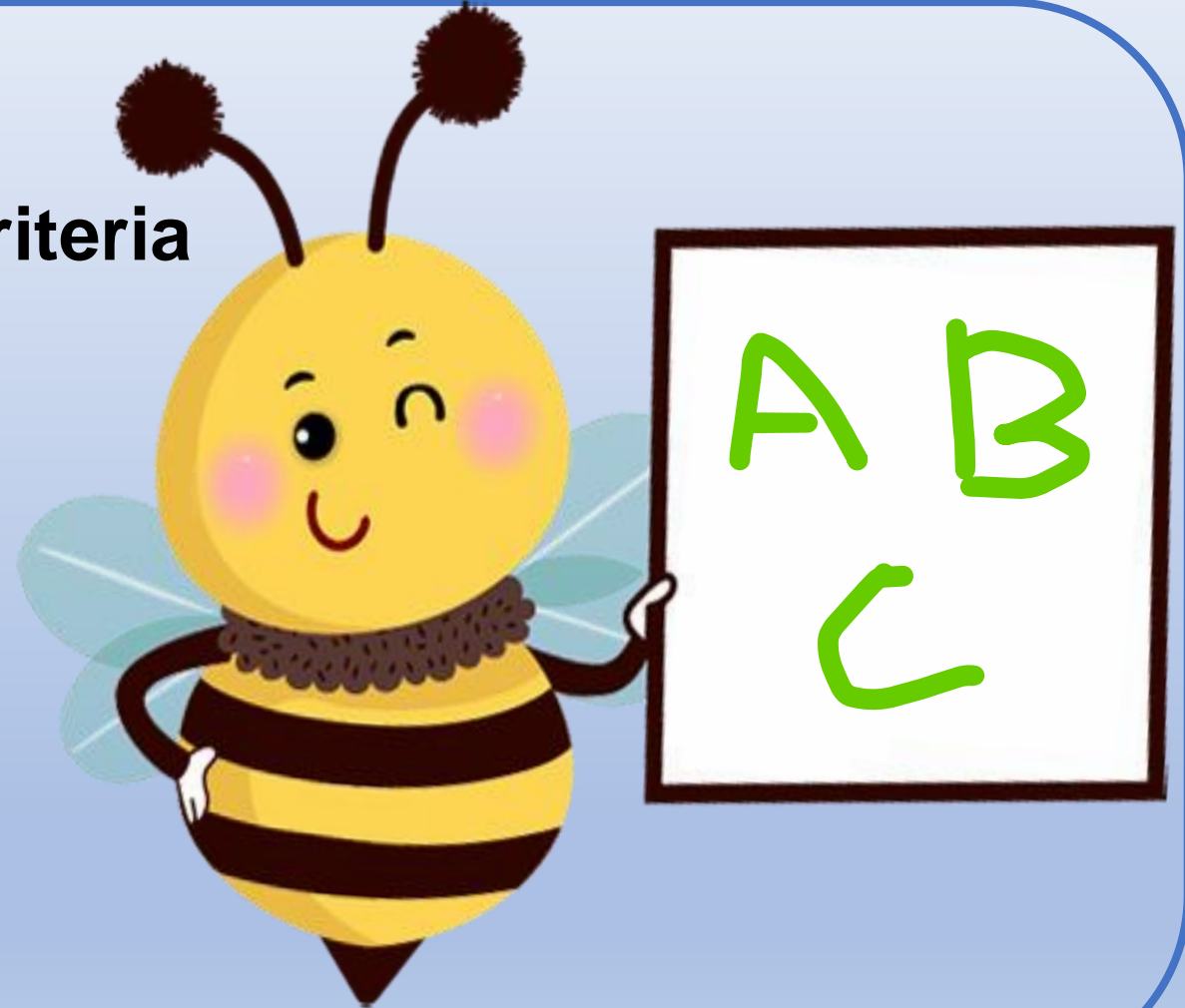
Madelene.MacSween@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Getting Schools Involved!

Simple Criteria

Theme: Climate Change & Carbon Reduction

- Positive impact on the school community
- Schools could apply for between £500 - £2000
- Whole schools, classes or groups could apply
- Individual schools could submit 1 application



We decide...making it happen in Aberdeenshire Schools 2022-2023



Children and Young People
Voting for Change

- 2 Rounds took place in October 2022 & December 2022
- 36 schools submitted projects
- 1,015 young people cast votes in how council money is spent
- 27 projects from across the area were awarded funds
- £41,115 was distributed to climate change and carbon reduction projects
- 9 academy projects were successful
- 18 primary projects were successful
- Success rates representative of ratio of academies to primaries applying
- The process is under review for 2023-24 to ensure even more young people get involved and benefit from successful project

Expected Impacts - Sustainability

Overall project:

Young People learn about climate change and carbon reduction in a positive way
Young people feel empowered and have the resources to take positive action

Individual projects:

- Improved local biodiversity through planting, conservation and developing habitats
- Carbon capture through planting
- Skills for life for young people - growing and cooking sustainably
- Reduced carbon impact through local food production
- Confidence, skills and enthusiasm around sustainable technologies
- Understanding and reducing impact through sustainable choice
- Mending, reusing, recycling and ethical purchasing
- More young people access, understand, enjoy and respect the outdoor environment

14 Wildlife and Biodiversity Projects established

Including:

- 8 Tree planting and learning about carbon capture
 - 1 Including Carbon Capture Green Screen



- 9 Wildflowers to attract pollinators



- 10 Creating & maintaining wildlife habitats



- 1 Companion planting



11 Food Growing Projects developed

Including:

- 9 Creating productive school gardens  
- 2 Developing productive school gardens  
- 1 Learning about composting 
- 4 Links to food chain/carbon reduction 
- 6 Growing with the community  
- 4 Cooking and sharing produce with community  
 - 1 Community Cafe



4 Learning Resources Projects created

Including:

- Climate and Sustainability

- 3 School Libraries





- 1 Digital Tools and Platforms



4 Accessing Environment for Education Projects resourced

Including:

- 1 Clothing and kit to get outdoors
 - Waterproofs and wellies 
- Workshops and site visits on responsible access
 - 1 Leave no trace camping
 - 2 Towards John Muir Awards
 - 2 Towards Junior Foresters Award 
 - 1 Towards RSPBs Wild Challenge Award



9 Improving the School Environment Projects

Including:

- 1 Green Screen to reduce pollution



- 1 Electric Car Points to encourage cleaner travel



- 1 discouraging Seagulls through infrastructure



- Creating Green Spaces for learning & wellbeing



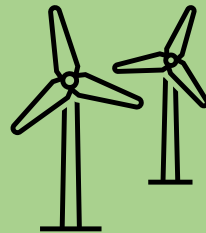
2 Technology Focused Projects

Including:

- 1 School Weather Station








- 1 Renewable Energy Build Kits



7 Upcycling, Reuse or Recycle Projects

Including:

- 1 Clothes recycling with Textile Fashion Workshops 
- 1 Composting 
- 1 Bike Fixing 
- 6 Creative reuse of materials for building school gardens 
- 1 Sourcing upcycled furniture and resources for improving school environment 



Early feedback from successful projects

*We now have the gardening tools to start our gardening programme with various learner groups and those that also help out in the local gardens. **The Grow Project, Banff Academy***

The children are really motivated and are gaining many skills as part of our outdoor learning and are really taking responsibility for the area.

