

Net Zero, Environment & Transport Committee Annual Effectiveness Report 2023/2024



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1. Introduction from Convener

- 1.1 I am pleased to present the second annual effectiveness report for the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee (NZET). The annual effectiveness reports have been in place since 2017, following a recommendation made by CIPFA in their review of the Council’s governance arrangements, namely that Committees review the extent to which they had operated within their Terms of Reference, through an annual report. The annual effectiveness report represents good practice in governance and also informs the annual review of the Council’s Scheme of Governance, enabling officers to identify if any changes are required, for example, to the Committee Terms of Reference.
- 1.2 Following the 2024 Scheme of Governance Review, only one minor change was made to the NZET Terms of Reference. This was to alter TOR 8 to include reference to climate and environmental projects, and not only roads and transport projects – “Approve and oversee all policies, strategies, programmes, and projects in relation to climate, sustainability, the natural environment and transport and roads.”
- 1.3 I would like to thank the Committee Vice Convener Councillor Miranda Radley, Members, and officers for their contributions during the year and I look forward to continuing to work with them all next year.



Councillor Ian Yuill
Convener – Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee

2. The Role of the Committee

PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE

To monitor the delivery of all services and functions relating to net zero, the environment and transport; to scrutinise performance and approve options within set budgets to ensure best value and delivery of the Council's agreed outcomes; and to ensure that the Council has robust arrangements for the delivery of the Council's environmental targets and the meeting of its related statutory obligations.

REMIT OF COMMITTEE

The Committee will:

1. Monitor the Council's compliance with its environmental targets, including its carbon budget, and statutory obligations, and any charters or memorandums of understanding which it enters, in relation to matters such as net zero, climate change, environmental sustainability, food growing and biodiversity.
2. Approve the annual Climate Change Report for submission to the Scottish Government.
3. Approve the Council's Climate Change Plan and monitor its delivery.
4. Approve the Council's Biodiversity Duty Report.
5. Monitor key performance indicators in relation to, and progress towards, the Council's decarbonisation pathway, climate adaptation and the 2045 target for zero carbon.
6. Consider environmental evidence and advice from the widest possible range of sources.
7. Oversee, and make decisions relating to, service delivery in respect of transport and roads matters, and approve options to improve/transform service delivery. This includes scrutiny of operational performance and service standards in line with the Performance Management Framework and considering recommendations for improvements where required.
8. Approve and oversee all policies, strategies, programmes, and projects in relation to climate, sustainability, the natural environment and transport and roads.
9. Receive risk registers relative to its remit and scrutinise to ensure assurance of the controls in place.
10. Receive reports on inspections and peer reviews in order to ensure best practice and note any actions arising from those inspections and reviews.
11. Make recommendations to the appropriate Committee(s) or Sub Committee(s) on matters affecting its remit where the authority to approve sits within the remit of another Committee or Sub Committee.

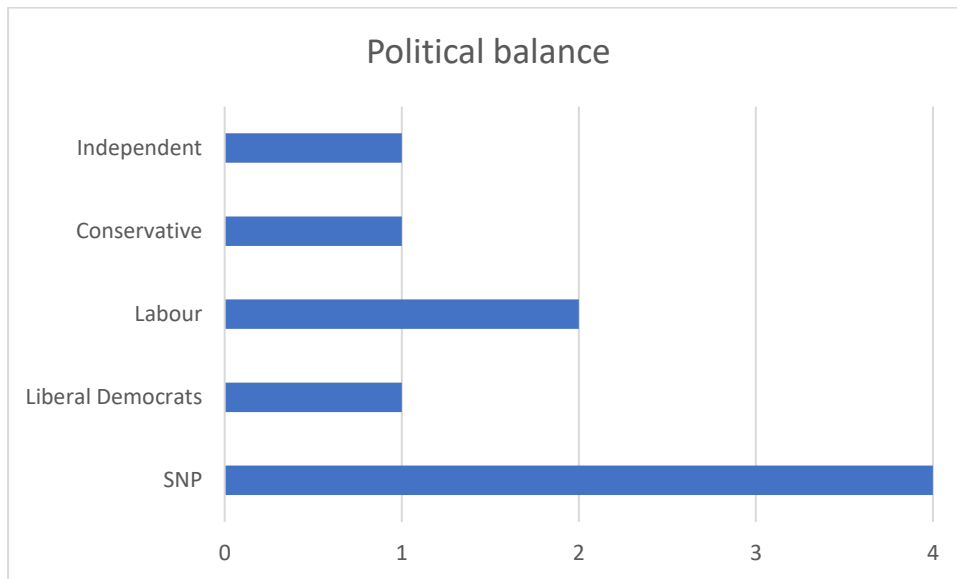
12. In undertaking its remit, ensure that it is acting within the budget set by Council and is supporting the delivery of the Council's agreed outcomes, commissioning intentions and service standards.

