

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Net Zero, Environment & Transport
DATE	11 June 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Place Based Strategy Framework – Update Report
REPORT NUMBER	CR&E/24/160
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	David Dunne
REPORT AUTHOR	David Dunne
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides an update on the development of some of the Council's key place-based strategies.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Note the current position on the preparation of plans and strategies set out in the report, and the indicative timelines provided; and
- 2.2 Instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to produce an annual Service Update to this Committee on the ongoing development of the plans and strategies set out in this report, noting that this will be in addition to the ongoing reports to Committee on each individual plan and strategy.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 In May 2023 a report was presented to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee (COM/23/121) to explain the framework of place-based strategies and the interrelationship and interdependencies between them. The report also set out the role of these plans and strategies in the decision-making process and the timeline for their development and review. One of the instructions from the May 2023 report was for the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to keep the strategy framework up to date and report back to this Committee annually. This report provides an annual update on this basis.

National Plan / Strategy Updates

- 3.2 Key changes in the national picture of plans and strategies over the last year are summarised below:

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

Following its approval by the Scottish Parliament on 11 January 2023, NPF4 formally became part of the statutory development plan on 13 February 2023. Over the last 12 months Officers have been working with a range of stakeholders to ensure the transition to this new planning framework is managed as smoothly as possible. The framework set by NPF4 will be particularly important during production of the Council's own Local Development Plan, discussed further below.

Climate & Nature

- There has been much activity at Scottish Government level on biodiversity law and policy in recent times. Consultations on this have included: Natural Environment Bill, Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and Delivery Plan, Nature Networks, 30 x 30, Biodiversity Metric for Planning, Marine Conservation and more. The outcomes of these are yet to be seen and may result in new and / or amended law and / or policies affecting public bodies.
- Similar to biodiversity, there has also been much activity on climate law and policy. There have been consultations on the following: Energy Strategy & Just Transition, Circular Economy, National Adaptation Plan, Good Food Nation Plan, Wellbeing & Sustainable Development, Heat in Buildings and much more. The outcomes of these are yet to be seen and may result in new and / or amended law and / or policies affecting public bodies.
- Some of the recent activity has been more significant and high profile, with much remaining unclear and in flux at the time of writing this Report. The Government, in line with the findings of the Climate Change Committee, recently stated that the statutory climate targets, to 2030, as set out through the Climate Change (Scotland) Acts, were now considered overambitious and unachievable. While they emphasised their commitment to the end target of net zero by 2045, they stated their intention to abolish annual and interim targets to 2030, instead proposing to set out a new monitoring regime of 5-year carbon budgets through revised climate legislation, yet to be brought forward.
- There is a duty on the Scottish Government, as part of the above legislation, to bring forward a Climate Change Plan update setting out how they intend to meet the statutory targets. Also expected was updated statutory guidance for public bodies on implementing climate law and policy. These were expected to be published in late 2023 and were delayed to early 2025. It is understood at this time that the intention remains to publish these. If and when these are published, they will act as important guides for updating the Council and City climate related strategies and plans in 2025.

Regional Plan / Strategy Updates

- 3.3 Key changes in the regional picture of plans and strategies over the last year are summarised below:
- There have been no material changes to report on regional plans or strategies in the reporting period.

Local Strategy Framework Updates

- 3.4 Key changes in the local picture of plans and strategies over the last year are summarised below:

Local Outcome Improvement Plan / Locality Plans

- 3.5 On 29 April 2024 the refreshed Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2016-26 and three Locality Plans for North, South and Central Aberdeen were approved by the Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) Board. The LOIP focuses on four themes: Economy, People, Place and Community Empowerment, with 97 improvement projects planned to help achieve the goals.

Local Development Plan

- 3.6 On 19 June 2023 the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (LDP) 2023 was formally adopted by the Council and constituted as part of the statutory Development Plan. It will be used to guide decisions on planning applications alongside Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance. The LDP provides a land use framework until 2032 and aims towards Aberdeen being a sustainable city at the heart of a vibrant and inclusive North East of Scotland.
- 3.7 On 22 November 2023 Members of the Council's Finance & Resources Committee agreed a Development Plan Scheme and Participation Statement to set the Council's programme for preparing and reviewing the next Local Development Plan, which is programmed for adoption in 2028.

Local Transport Strategy

- 3.8 A Draft Local Transport Strategy (LTS) was approved by this Committee in August 2023, and public consultation took place on the draft strategy and all supporting appendices and background documents from November 2023 – January 2024. The consultation generated a high number of responses and presented a number of complex issues which Officers are currently working through. This exercise is being supported by Officers from the Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) given the resourcing pressures associated with analysis of a large number of complex and detailed responses, many of which relate to the links between transportation and health and wellbeing.