*We are in the process of planting wildflowers and all of our garden improvements are seeing an increase in our local biodiversity - we were delighted to have a frog visit last week! **Westhill Primary Rainbow Garden***

*Our pupils have undertaken various conservation projects to make a difference in the community. Bird boxes and bug hotels have been built to encourage more wildlife to the areas around the school. Planters have been built and more wild flowers have been planted furthering the biodiversity in the area **John Muir Award Environmental Craft Club Turriff Academy***

*The funding enabled us to purchase a weather station...This weather station is linked to a website... The pupils will continue to use this resource as part of their eco awareness award and continued learning. For now and years to come. **Strathdon School***

Schools successful in gaining funding this year

Banchory Academy - Grow a Rainbow

Banchory Primary School - BPS Rewilders

Chapel of Garioch - Learning for Sustainability

Strathburn Primary School - Eco Sustainability Group

Aboyne Academy - Aboyne Academy Leadership Group

Mearns Academy - Sewing, Fashion & Textiles Classes

Kincardine O'Neil Primary School - Wild Challenge Week

Lumphanan Primary School - Super 7's Gardening Project

Turriff Academy - John Muir Award/Environmental Craft Club

Westhill Primary School - The Rainbow Garden

Fishermoss Primary School - Climate Change - Fishermoss Primary School

Dunnottar Primary School - Eco Committee

Drumoak Primary School - Climate Change Group

Strathdon Primary School – Whole School

Mintlaw Academy - Go Wild Project

Banff Academy - The GROW Project - Our Health and Well-being Space

Logie Druno - Climate Action Research

Banff Primary - Banff Primary Library Group

Banff Academy - The Grow Project

Hatton on Fintry Primary - Fintray's Future

Inverurie Academy Inverurie Academy Eco Group

Midmill School - Midmill School Eco Group

Clerkhill School – Peterhead - Clerkhill Conservation Champions

Portlethen Primary School - Portlethen Primary Eco Group

Hill of Banchory - Hill of Banchory Eco Group

Portlethen Academy - Promote electric/hybrid cars reducing carbon emissions.

What Next: Growing Involvement Shared Learning and Improving Process, Improving Access

The Youth & Community Team Outcomes are around Youth Voice:

- Introducing young people to PB and giving them the opportunity to be involved in PB decision making processes

We are reviewing process and based on school feedback and the monitoring of our outcomes. We propose to:

- Clarify and announce the funds available and theme for 2023-2024
 - Proposed theme: Cost of Living
- Inform Schools of 2023 - 2024 process and timeline by the end of May 2023.
- Hold 2 Rounds of Participatory Budgeting in Schools September/October & December/January
- Each School can opt in advance to be involved in 1 of those rounds only

We are proposing to make the process more equitable and improving our outcomes by:

- Improving how funding is shared across all schools
- Introducing different types of participatory decision making:
Big Vote, Panel Decisions, Collaborative Budgeting
- Enabling different processes to suit different schools

REPORT TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE – 17 MAY 2023

CARBON BUDGET 2022-2023 FINAL UPDATE

1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 This report presents the final update to the Sustainability Committee on the actions which were listed in the Carbon Budget 2022-2023 that were agreed by Aberdeenshire Council on 9 March 2022 ([Item 7](#)). The final update indicates that the Carbon Budget for 2022-23 is unlikely to be reached due to challenges which have delayed projects from starting at the anticipated time. However, many of those projects have now been moved into 2023/24 for actioning or have been revised to become more cost effective.

1.2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 Consider and comment on the final Carbon Budget 2022-2023 six-monthly update as attached in Appendix 2.

2 Decision-Making Route

2.1 On 9 March 2022 ([Item 7](#)) a total Carbon Budget for 2022-2023 was set as 47,383 tonnes Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e) by Aberdeenshire Council in line with linear progression towards a 75% reduction in Council owned emissions by 2030. A list of CO₂e reduction measures was presented at this meeting to support the Council in reaching its Carbon Budget for the year. At the same meeting, it was agreed that all Directors were required to submit six-monthly updates on in-year progress in relation to these reduction measures to their relevant Policy Committees and additionally to the Sustainability Committee.

2.2 This report contains the final update that has been provided from each Directorate. **Appendix 1** contains the agreed Carbon Budget for 2022-2023 and **Appendix 2** contains the final update on each of the actions listed.

2.3 In addition to the Carbon Budget 2022-2023 being agreed on 9 March 2022, the responsibility for developing and delivering feasibility studies was delegated to the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services. A budget of £500,000 was approved for spend to support the further development of the Route Map to 2030 and Beyond through necessary feasibility work on a cross section of the Council's operational buildings. An update on progress to date is provided in paragraph 3.3.

3 Discussion

3.1 The final update in **Appendix 2** demonstrates the estimated savings made by each of the projects which were listed for the Carbon Budget 2022-23. It also sets out an explanation for projects which have been delayed due to different

factors (mainly resource and supply chain challenges) and if the project has been rolled forward into 2023-24.

- 3.2 As the figures in **Appendix 2** suggest, the target set for the Carbon Budget 2022-23 is unlikely to have been met. This will not be officially established until the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report (PBCCDR) for 2022-23 is completed by the Sustainability and Climate Change team by November 2023. The PBCCDR template will not be released by Scottish Government until July 2023 for completion by 30 November 2023.
- 3.3 A scope has now been agreed for feasibility work on a cross section of the Council's operational buildings. This work is required to determine a better understanding of the work which will be required on the different types of non-domestic buildings the Council owns and operates. Results from these studies will also support identifying actions and costs for future carbon budget projects and will update the Carbon Budget Toolkit with latest data available making the assumptions behind the tool more rigorous. This work was due to be completed in 2022-23 but due to internal resource capacity this will now roll over into 2023-24.
- 3.4 In addition to the actions which were listed in the Carbon Budget 2022-2023, work is also underway on a number of different projects. This includes the continued identification of funding opportunities to support Aberdeenshire Council in reaching its emission reduction targets, and some examples are set out below:
 - 1) The development of Aberdeenshire's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). By December 2023, the Council is to have in place a strategy and delivery programme. This work will have a positive impact on future Carbon Budgets as it includes Council buildings.
 - 2) A grant through the Local Authority Covid Economic Recovery (LACER) was awarded to take forward a consultant led Aberdeenshire Heat Decarbonisation Supply Chain and Skills Feasibility study. The Consultants appointed by the Council identified the potential supply chain demand and skills required, in order to decarbonise heat and drive down energy consumption from Public Sector buildings in the region no later than 2038. The draft report is currently being finalised and will be presented at a future Sustainability Committee.
 - 3) Surveys and interviews have taken place across services in the organisation to identify how climate change has impacted on service delivery and measures in place for climate change adaptation and resilience building. The Local Climate Impact Profile (LCLIP) has been updated with this latest data and the Climate Change Risk Register is also under review. A Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Framework to be utilised by services is also under development.
 - 4) The Sustainability Champions programme has been rolled out with currently 35 officers signed up and meeting monthly.

- 5) The Route Map Steering Group has been set up and meetings are underway. The group is made up of senior management representatives from key services and will help to deliver the Route Map to 2030 and Beyond.
- 6) Climate Ready Aberdeenshire (CRA) draft strategy is in its final stages and currently under final review with the CRA Steering Group. An Activity Log of actions currently underway by different organisations across Aberdeenshire has been developed. This is also trying to capture future opportunities for partnership working and identifying funding to expand on these projects if it becomes available.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 4.1 This report helps deliver the Strategic Priority “Climate Change” within the Pillar “Our Environment”.

Pillar	Priority
Our People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning for Life • Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change • Resilient Communities
Our Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Growth • Infrastructure and public assets

- 4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			X
Staffing			X
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			X
Children and Young People’s Rights and Wellbeing			X
Climate Change and Sustainability			X
Health and Wellbeing			X
Town Centre First			X

- 4.3 There are no direct staffing or financial implications arising from this Carbon Budget update monitoring report.

- 4.4 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken. An IIA is not required as there are no direct implications of considering this update as it is a performance monitoring report. An IIA was completed for the Carbon Budget 2022-2023 which was approved by Aberdeenshire Council 9 March 2022 ([Item 7](#)).

4.5 The following Risks in the Corporate Risk Register have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level. However, it is acknowledged that working towards a 75% reduction in Council owned emissions has the potential to impact upon any number of areas across the Council risk portfolio.

- Risk ID ACORP010 as it relates to environmental challenges; and
- Risk ID ACORP006 as it relates to reputation management.

The following Risk in the Directorate Risk Registers has been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level:

- Risk ID ISR010 as it relates to Climate Change.

4.5.1 The above risks could be mitigated against with sufficient communication and engagement on the progress Aberdeenshire Council is making with regards to climate change mitigation and adaptation beyond the Carbon Budget.

5 Scheme of Governance

5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this Report and their comments are incorporated within the Report. They are satisfied that the Report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

5.2 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section R paragraphs 1.1a and 1.1c of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to approving, reviewing and monitoring the Council's work in respect of sustainable development and climate change and, also to promote awareness of the need for sustainability within the Council.