Executive Lead: Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning

3. Membership of the Committee during 2023/2024

3.1 Following the decision taken by Council in February 2024, the membership of the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee reduced from 13 members to 9. There were therefore a number of changes to the Committee membership during the reporting period.

3.2 The current Committee composition is presented below:-



4. Membership Changes

- 4.1 Following the decision of Council in February 2024 to reduce the number of Members on Committees, Councillors Bonsell, Crockett, Fairfull, Farquhar, McLellan and McRae all stepped down from the Committee, therefore were only Members for the October 2023 and January 2024 meetings of the Committee in terms of the recorded attendance in the table below. Also following the February 2024 Council meeting, Councillors Nicoll and van Sweeden joined the Committee, therefore only have attendance data for the March, June and September 2024 meetings of the Committee.

5. Member Attendance

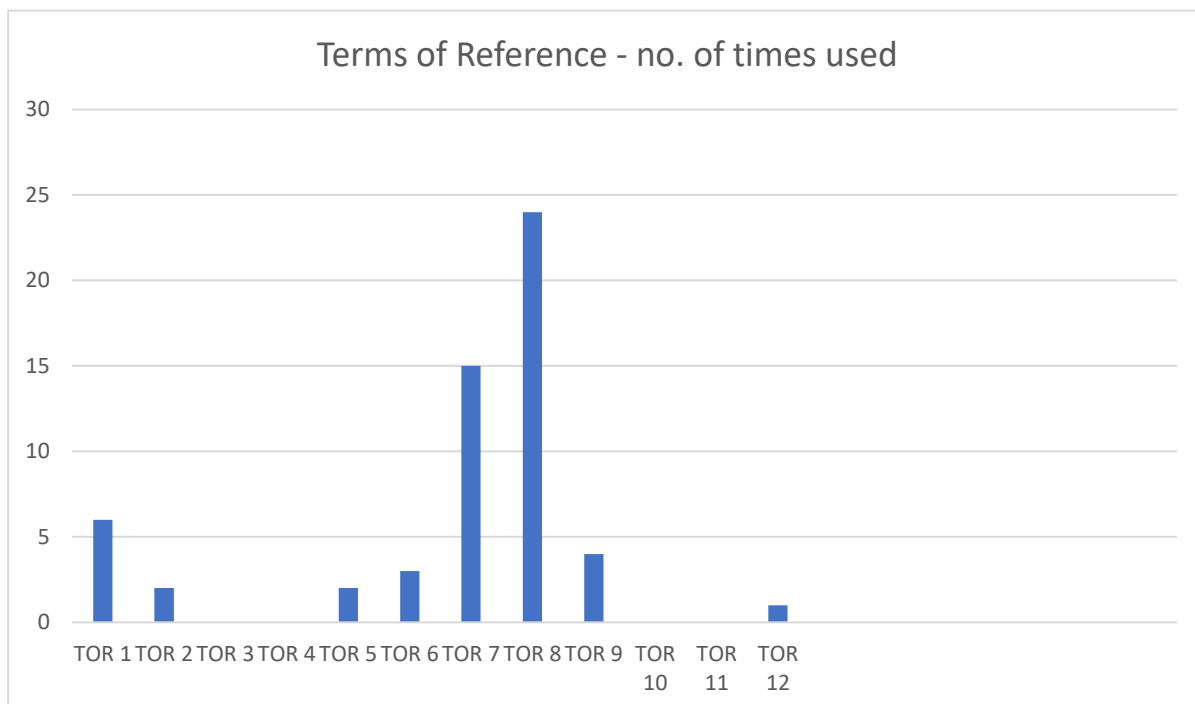
Member	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances	Substitutions
Current Membership			
Councillor Ian Yuill	5	4	1 - Councillor Steve Delaney
Councillor Miranda Radley	5	5	
Councillor Nurul Hoque Ali	5	5	
Councillor Kate Blake	5	5	
Councillor Dell Henrickson	5	5	
Councillor Michael Hutchison	5	5	
Councillor Duncan Massey	5	5	
Councillor Alex Nicoll	3	3	
Councillor Kairin van Sweeden	3	3	
Membership pre-February 2024			
Councillor Jennifer Bonsell	2	2	
Councillor Barney Crockett	2	1	
Councillor Lee Fairfull	2	0	2 - Councillor Jessica Mennie & Councillor Gill Al-Samarai
Councillor Emma Farquhar	2	2	
Councillor Alex McLellan	2	2	
Councillor Ciaran McRae	2	0	2- Councillor Gill Al-Samarai & Councillor Donna Clark