- 3.9 Officers are also mindful of a number of key City Centre transport interventions currently underway and that it would be beneficial if the results of / feedback from these interventions could also be reflected in the final strategy. Some examples include the bus priority interventions, the progress of Aberdeen Rapid Transit – both subject to other reports on this Agenda – as well as work ongoing on the Regional Active Travel Network Review and the City Centre Car Parking Strategy (which itself will be informed by the upcoming six month reduction in charges for off-street car parking in Council carparks after 5pm). A report summarising and analysing the consultation responses from the Draft LTS will be presented back to this Committee later this year, at which point Members will also be asked to approve a new timeline for the final Local Transport Strategy to be reported back for approval.

Local Housing Strategy

- 3.10 The Aberdeen Local Housing Strategy (LHS) (2018-2023) is currently being refreshed. A report setting out the timeline, vision and strategic outcomes will be reported to the May meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee.

Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap & Strategies

- 3.11 A refreshed Net Zero Aberdeen & Adaptation Board has been established to help continue directing collaborative efforts on citywide net zero and climate adaptation ambitions. The new Board first met on 16 May 2024 to discuss existing plans and set out new ways forward to take the city from strategic ambitions towards delivery plans. The Board will meet at least twice a year to ensure momentum on these matters.

NZA Buildings & Heat / Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES)

- 3.12 Work commenced during the reporting period to develop a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) which aims to underpin an area-based approach to heat and energy efficiency planning and delivery. This is being led by the Council's Energy Management Team, supported with external Scottish Government funding and with specialised support from ChangeWorks. Work to date has involved stakeholder engagement to identify key issues and opportunities. The outputs are yet to be finalised and will be reported to Committee at the appropriate time.

NZA Natural Environment Strategy - Open Space Audit

- 3.13 The second Aberdeen Open Space Audit has been completed and is due to be published. This is a significant piece of work and provides a critical evidence base on the types, quantities, distribution, qualities, accessibility and public perceptions of public open spaces across Aberdeen. This evidence will be used by the Council and partners to help inform their own policies and approaches to open space. This includes the next Local Development Plan, Council Climate Plan and Net Zero Aberdeen Natural Environment Strategy refresh.

Outline Timelines

- 3.14 Table 1 below gives an indication of the timelines for some of the key plans and strategies prepared by the Council. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of plans or strategies, and the timelines quoted may be subject to change.

Table 1: Key dates for a range of strategies

Strategy Title	Live / Fixed	Adopted	Next Review (Approx.)	Next Adoption Date (Approx.)
Local Outcome Improvement Plan	F	2021	2025	2026/7
Aberdeen Adapts Framework	L	2022	2024/5	2025
Net Zero Aberdeen (NZA) Routemap	L	2022	2024/5	2025
NZA Mobility Strategy	L	2022	2024/5	2025
NZA Building and Heat Strategy	L	2022	2024/5	2025
NZA Circular Economy Strategy	L	2022	2024/5	2025
NZA Energy Supply Strategy	L	2022	2024/5	2025
NZA Natural Environment Strategy	L	2022	2024/5	2025
NZA Empowerment Strategy	L	2022	2024/5	2025
Council Climate Change Plan	L	2021	2024/5	2025
Local Development Plan	F	2023	2024	2028
Local Transport Strategy	F	2016	2021	2025
Local Housing Strategy	F	2018	2021	2024
Flood Risk Management Plan	F	2022	2027	2028
Waste Strategy	F	2015	2022	2025
Active Travel Action Plan / Network Review	F	2021	2023	2026

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. Preparation of individual Council plans and strategies will be met through existing budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on a number of Council plans and strategies, and so there are no direct implications arising from this report. Individual strategies, programmes or plans may in themselves be required to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulation Appraisal to identify the likely environmental effects, and to avoid any adverse environmental effects occurring.

7. RISK

7.1 The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Failure where the Council has scope of influence to contribute to place based targets	Strengthened place-based governance approach.	M	Yes
Compliance	Failure to contribute to the delivery of national targets/ programmes	Strengthened place-based governance approach.	L	Yes
Operational	Failure to support the governance structure	Strengthen the strategic direction to the delivery of operation services and to focus resources accordingly	L	Yes
Financial	Failure to focus resources on preventative spend and in a coordinated way to ensure strategic delivery	Provide support and strategic direction for resource spend.	L	Yes
Reputational	Failure to support the governance structure	Council Core Coordination Group in place for place based climate work.	M	Yes
Environment / Climate	Risk to the delivery of Net Zero Aberdeen & Aberdeen Adapts	Ongoing support for the delivery of collaborative place based climate work programmes; as well as the Council project pipeline	M	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	There are no direct proposals within this report the purpose of the report is to explain how the policies developed by the council will aim to deliver the policy statement, where the Council has scope to do so.
<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The purpose of this report is to explain the relationship between regional and city wide strategies rather than delivering any objectives in and of itself.
Regional and City Strategies	The purpose of this report is to explain the relationship between regional and city wide strategies rather than delivering any objectives in and of itself.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)	As an update report with no material decisions or actions, no IIA is required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with David Dunne, Chief Officer Strategic Place Planning on 07/05/2024.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Report to Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee, May 2023: COM/23/121 – Place Based Strategy Framework

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 N/A

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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