Alan Wood
Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by: Claudia Cowie, Team Leader Sustainability and Climate Change
Date: 4 May 2023

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Carbon Budget 2022-2023, Identified Costs and Financial Budget Lines
Appendix 2: Carbon Budget 2022 – 2023 Final Update



	Proposed Identified CO2e Savings (tonnes) 2022-23
Table 1: Carbon Budget 2022-2023	
BUSINESS SERVICES	
LED Lighting	207
EC Fan	13
Pipework insulation	37
Solar PV	62
BMS	27
Business Services Total	346
ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	
Introduce/trial more electric landscaping equipment	TBD
Roads Resurfacing – Warm Mix	220
Energy from Waste	98
LED Street Lighting	228
Warp-It	3
Environment & Infrastructure Services Total	549
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN SERVICE	
Energy Sparks	34
Improved Recycling/Composting	16
Education & Children Services Total	50
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP	
Reduction in business miles	TBD
Resources and Circular Economy Frameworks	TBD
Health & Social Care Partnership Total	TBD
Grid Decarbonisation	500
Total Reductions Identified (tCO2e)	1445

*TBD = Data to be determined for tCO2e savings

Appendix 1: Carbon Budget 2022-2023, Identified Costs and Financial Budget Lines

Table 2: Carbon Budget 2022-2023 Indicative Costs and Financial Budget Lines from initial study work

The details in this table are subject to further consideration by officers but give an indication of the types of interventions being developed, the potential carbon reduction and the scale of investment required.

Interventions	Asset name	Carbon saving (tCO2e)	Capital expenditure (£)	Annual cost saving (£)	Budget	Budget line
LED Lighting	Banff Academy & Banff Swimming Pool	35	134,893	21,687	Capital	Carbon reduction
EC Fan	Banff Academy & Banff Swimming Pool (Deveron Centre)	9	9,598	5,827	Capital	Carbon reduction
LED Lighting	Mackie Academy	53	213,126	33,311	Capital	Carbon reduction
Pipework insulation	Mackie Academy	4	7,371	586	Capital	Carbon reduction
Solar PV	Mackie Academy	27	176,956	16,859	Capital	Carbon reduction
LED Lighting	Fraserburgh Academy	18	98,545	11,129	Capital	Carbon reduction
BMS	Fraserburgh Academy	17	110,646	5,022	Capital	Carbon reduction
EC Fan	Fraserburgh Academy	1	14,598	822	Capital	Carbon reduction
Pipework insulation	Fraserburgh Academy	8	15,473	1,219	Capital	Carbon reduction
Solar PV	Fraserburgh Academy	19	126,455	11,603	Capital	Carbon reduction
LED Lighting	Mintlaw Academy	35	108,964	21,622	Capital	Carbon reduction

Appendix 1: Carbon Budget 2022-2023, Identified Costs and Financial Budget Lines

Interventions	Asset name	Carbon saving (tCO2e)	Capital expenditure (£)	Annual cost saving (£)	Budget	Budget line
EC Fan	Mintlaw Academy	2	9,598	1,500	Capital	Carbon reduction
Pipework insulation	Mintlaw Academy	4	8,961	703	Capital	Carbon reduction
Solar PV	Mintlaw Academy	16	102,265	9,701	Capital	Carbon reduction
LED Lighting	The Gordon Schools	17	89,964	10,640	Capital	Carbon reduction
Pipework insulation	The Gordon Schools	9	17,736	1,407	Capital	Carbon reduction
LED Lighting	Westhill Academy	25	98,814	15,450	Capital	Carbon reduction
Pipework insulation	Westhill Academy	2	4,558	352	Capital	Carbon reduction
LED Lighting	Turriff Academy	13	75,886	7,924	Capital	Carbon reduction
BMS	Turriff Academy	10	12,906	2,663	Capital	Carbon reduction
Pipework insulation	Turriff Academy	1	1,469	117	Capital	Carbon reduction
LED Lighting	Stonehaven Leisure Centre	5	13,646	2,817	Capital	Carbon reduction
Pipework insulation	Stonehaven Leisure Centre	2	4,524	352	Capital	Carbon reduction
LED Lighting	Strathburn Primary School	5	17,604	3,101	Capital	Carbon reduction
Pipework insulation	Strathburn Primary School	6	12,187	938	Capital	Carbon reduction

Appendix 1: Carbon Budget 2022-2023, Identified Costs and Financial Budget Lines

Interventions	Asset name	Carbon saving (tCO2e)	Capital expenditure (£)	Annual cost saving (£)	Budget	Budget line
EC Fan	Arduthie Primary School	1	6,131	202	Capital	Carbon reduction
LED Lighting	Kemnay Primary School	1	3,236	374	Capital	Carbon reduction
Pipework insulation	Kemnay Primary School	1	2,999	234	Capital	Carbon reduction
Warp-it	Aberdeenshire Council	3	3,912	0	Reserve	Renewable Energy Reserve
Recycling - Compost	Schools still to be identified	16	TBD	TBD	Revenue	*waste E&CS
Energy Sparks	30 pilot schools still to be identified for initial free trial	34	0	TBD	Revenue	*TBD - E&CS for future costs
Road resurfacing		220	0	0	Revenue	Roads Maintenance
Energy from Waste		98	TBD	TBD	Capital/Revenue	EfW/Waste disposal
LED Street Lighting		228	800,000	117,629	Capital	Street lighting
Grid decarbonisation		500	0	0	NA	NA
Total		1,445	2,303,021	305,791		

Appendix 1: Carbon Budget 2022-2023, Identified Costs and Financial Budget Lines

Table 3: Other opportunities identified by services to be assessed in 2022/23 for future Carbon Budgets

Interventions	Carbon saving (tCO2e)	Estimated Expenditure (£)
General waste reduction and increased recycling on school sites	89	1,230,437
Formal reuse hubs for schools, offices etc. (e.g. furniture, science equipment)	TBD	TBD
Formal reuse hubs for health and social care partnerships	TBD	TBD
LED lights - Waste management & recycling centres	TBD	TBD
LED lights- sports centres & parks	TBD	TBD

Table 4: Abbreviations/Acronyms

BMS	Building Management System
EC	Electronically Commutated
EfW	Energy from Waste
LED	Light-Emitting Diode
NA	Not Applicable
PV	Photovoltaic
TBD	To Be Determined

Table 1: Carbon Budget 2022–2023 Final Update

BUSINESS SERVICES	Proposed Identified tCO2e Savings 2022/23	Actual estimated tCO2e Savings 2022/23	May 2023 Update on Projects
LED Lighting	207	0	Non domestic energy efficiency Framework (NDEEF) – Final package of works was agreed in August, to balance the removal of Mackie Academy PVs – unsuitable roof structure and Stonehaven Leisure LED's due to planned renovation of property. Woodhill House additional PVs.
EC Fan	13	6	
Pipework insulation	37	14	
Solar PV	62	10	
BMS	27	12	
Business Services Total	346	42	All works are now completed under the NDEEF except for the LED lighting upgrades, these will be completed during the summer of 2023. 42 tonnes of CO ₂ savings were achieved through the works completed in 2022-23. The total savings attributable to the retrofit energy efficiency measures, of 300 tonnes CO₂, will be carried forward to 2023/24.
ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	Proposed Identified tCO2e Savings 2022/23	Actual estimated tCO2e Savings 2022/23	May 2023 Update on Projects
Introduce/trial more electric landscaping equipment	TBD	No data available to calculate	Due to continued supply chain issues the manufacture of the equipment has been delayed. Delivery was made during the last quarter.
Roads Resurfacing – Warm Mix	220	10	Impacts of global challenges on the Quarry Industry have meant that manufacturers were concentrating on their core business of producing bitumen for “hot mix”. Supply became available for “warm mix” in early 2023 and the Quarries team took on the warm mix in March so savings have been amended to address this and the project has been added to the Carbon Budget 2023/24 when we will see the full year of savings.