6. Meeting Content

6.1 During the 2023/2024 reporting period (14 October 2023 to 14 October 2024), the Committee had 5 meetings and considered a total of 45 reports.

6.2 Terms of Reference

6.2.1 The following chart details how reports aligned to the Terms of Reference (TOR) (set out at section 2 above) for the Committee.



6.2.2 During the course of 2023/2024 the Committee received reports across a range of its Terms of Reference, with the majority relating to roads and transport issues, and with the change to TOR 8 (as explained at 6.2.5 below) climate, sustainability and the natural environment.

6.2.3 There were no reports received under TOR 3 and 4, however these specifically relate to the approval of the Council's Climate Change Plan and Biodiversity Duty, both of which will be considered at future meetings of the Committee.

6.2.4 Similarly, there were no reports under TOR 10 and 11. TOR 10 relates to reports on inspections and peer reviews, which tend not to be reported to NZET Committee. The Committee did not require to make any recommendations to the appropriate Committee(s) or Sub Committee(s) on matters affecting its remit where the authority to approve sits within the remit of another Committee or Sub Committee (TOR 11).

6.2.5 Very few changes to the Committee Terms of Reference were made following the 2024 Scheme of Governance review. Any changes made were generally to provide clarity where required and ensure consistency between committees. The specific

change made to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee was to ensure that officers were able to easily select an appropriate TOR to use for their reports. This had not always been the case, as TOR 8 which related to approval of policies, strategies, programmes, and projects initially only made reference to roads and transport matters. This was therefore addressed in the 2024 Review following feedback from officers throughout the year. The new Terms of Reference will continue to be monitored throughout the year, in preparation for the 2025 Scheme of Governance review, and consideration will again be given to whether those TOR which have not been used in reports require to be amended.

7. Reports and Decisions

7.1 The following information relates to the committee reports and Notices of Motion presented to Committee throughout the reporting period, as well as the use of Standing Orders and engagement with members of the public.

