

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
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Date: 5 May 2023

List of Appendices

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