Appendix 2: Carbon Budget 2022 – 2023 Progress Update

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	Proposed Identified tCO2e Savings 2022/23	Actual estimated tCO2e Savings 2022/23	May 2023 Update on Projects
Energy from Waste (EfW)	98	0	EfW facility this has been delayed and will now not be operational until August 2023 at the earliest so no carbon savings for internal waste this financial year. This has been included in the Carbon Budget 2023-24 where we should see 8 months of savings take place if August remains the start date.
LED street lighting	228	227	Have reported a kWh consumption of 8,654,997 kWh for 2022-23, which is a saving of 12.5% and 227 tCO2e – only 1 tCO2e less than originally estimated.
Warp-It	3	18	For 2022-23 the savings are estimated by the platform as 18tCO2e – it is important to note that this saving takes into account a number of factors including embedded carbon not just landfilling of an item.
Environment & Infrastructure Services Total	549	255	
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN SERVICE	Proposed Identified tCO2e Savings 2022/23	Actual estimated tCO2e Savings 2022/23	May 2023 Update on Projects
Energy Sparks	34	0	With budget constraints in place, the service decided not to progress with Energy Sparks without budget identified to continue this work once the free period expires. In 2023-24 the service will work with the Council's Energy Team to share data on energy use with schools so that interaction can be done through internal channels and not an external company with a cost associated.
Improved Recycling/Composting	16	0	With budget constraints in place the service is facing difficulties in taking aspects of the proposed work forward. However, Education & Children's Service has been working collaboratively with the corporate Waste Management

Appendix 2: Carbon Budget 2022 – 2023 Progress Update

			Team in supporting the change to three week waste uplift.
Education & Children Services Total	50	0	
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP			
	Proposed Identified tCO2e Savings 2022/23	Actual estimated tCO2e Savings 2022/23	May 2023 Update on Projects
Reduction in business miles	TBD	77	Business mileage has been reduced during and post Covid, but the level of reduction post Covid will require to be monitored as working practices evolve in line with hybrid working and the nature of service delivery requiring mobility of our workforce. For information, we have reduced the T&S budget within HSCP by £125,000 in 2022-23 which equates to around 277,778 miles. The estimated CO2e savings are based on this estimated saving in mileage using the emission factor for an average car.
Resources and Circular Economy Frameworks	TBD	No data available to calculate	This area focusses on the ability of the HSCP to recycle equipment and furniture. This project work will now be re-established post Covid.
Health & Social Care Partnership Total	TBD	77	
Grid Decarbonisation	500	500	Still estimated to be around 500tCO2e
Total Reductions Identified in March 2022 (tCO2e)	1445		
Total Reductions currently anticipated for 2022-23 (tCO2e)		874	

*TBD = To be determined

REPORT TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE – 17 MAY 2023

THE DRAFT ENERGY STRATEGY AND JUST TRANSITION PLAN CONSULTATION

1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 The 'Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan - delivering a fair and secure zero carbon energy system for Scotland' consultation opened on 10 January 2023 with a closing date for responses by 9 May 2023. The Plan sets out a vision and a route map of ambitions and actions to guide decision making and policy support. This report presents the Aberdeenshire Council response from officers across different key services.

1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 Acknowledge the Aberdeenshire Council submission on the consultation of the Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan which was submitted under delegated powers and following internal consultation.

2 Decision-Making Route

2.1 The 'Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan - delivering a fair and secure zero carbon energy system for Scotland' consultation opened on the 10 January 2023. The Plan sets out a vision and a route map of ambitions and actions to guide decision making and policy support for the Net Zero 2045 target. The consultation documents can be found here:

<https://consult.gov.scot/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/energy-strategy-and-just-transition-plan/>.

2.2 Officers from across different key services provided input into the Aberdeenshire Council response. In addition, the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokespersons of the Infrastructure Services and Sustainability Committees were consulted on the draft response.

2.3 The Team Leader for Sustainability and Climate Change and officers from different services also attended a workshop held by Scottish Government on 30 March 2023 as an additional opportunity to share views on this consultation.

2.4 The final response was uploaded onto the Scottish Government's consultation platform by the deadline of 9 May 2023.

3 Discussion

3.1 The Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan is an important proposal to support. It is however very ambitious and it should be noted that delivery will be challenging. It will require strong leadership that builds in consensus across

all areas of Scotland’s public, private, and third sectors, and include all communities down to individuals for its delivery to be successful. This has been reflected throughout the response.

- 3.2 The written response provided to Scottish Government after consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokespersons of the Infrastructure Services and Sustainability Committee can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.3 Some of the key points raised were: being clearer on some of the terminology used; considering interim targets; better approaches to funding; options for community engagement and involvement; challenges around skills and supply; wider opportunities for renewables and transportation; support for the Acorn Project at St Fergus; ensuring resilience of our energy system; clarity on communication of the strategy and how its outcomes will be measured.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 4.1 This report helps deliver the Strategic Priorities of “Learning for Life”, “Climate Change” and “Economic Growth” within the Pillars “Our People, “Our Environment” and “Our Economy”.

Pillar	Priority
Our People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning for Life • Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change • Resilient Communities
Our Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Growth • Infrastructure and public assets

- 4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation is agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			X
Staffing			X
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			X
Children and Young People’s Rights and Wellbeing			X
Climate Change and Sustainability			X
Health and Wellbeing			X
Town Centre First			X

- 4.3 There are no direct staffing or financial implications arising from this report.
- 4.4 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken. An IIA is not required as this report is providing a response to an external consultation on a Scottish Government draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan.

4.5 The following Risks in the [Corporate Risk Register](#) have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

- Risk ID ACORP010 as it relates to environmental challenges;
- Risk ID ACORP004 as it relates to business and organisation change;
- Risk ID ACORP005 as it relates to working with other organisations.

4.5.1 By responding to this consultation the Council is in a better place to mitigate these risks.

5 Scheme of Governance

5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report. They are satisfied that the report complies with the [Scheme of Governance](#) and relevant legislation.

5.2 The response to this external Consultation has been submitted by officers in accordance with Officer Power A21 in the of the List Officer Powers in Part 2B of the Scheme of Governance and is being reported to Sustainability Committee as it relates to a consultation response submitted on the Council's behalf, to the Scottish Government regarding sustainable development and climate change issues.

Alan Wood
Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by: Claudia Cowie, Team Leader Sustainability and Climate Change
Date: 5 May 2023

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan Consultation Questions and Aberdeenshire Council Response

Appendix 1

Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan Consultation Questions and Aberdeenshire Council Response:

Responses in black = Environment and Sustainability

Responses in blue = Planning and Economy

Responses in red = Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokespersons from Infrastructure Services Committee and Sustainability Committee

Chapter 1 – Introduction and Vision

1. What are your views on the vision set out for 2030 and 2045? Are there any changes you think should be made?

Both visions are clear and concise as visions should be, however a few points to consider below:

2030 – maximum community and economic benefits – it needs to be clearer what this actually means and how this will look across the whole country. It will be incredibly challenging to achieve this over the next 7 years.

2045 - A climate friendly energy system needs defining.

It is good to see the recognition that achieving the vision as set out will require a collective effort from government and agencies at local and national levels, industry, the research and innovation sector, our communities and civil society. However, for this to be realised in the timescale will require very strong leadership.

There should be at least one more additional date with interim targets between 2030 and 2045. The last part of reducing energy use, increasing renewables and ensuring we are on target for Net Zero in 2045 will be harder than what has been achieved to date. There is also a lot to be achieved between the targets set for 2030 and 2045. For example, the difference between targets/reductions for 2030 and 2045 are huge in some areas – 5GW Hydrogen (2030) to 25GW Hydrogen (2045), Oil & Gas production down from 35% (2030) to 3% (2045). An interim target would be more indicative of how to bridge the gap and at what rate.

What is the definition of secure and affordable energy and what is the definition of Net Zero – the question arises if these are achievable. There will still be a demand for oil and gas derived fuels and products unless there is a total commitment to change and as such, oil and gas needs to still be further developed. Significant reserves remain untapped and existing good reserves are yet to be fully utilised.

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Chapter 2 – Preparing for a Just Energy Transition

2. What more can be done to deliver benefits from the transition to net zero for households and businesses across Scotland?