	Total	Total Percentage of Reports
Confidential Reports	0	0%
Exempt Reports	1*	2%
Number of reports where the Committee amended officer recommendations	3**	7%
Number of reports approved unanimously	39	87%
Number of reports or service updates requested during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in business planner	1 report 1 service update	N/A
Number of reports delayed for further information	0	0%
Number of times the Convener has had to remind Members about acceptable behaviour in terms of the Code of Conduct	0	0%
Late reports received (i.e. reports not available for inspection at least 3 clear days before the meeting)	0	0%

* There was one exempt report presented to Committee, however there was also one exempt appendix in relation to the Roads and Transport Related Capital Budget Programme 2024-2025.

** These were “Feasibility of changing the current pay and display policy (Notice of Motion by Councillor Malik)”, “The Aberdeen City Council (City Centre, Aberdeen) (Traffic Management) (Experimental) Order 2023 – Statutory Public Consultation”, “Westhill to Aberdeen City Centre Active Travel Improvements”

There were slight amendments or additions to other reports however these have not been counted in the above table as the essence of the report recommendations from officers were approved.

7.2 The additional report instructed to provide additional assurance was due to the high sickness absence within Environmental, Roads and Waste Services at the time of reporting (March 2024). It was agreed therefore to instruct the Chief Officers – Operations and People and Citizen Services to bring back a report to the June Staff Governance Committee on why sickness absence was so high within those services and what the Council was doing to reduce such absence; and to instruct that future updates be incorporated into the relevant sickness absence report to Staff Governance Committee.

The Committee instructed a service update at the September 2024 meeting to provide additional assurance in relation to the Draft Local Transport Strategy and the measures in place to increase the response from underrepresented groups and to align more closely to the demographic profile of the city. Other service updates provided throughout the year are not counted in this table as they were not specifically to provide assurance. They are however listed at Section 9.2 for information.

7.3 The figures in the table at 7.1 are generally unchanged from last year’s report.

7.4

Notices of Motion, Suspension of Standing Orders, Interface with the Public	
Number of Notices of Motion to Committee	1*
Number of times Standing Orders suspended	3
Specific Standing Orders suspended	14.14 and 40.2**
Number of deputations requested	5
Number of deputations heard	2***
Number of petitions considered	0

* This was a Notice of Motion from Councillor Blake in relation to School Streets

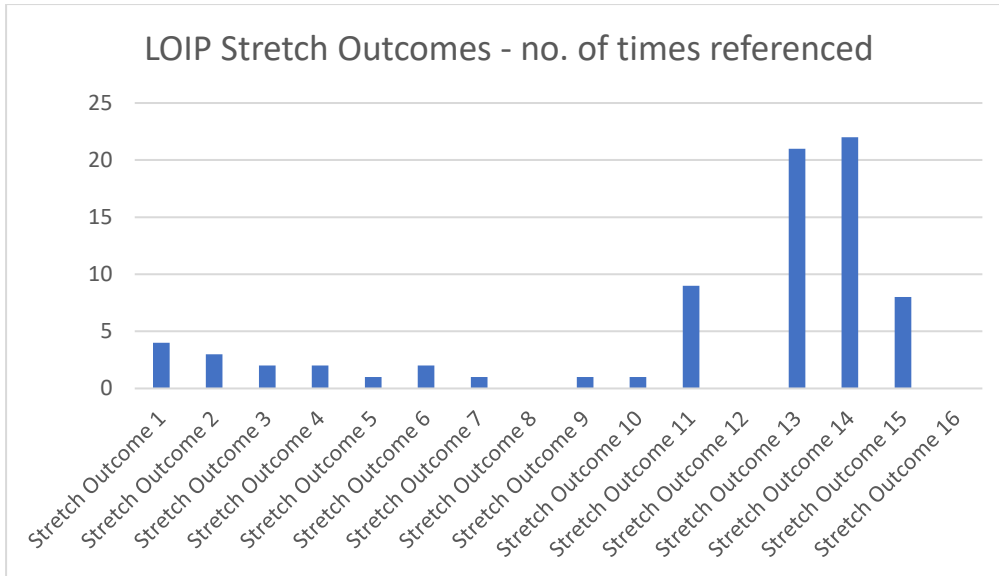
** The following Standing Orders were suspended:- Standing Order 14.14 (at the September 2024 meeting) to allow continuation of questions to a deputation; and Standing Order 40.2 twice (at the June and September meetings), to enable the meeting to continue past six hours to complete the business.