Proactively sharing and delivering what is available in grants, interest free loans etc. to the public and business. There is still a lack of awareness as to what is available and to whom. Timelines need to be increased also – not just annual budgets but long-term funding over multiple years so people can do work in stages if required to save for further improvements themselves. In addition to this, the reintroduce of funding/match funding for investment such as solar which would lead to less demand on the grid.

Another option could be match funding up to a certain amount for homeowners who invest in decarbonising or improving energy efficiency of their homes (beyond what is currently available to those who qualify for support).

There also needs to be better investment in training, signposting and support for Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) who do not have the same knowledge, time or resource as larger organisations to maximise these benefits.

There should also be a strong focus on incentivising landlords to upgrade properties to ensure those who live in rental properties receive the same benefits (suggested above) as regular homeowners.

The benefits have to be more precisely communicated and costs must be transparent – if Government(s) are funding this then everyone needs to be contributing proportionately and fairly.

More consideration on open source technologies that could both speed the transition at community and small business level should be given. Whilst financial rewards from either community benefit or joint ownership of developments is welcome, the financial risk and gain will largely benefit corporate bodies developing leading technologies. Whilst the newest technologies need to be protected to allow this risk to be taken, consideration should be given to how an open source approach could help empower communities and smaller businesses to benefit should be given. Evidence from previous open source activities suggests that this is also a meaningful way to develop research and development in addition to distributing the benefits.

Creating confidence in what is being offered is very important. People need to be given the capacity to understand all the products available, costs and benefits, trust in businesses to correctly install and maintain technologies etc. so that they support the investment required to be a part of net zero delivery. How all this information is gathered and supported will be key. We are increasingly told to beware of scams so how information about initiatives, funding sources and deadlines matter because we are told scammers use the pressure of deadlines as a strategy to not give people time to check and reflect. Confusion benefits scammers as well. Therefore, there needs to be a kitemark or a go to place for information that people can trust.

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3. How can we ensure our approach to supporting community energy is inclusive and that the benefits flow to communities across Scotland?

Government needs to ensure that those communities trickier to engage with or those without active groups already set up, are given strong continual support to be able to consider community energy opportunities and lead on their development.

Existing community resources who are already embedded and engaged with communities such as third sector interfaces and regional climate change hubs should be utilised for this. Climate Hubs are to be set up across Scotland and so should be utilised to ensure an inclusive approach across the regions they are set up to represent.

Extra funding for Local Authorities to have support in place to encourage engagement in harder to reach communities and even support to replicate successful projects occurring in more invested communities could also ensure the approach to supporting community energy is inclusive and that the benefits flow to communities across Scotland.

However, consideration should be wider than just means testing and areas of deprivation by looking at other factors such as population demographics, housing types, geographical location and logistics of installing and maintaining energy infrastructure in certain areas, etc.

It is important to also think about how young people could be included in this process. Considering the targets are up to 2045 their involvement from an early stage is crucial. This could include delivering education and exploring use of innovative methods of engagement to illustrate current/future benefits to 2030 and 2045 (e.g. visioning exercises and/or serious gaming).

Experience from Aberdeenshire Councils Regeneration Strategy dictates that those communities that experience the worst Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation are less likely to reach out to programmes and schemes run to benefit them. This was backed up by the recent Just Transition fund, in particular the Participatory budget element where the vast majority of projects supported were out with those communities who perhaps needed it most. Where most success is achieved in these communities is where the programmes and schemes are specifically place identifiable, with much more intensive ground up work required before the community is ready to consider the opportunities from such schemes. People and skills capacity need to be invested where the organisational capacity of the communities is lower and this needs to be funded from sources not currently available. This support should be given regardless of whether there is constituted body in a community with the purposes of improving the organisational and aspirational capacity of communities.

Long term core funding needs to be made available. There are too many limitations for communities under the current short term funding models which do not encourage the engagement that is required by communities for this to be successful. Some current schemes mean communities take on all the risks involved in a project. This is very discouraging and is slowing any progress towards targets.

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4. What barriers, if any, do you/your organisation experience in accessing finance to deliver net zero compatible investments?

The Scottish Parliament's Net Zero Energy and Transport Committee report on 'The role of local government and its cross-sectoral partners in financing and delivering a net-zero Scotland' which was published on 23 January 2023 states the challenge on accessing finance for the public sector well.

We would encourage those analysing this consultation to consider the Committee's report in addition to the responses received through this process. The Committee's 'call for evidence' identifies so many challenges and puts forward recommendations to address them and this Strategy and Plan should take that report into consideration also.

Access to funds is not available or easy to obtain.

Long term core funding needs to be made available. There are too many limitations under the current short term funding models which do not encourage the engagement that is required to deliver net zero. Too much resource is having to go into chasing and bidding for funding which means the outcomes of those bids is not certain. Funds are not flexible enough and the timelines for spend too tight. To deliver net zero, the necessary funding needs to be part of the core grant so that councils can plan properly for the work that needs to be done, confident that the resource needed is there.

5. What barriers, if any, can you foresee that would prevent you/your business/organisation from making the changes set out in this Strategy?

Resource capability and capacity is the biggest barrier we have. Short term funding also prevents long term confidence in acting on the required changes. Timing as well as foresight of funding is needed to allow organisations to be proactive rather than reactive.

Having appropriate frameworks set up on Scotland Excel prior to requirements being levied on organisations would help precipitate the process of procuring external support too.

Remove any barriers to funding access.

6. Where do you see the greatest market and supply chain opportunities from the energy transition, both domestically and on an international scale, and how can the Scottish Government best support these?

Need to make sure that the supply chain and the capability and capacity to do this work remains in the United Kingdom. This is already in place in particular through the oil and gas sector and is an opportunity that the Scottish Government should work hard to retain. The longer it takes for this to become established the more risk there is that businesses move this elsewhere. There needs to be visibility and

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assurance over the pipeline of work for business to maintain confidence in the country. If there is a lag in progress, business will move on and the UK could end up in a position where we need to import the expertise and supply chain from elsewhere.

There needs to be investment to ensure this remains within the UK from an economic (employment and income/savings) and environmental perspective (reduce import from abroad).

This investment should include re-training and training to ensure there is sufficient expertise in heat pump technologies that would encourage more uptake. There are a growing number of installers who can competently fit systems but when there are issues, there is less proficiency to address these and ensure energy and cost-efficient running of the systems.

There needs to be more dialogue between Government and Local Authorities and Institutes of higher education/those who deliver apprenticeships etc to ensure appropriate courses and training begins now so we have fully trained specialist in time to deliver on these targets. This also ties in with engaging with young people as early as possible and supporting them to progress to higher education/apprenticeships in the relevant fields.

All opportunities have to be agreed by all governments and international leaders. What is done collectively is what will really matter on a global scale.

7. What more can be done to support the development of sustainable, high quality and local jobs opportunities across the breadth of Scotland as part of the energy transition?

Upskilling existing workforce is mentioned however there is a lack of detail on plans to attract new people into this area of work. What can be done to support early engagement in schools and colleges, for example Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) focused Hubs which can support practical hands-on learning and encourage our young people with an exciting new prospect for a variety of career opportunities that are required for Net Zero to be realised in Scotland by 2045. This needs to happen now. More focus on green jobs at career fairs, visits to schools by professionals, etc. Emphasis should be that there are jobs at all levels with different ways to access them, for example, you do not need an engineering degree, there are apprenticeships, on the job training, utilisation of existing transferable skills and experience etc.

There also needs to be a strong focus on retention. This may be more specific to the north east of Scotland with its relatively high cost of living meaning after training and gaining experience, many may leave the area for opportunities elsewhere.

The breadth of jobs across the transition agenda is substantial and more so within a full labour market and ageing population. Local job opportunities can be a challenge when, for example the offshore opportunities are largely driven by international companies. Local training institutions should be given support to develop and

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accredit more courses which are relevant to energy transition. The speed at which new courses are developed, launched and populated needs to improve across Scotland as a key part of the skills infrastructure. Given the pace that we need to transition, consideration should be given to our whole education system. An example is the project based learning approach successfully deployed by Banff Academy. This is aligning young peoples skills and talents with local real world experiences. It is rooting the curriculum in skills development which reflects the needs of local employers. This type of approach could lead the way for local skills to be much more sharply aligned and attuned with the needs and pace of the transition journey.

Further education establishments require the necessary resource to support the development and uptake of high-quality courses which lead to sustainable local job opportunities across the breadth of Scotland as part of the energy transition.

8. What further advice or support is required to help individuals of all ages and, in particular, individuals who are currently under-represented in the industry enter into or progress in green energy jobs?

As mentioned in question 7 – some targeted STEM/Net Zero Hubs in regions that are connected to schools and Colleges/Universities. Those under-represented are in this place because the reach in their communities must not be there.

It is important to reemphasise the different routes at all levels to ensure these jobs are inclusive and attainable to anyone, including those under-represented in the industry.

Ensure these opportunities are also available to those over the age of 30, as this is often a forgotten age group when it comes to new job opportunities, despite their experience and transferrable skills. These groups may also need additional support due to financial and family responsibilities which younger people still living at home may not have.

All jobs should be focusing on green energy or transition to this. We cannot switch right away that is for certain and accepting that there will be a time lag to change certain industries needs to be accepted.

The entire “Transition” will take time and the targets may be unachievable in terms of dates until all countries agree this is the way forward otherwise there will always be under representation in green energy jobs.

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Chapter 3 – Energy supply

Scaling up renewable energy

9. Should the Scottish Government set an increased ambition for offshore wind deployment in Scotland by 2030? If so, what level should the ambition be set at? Please explain your views.

If the renewable hydrogen production noted is to be powered by wind, this will mean there is a lot less of a surplus of energy for export due to the energy intensity of producing hydrogen. Thus, the potential financial benefits that Scotland would have gained will be diminished (from electricity export). In this case it would be prudent for Scotland to increase the offshore wind deployment targets.

Any increase should not be at the expense of industry – the likes of fishing or marine farming for example, as competition is becoming too severe already. Currently 37% of Scottish waters cannot be accessed to fish in and this figure is looking to be increased by at least 10% by the introduction of Highly Protected Marine Areas. There is considerable risk of the sustainable “blue protein” source which is derived from the sea being affected and putting further strain on land based protein production to meet the ever growing population food requirements.

10. Should the Scottish Government set an ambition for offshore wind deployment in Scotland by 2045? If so, what level should the ambition be set at? Please explain your views.

Similar to the response to Q9, if much of the electricity produced offshore is being utilised for hydrogen production then there could be a market for increasing renewable electricity generation in Scotland for export. It would be wise not to overinvest then have to curtail the electricity production though as this already gives a bad image to the general public when they see stationary wind turbines on windy days. There needs to be some thought into how to store this energy that does not involve lithium and other precious metal extraction.

Scottish (and UK) Governments are already leasing/giving away Scottish and UK opportunities to foreign investors and countries to develop offshore energy production and as such we are not seeing the commercial returns and this subsequent economic benefit here. There should be the ambition to develop the offshore energy industry to the benefit of the UK to a greater degree.

11. Should the Scottish Government set an ambition for marine energy and, if so, what would be an appropriate ambition? Please explain your views.

Scottish (and UK) Governments are already leasing/giving away Scottish and UK opportunities to foreign investors and countries to develop offshore energy production and as such we are not seeing the commercial returns and this

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subsequent economic benefit here. There should be the ambition to develop the offshore energy industry to the benefit of the UK to a greater degree.

12. What should be the priority actions for the Scottish Government and its agencies to build on the achievements to date of Scotland's wave and tidal energy sector?

Wave and tidal energy could be very valuable for electricity production in Scotland. Wave power is much more consistent than solar or wind, this is particularly significant in winter when demand is higher. We have a vast coastline and it does not make sense not to utilise this additional potential for energy production.

Need to ensure sufficient resources are provided to support the development of Regional Marine Planning around Scotland's coast. In this context, especially to the Scottish Marine Regions that are considered to have the greatest wave and tidal energy potential.

Keep supporting further progression and international development especially for UK based companies.

13. Do you agree the Scottish Government should set an ambition for solar deployment in Scotland? If so, what form should the ambition take, and what level should it be set at? Please explain your views.

Solar (photovoltaic) has its place in Scotland and should be encouraged where appropriate.

14. In line with the growth ambitions set out in this Strategy, how can all the renewable energy sectors above maximise the economic and social benefits flowing to local communities?

By having local benefits available for a radius where the power is produced/where the power comes onshore, similar to the funds that communities near landfill sites could apply for to improve resources in the local area.

Unit price for energy generated being made to be as cost neutral as possible will benefit all. The ownership of energy generating companies being outwith UK hands means we do not see the value benefits of generating more sustainable power for our increasing requirements.

There is established mechanism for wind projects in particular to consider Community Benefits. These are very much transactional and come in flushes dependent on the development stage with limited rigour around legacy. Whilst helpful, there needs to be a much more systemised way of doing this. Every local authority has signed up to the Place Principle of the Scottish Government and Aberdeenshire is embarking on a Place Strategy. Part of this will be about

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establishing Place Plans for our key places, led by local evidence, partners, assets and future vision of the community. It would make sense in terms of addressing longer term objectives, that community benefits were aligned to our key settlement Place Plans, thereby ensuring they are addressing the future success of our communities. This could be done via combining community benefit funds into a Community Wealth Fund or separately, with collaboration around the Place Plans.

Longer term planning and understanding of places by developers will also result in more long term benefits being achieved. Engaging with regions and places in advance of major developments to understand the economic and social landscape and how it can be advanced by the development would benefit. Procurement terms for example could encourage social enterprise development within ancillary works. The transitory nature of some of the development works could leave legacy developments, for example by partnering in the provision of local accommodation through developing vacant and derelict buildings with partnership agreements for future use depending on local circumstances.

15. Our ambition for at least 5 GW of hydrogen production by 2030 and 25 GW by 2045 in Scotland demonstrates the potential for this market. Given the rapid evolution of this sector, what steps should be taken to maximise delivery of this ambition?

Funding should be available to those producing hydrogen without the use of fossil fuels to ensure that hydrogen production is a low carbon energy. Further funding once technology has been proven to replicate methods across the country would ensure we become the energy leaders that we aspire to be.

An alternative to a variety of energy generating forms is important in terms of how it is produced so develop each and every sector in the most appropriate way depending on “where” - in and around the UK.

16. What further government action is needed to drive the pace of renewable hydrogen development in Scotland?

Funding as mentioned in previous responses.

17. Do you think there are any actions required from Scottish Government to support or steer the appropriate development of bioenergy?

Food security and maximising the potential of suitable agricultural land (and seas) should be a priority and alternative energy sources needs to be encouraged before necessarily bioenergy. Food security and the need to reduce imports of key foods which can be produced here in the UK needs to be more of a focus and utilising available and appropriate land for this and not necessarily for bioenergy production should be further considered.

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18. What are the key areas for consideration that the Scottish Government should take into account in the development of a Bioenergy Action Plan?

Food security and maximising the potential of suitable agricultural land (and seas) should be a priority and alternative energy sources needs to be encouraged before necessarily bioenergy. Food security and the need to reduce imports of key foods which can be produced here in the UK needs to be more of a focus and utilising available and appropriate land for this and not necessarily for bioenergy production should be further considered.

19. How can we identify and sustainably secure the materials required to build the necessary infrastructure to deliver the energy strategy?

Ideally develop and manufacture them in UK.

North Sea Oil and Gas

20. Should a rigorous Climate Compatibility Checkpoint (CCC) test be used as part of the process to determine whether or not to allow new oil and gas production?

Yes, but efforts to reduce carbon emissions should focus on the demand side. There is little point replacing UK oil and gas with imported oil and gas.

Keep looking at efficient ways to extract and use oil and gas reserves to their maximum though in as “green” a way as possible. Must be a proven and safe efficient way of oil and gas abstraction and use as there will be a continued demand for products and not just for energy.

21. If you do think a CCC test should be applied to new production, should that test be applied both to exploration and to fields already consented but not yet in production, as proposed in the strategy?

Keep looking at efficient ways to extract and use oil and gas reserves to their maximum though in as “green” a way as possible. Must be a proven and safe efficient way of oil and gas abstraction and use as there will be a continued demand for products and not just for energy.

22. If you do not think a CCC test should be applied to new production, is this because your view is that:

- Further production should be allowed without any restrictions from a CCC test;

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- **No further production should be allowed [please set out why];**
- **Other reasons [please provide views].**

The CCC test should account for both the carbon emissions associated with production and the product itself. It should account for the varying emissions associated with differing products – e.g. oil or gas, sulphur content and other quality measures.

Energy security must remain a factor to protect the vulnerable from sudden price rises.

23. If there is to be a rigorous CCC test, what criteria would you use within such a test? In particular [but please also write in any further proposed criteria or wider considerations]

- **In the context of understanding the impact of oil and gas production in the Scottish North Sea specifically on the global goals of the Paris Agreement, should a CCC test reflect –**

A) the emissions impact from the production side of oil and gas activity only;

B) the emissions impact associated with both the production and consumption aspects of oil and gas activity (i.e. also cover the global emissions associated with the use of oil and gas, even if the fossil fuel is produced in the Scottish North Sea but exported so that use occurs in another country) – as proposed in the Strategy;

C) some other position [please describe].

- **Should a CCC test take account of energy security of the rest of the UK or European partners as well as Scotland? If so, what factors would you include in the assessment, for example should this include the cost of alternative energy supplies?**
- **Should a CCC test assess the proposed project's innovation and decarbonisation plans to encourage a reduction in emissions from the extraction and production of oil and gas?**
- **In carrying out a CCC test, should oil be assessed separately to gas?**

B) All emissions for production and consumption should be taken into account.

Keep looking at efficient ways to extract and use oil and gas reserves to their maximum though in as “green” a way as possible. Must be a proven and safe efficient way of oil and gas abstraction and use as there will be a continued demand for products and not just for energy.

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The CCC test should account for both the carbon emissions associated with production and the product itself. It should account for the varying emissions associated with differing products - eg oil or gas, sulphur content and other quality measures.

Energy security must remain a factor to protect the vulnerable from sudden price rises.

24. As part of decisions on any new production, do you think that an assessment should be made on whether a project demonstrates clear economic and social benefit to Scotland? If so, how should economic and social benefit be determined?

Yes, but there must be strong focus on these being long-term economic and social benefits.

This seems reasonable, based on the expectation for offshore wind licensing, and significant experience that exists within the wind industry on how these should be determined.

25. Should there be a presumption against new exploration for oil and gas?

Yes, but the timing should be assessed against reducing levels of demand and the likelihood of requiring imports. Oil and gas is needed for the transition phase.

26. If you do think there should be a presumption against new exploration, are there any exceptional circumstances under which you consider that exploration could be permitted?

Full carbon capture and storage at least equivalent to the resulting emissions from production and use of the oil/gas. Also, on top of considerable proven social and economic benefits.

Oil and gas is needed for the transition phase for current use and economic stability. Saying that it will need to be done environmentally efficiently and safely.

Chapter 4 Energy demand

Heat in Buildings

27. What further government action is needed to drive energy efficiency and zero emissions heat deployment across Scotland?

The requirement for all Local Authorities to produce Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) could be utilised to determine exactly how far we are as

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a nation from the targets and also what support will be required in which areas to ensure that we manage as a nation to reduce the carbon impact from heating. As it stands, there is a requirement for the documents to be produced but not for them to be submitted to Scottish Government nor for Scottish Government to assess and use the information.

Government funding and assistance to every building that is used to bring them to acceptable standard and rigorous new design policies that need to be followed (or they should not be allowed to be built) – in other words, strict regulations.

Regulating energy efficient and zero direct emission heat in Scotland's homes and buildings will require that development is delivered of a high build quality standard. Tight building regulatory control is needed to ensure new development is designed of a high quality to ensure energy efficiency performance is actually achieved and is built to last. Building performance monitoring, including post-occupancy evaluation, should feature in Scotland's wider monitoring to ensure that quality and liveability is not being compromised in the drive to achieve net zero.

Energy for transport

28. What changes to the energy system, if any, will be required to decarbonise transport?

Ensuring that infrastructure is widespread for new fuels and not forgetting rural areas.

The transport section under represents the maritime industry including the sub sectors in maritime operations (e.g. support vessels, fishing, service vessels for oil and gas, cargo). These will all need alternative fuels too.

All transport to be switched to clean electric (at present this is unachievable and will not be met within the timescale and nor will it be worldwide. Reduce certain vehicle types (cars, vans) is possible but we cannot remove them unless totally committed to an entire greener transport network which includes lorries, planes, boats and trains.

More rapid chargers are required on the network too.

29. If further investment in the energy system is required to make the changes needed to support decarbonising the transport system in Scotland, how should this be paid for?

Penalties for excess emissions from vehicle manufactures similar the EU scheme. Penalties for non-compliant vehicles which use Low Emission Zones (and an increase in these zones). Making ports and harbours Low Emission Zones with penalties for high emission ferries, cruise ships etc like some European countries. This will generate income and encourage a move to lower emission vehicles to help achieve targets. If penalties from Low Emission Zones are to be a source of

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investment, cities will need stricter rules on prohibited vehicles and accelerate full implementation of current/prospective Low Emission Zones.

If this is what is wanted by the UK people and therefore the UK Government, then we have to be able and prepared to pay for this.

30. What can the Scottish Government do to increase the sustainable domestic production and use of low carbon fuels across all modes of transport?

Ensure that the electricity network providers can upgrade the infrastructure at pace to keep up with the electrification of heating as well as the likelihood of people installing electric car chargers. In Aberdeenshire there are too many constrained areas which will impact on the ability to progress with either ambition.

Invest and commit through taxation and spend and do this in line as a UK Government not as a Scottish one on its own.

31. What changes, if any, do you think should be made to the current regulations and processes to help make it easier for organisations to install charging infrastructure and hydrogen/low carbon fuel refuelling infrastructure?

Invest and commit through taxation and spend and do this in line as a UK Government not as a Scottish one on its own.

32. What action can the Scottish Government take to ensure that the transition to a net zero transport system supports those least able to pay?

The Scrappage Scheme and used Electric Vehicle loan will help and assistance for households to install EV chargers in their homes.

However, there needs to be a dialogue with public transport organisations and vehicle manufacturers to reduce the cost of travelling sustainably and make it more accessible e.g., increase in reliable bus and train routes with means tested discounts and means tested low emissions vehicle payment scheme provided by car manufacturers. Some of the responsibility for encouraging/enabling those least able to pay needs to sit with the private sector not just the Scottish Government, local authorities, and the public.

If Net Zero cannot be paid for by all then it cannot expect to benefit all.

33. What role, if any, is there for communities and community energy in contributing to the delivery of the transport transition to net zero and, what action can the Scottish Government take to support this activity?

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There is a role for this, and communities are best placed to let you know what would suit them best. There are example of communities trying to set up schemes to reduce their travel emissions, but many have been unsuccessful due to national and local governance and the tight criterion of funding.

The Scottish Government can support communities by using a place-based approach with community engagement rather than a 'one size fits all' approach. Working with them to understand what suits them best and what is sustainable long-term and providing communities with knowledge, signposting and support regarding governance and funding to enable them to contribute to the delivery of a transport transition to net zero.

Would be good to utilise existing community resources who are already embedded and engaged with communities such as third sector interfaces and regional climate change hubs. If funding is made available to local authorities for engagement, then these postholders need to work with these organisations and other community engagement officers within each local authority.

34. Electric vehicle batteries typically still have around 80% of their capacity when they need replacing and can be used for other applications, for example they can be used as a clean alternative to diesel generators. What, if anything, could be done to increase the reuse of these batteries in the energy system?

Ensuring that there is a producer takeback scheme in place for electric vehicle batteries. Manufacturers/producers are best placed to ensure that their products are responsibly disposed of and where there is a secondary use possible, they would then be able to supply the used batteries for that after having checked them for damage.

Offer at a reduced rate to homeowners with renewable energy sources (solar panels, small wind turbines etc.) to increase the energy storage potential onsite at individual houses. Equivalent new batteries can cost around £3000 each.

Energy for agriculture

35. What are the key actions you would like to see the Scottish Government take in the next 5 years to support the agricultural sector to decarbonise energy use?

Subsidised conversion to enable low carbon fuel use for large machinery that is likely to be in use for years to come. Machinery such as combine harvesters are utilised for short periods throughout the farming season and likely to last longer than tractors and other machinery in daily use.

Incentivise farming practices that advocate enhanced carbon sequestration and biodiversity net gain (healthier soils, plants, water courses, and habitats).

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Agriculture is looking (as are all industries and sectors) to reduce their carbon use and where appropriate this should be encouraged. If the desire of the Government is to strive towards Net Zero then incentives should not always be necessary as it should also be the desire of all in the country (countries around the world).

Energy for Industry

36. What are the key actions you would like to see the Scottish Government take in the next 5 years to support the development of CCUS in Scotland?

Support the Acorn project to remove carbon for St Fergus gas terminal.

37. How can the Scottish Government and industry best work together to remove emissions from industry in Scotland?

Legislate against emissions otherwise it will not be achieved at the pace required.

38. What are the opportunities and challenges to CCUS deployment in Scotland?

Where Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) is proposed in marine areas, this may conflict with competing interests such as fishing, offshore wind developments, Marine Protected Areas (and other conservation designations). This provides an opportunity for Marine Spatial Planning and increased partnership working between stakeholders through Regional Marine Planning Partnerships.

There is a danger that large scale CCUS is seen as a green light for business as usual. It is, however, an opportunity to solve carbon emissions for heavy industry in a relatively short time scale.

39. Given Scotland's key CCUS resources, Scotland has the potential to work towards being at the centre of a European hub for the importation and storage of CO₂ from Europe. What are your views on this?

The carbon costs of transporting any CO₂ for CCUS should also be taken into account if this is to be done remotely from the site of production. Solutions should be sought as close to site of production as possible to avoid further carbon production.

We are supportive of the opportunities available via CCUS and encourage the Scottish Government to continue to advance this agenda.

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Chapter 5: Creating the conditions for a net zero energy system

40. What additional action could the Scottish Government or UK Government take to support security of supply in a net zero energy system?

Encourage more micro generation and community energy schemes. Open source and much more effective community knowledge transfer will be required to achieve this.

Have UK based companies and investors operating and controlling the energy industry.

41. What other actions should the Scottish Government (or others) undertake to ensure our energy system is resilient to the impacts of climate change?

Micro generation and battery storage.

Ensure mobile masts and key communication infrastructure is not reliant on a mains connection.

Compulsory strategic land management to alleviate flooding. Upland tree planting, planned flood plains, manage ecosystems.

Ensuring resilience of our energy system to extreme weather and ensuring community resilience should not be mutually exclusive endeavours: separation distances between energy infrastructure and residential areas, notably in relation to the trend for significantly taller wind turbines, requires scrutiny and potential regulation. There are also associated compatibility issues e.g. expansion or introduction of battery storage facilities of scale do not provide a good 'neighbour' to residential areas when in close proximity.

Chapter 6: Route map to 2045

42. Are there any changes you would make to the approach set out in this route map?

There is a lack of detail between 2030 and 2045 – this is a huge timeframe over which much can change. Interim targets and plans need to be inserted here. Possibilities such as a minimum amount of carbon captured and stored in Scotland by 2031 for example would be a good start.

Need a better breakdown of steps by year between 2030 and 2045 to show how we are getting to 2045 targets and also to help monitor and report on progress and if any changes, improvements, etc need to be made.

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43. What, if any, additional action could be taken to deliver the vision and ensure Scotland captures maximum social, economic and environmental benefits from the transition?

Keep engaging and consulting with the people. Net Zero will not happen without full engagement of society.

Needs to be a UK and world vision too.

Impact assessment questions

44. Could any of the proposals set out in this strategy unfairly discriminate against any person in Scotland who shares a protected characteristic? These include: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

A place-based approach working with communities and persons with protected characteristics in any action planning would be beneficial. I note that Annex C – Engagement shows Public Bodies, Local Authorities and Community Groups were involved in engagement events to support the development of the strategy and plan which is good.

Also good to see that those living in rural areas has been considered despite not being a protected group. This will be particularly appreciated by those in more remote island locations as well as rural mainland.

The equality around the necessary behaviour change that is required for a Net Zero society is needed to be assessed and monitored closely. The affordability at an individual level is very mixed and depends on so many circumstances.

Any consultation or engagement with NHS boards and/or health and social care partnerships is not clear? This is essential due to their knowledge of the above groups but also as the biggest employers in Scotland and the emissions of these sectors including their fleet and energy usage.

The links with NHS and social care partnerships are extremely important, especially for the transport sector. To avoid unfair discrimination the strategy should also help support better coordination between transport, health care, and social care providers (e.g. via Health and Transport Action Plans).

45. Could any of the proposals set out in this strategy have an adverse impact on children's rights and wellbeing?

Consultation with Local Authorities and Scottish Youth Parliament was had but further engagement with children's services and education facilities in any action planning would be beneficial.

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46. Is there any further action that we, or other organisations (please specify), can take to protect those on lower incomes or at risk of fuel poverty from any negative cost impact as a result of the net zero transition?

Third Sector Interfaces, related charities and non-profits and specific local authority departments should be consulted to provide further information on this.

There is an opportunity to consider how different elements of the energy strategy could be tied to create more of an ecosystem approach to transition. An example could be the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), and heat in buildings. The ETS (run by the UK government) is an effective mechanism at driving a carbon price and penalising emitters. If a percentage of the funds generated through the ETS were to be invested directly by the emitters on other activities to lower emissions, and reducing local fuel poverty by providing for example insulation or contributing towards heat pumps, it would quicken the wider community buy in to net zero, whilst accelerating transition from the ground up and would be adjusted to local circumstances.

In the absence of systemic incentives, financial incentives will be required. Support for community district heating systems and retrofitting buildings requires up front funding but could be in the form of loans with cost savings recouped and returned to the funders.

47. Is there further action we can take to ensure the strategy best supports the development of more opportunities for young people?

As above, continued dialogue with young people themselves through the Youth Parliament, schools, sports clubs, youth activity groups, etc would be beneficial. Ensuring collaboration with institutions of higher education and those who provide on the job training and apprenticeships for young people is essential.

Just Transition energy outcomes

48. What are your views on the approach we have set out to monitor and evaluate the Strategy and Plan?

A bit more clarity on 'how' these outcomes will be measured with tangible targets and figures would be helpful. Suggest that a breakdown of targets and measurements annually between 2030 and 2045 would be beneficial to monitor progress and give time to put in place any required changes or improvements in time to meet the 2045 targets. There needs to be smaller more achievable steps put in place to manage the process to Net Zero.

Regulating energy efficient and zero direct emission heat in Scotland's homes and buildings will require that development is delivered of a high build quality standard. Tight building regulatory control is needed to ensure new development is designed of

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a high quality to ensure energy efficiency performance is actually achieved and is built to last. Building performance monitoring, including post-occupancy evaluation, should feature in Scotland's wider monitoring to ensure that quality and liveability is not being compromised in the drive to achieve net zero.

How the strategy and plan are monitored is critical because in the absence of steady and reliable funding streams for the work this agenda requires, the likelihood is that targets will be missed. Therefore, clear and defined targets are important.

49. What are your views on the draft Just Transition outcomes for the Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan?

Views are generally positive. However, it is a large document and many would struggle to comprehend and digest the material easily. Some of the content is a bit disjointed, for example, trying to see the correlation between 4 different route maps. It may already be planned but a simplified synopsis with one combined route map for easier reading for the public would be helpful. If available some case studies would be good.

A communication plan on how engagement will be done on the release of the final plan would be good to be shared for input also. Many in the private, public and third sector could support the messaging if a communication plan and set of materials is produced alongside it.

50. Do you have any views on appropriate indicators and relevant data sources to measure progress towards, and success of, these outcomes?

It is likely that reporting and monitoring of reports by regulators such as SEPA or Scottish Government will be required to ensure we are on track to meet the 2045 targets. Reviewing and modifying targets to make sure we can achieve them will be required. Air quality data is taken by Local Authorities already, use of this data to show the effect of low emission zones for example will encourage those making sacrifices.