*** The three deputations which were refused were as follows:- two requests in relation to the Various Small Scale Traffic Management – Stage 3 report (March 2024) and one request in relation to the Aberdeen City Council (City Centre, Aberdeen) (Traffic Management) (Experimental) Order 2023 – Statutory Public Consultation. The three requests were refused under Standing Order 14.5.6 *“Deputations which relate to matters that have alternative procedures for representation (which may include, but are not restricted to, the Council’s*

proposed sale or let of a property which has been subject to a closing date and the Council's proposed tendering of goods, services or works)" as there had already been the opportunity for representations to be made as part of both processes.

8. Reports with links to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan

- 8.1 The chart below details of the 45 reports how each report linked to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP Stretch Outcomes are appended to this report for reference at Appendix 1). As can be seen from the chart below, reports to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee had links to most of the stretch outcomes, with the exception of 8, 12 and 16.
- 8.2 Stretch outcome 8 relates to *100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination*; and stretch outcome 12 is *Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City*. Stretch Outcome 16 is *100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026*. While these three have not been used for any reports this year, there is however a relatively wide spread across the other stretch outcomes, demonstrating that many of the reports are expected to have an impact on the LOIP stretch outcomes. As would be expected, most reports have had a connection with stretch outcomes which relate to climate change, sustainable travel, and nature.
- 8.3 Due to the refresh of the LOIP in April 2024, the numbering and wording of some of the Stretch Outcomes was altered, therefore the reports listed under Stretch Outcome 11, in the table below, relate to the old Stretch Outcome 11 (Healthy life expectancy [time lived in good health] is five years longer by 2026) as opposed to the new Stretch Outcome 11 (Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026).
- 8.4 Some reports considered by Committee this year have had no connection with specific LOIP stretch outcomes; these tend to be items such as the regular performance report, which do however still have a general impact on the outcomes of the LOIP by monitoring key indicators impacting on the lives of all citizens of Aberdeen and enable Members to assess the measures of already implemented and consider future actions which may be required to ensure an improvement in outcomes.



9. Training and Development

9.1 The following has been made available to Members over the reporting period.

- A Briefing Session on the Council Annual Climate Change Report and Biodiversity Duty Report took place in October 2023 for members of the Net Zero, Environment and Transport (NZET) Committee.
- A number of Elected Members attended the Scottish Climate Intelligence Service (SCIS) online launch event on 26 September 2024. An invite to the event was shared by email and through the Elected Members Information and Development Teams channel.
- Officers undertook regular meetings with NZET Conveners to discuss plans and progress on the Council's activities in relation to greenspace, trees and nature.
- The Lord Provost and several Elected Members attended a Civic Reception on 19 September 2024, to celebrate the contributions of local people to achieving and retaining 20 years of Fairtrade City status for Aberdeen.
- Members were invited and some attended and engaged with the Envirolution Festival pilot - a collaborative community environment festival which took place in Seaton Park on 28 September 2024, covering issues such as climate change, nature recovery and sustainable active travel.
- Information on the addition of a new Environmental Implications Section to the updated Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) template was included in an Elected Members information post by People and Citizen Service.
- Members continued to have access to the Green Workplace section of the Intranet, this contains a growing range of information on climate and environment. Including on the new Taking Action on Climate Change training and the 12 Council-led events contributing to Climate Week North East in March 2024.
- Bespoke training on the Natural Environment was delivered in October 2024. It was open to all Councillors with attendance both from NZET and other

Members. This session was an introduction to key topic areas including; key legislative and policy context, work/ projects ongoing in this field by the Council, and what Elected Members can look out for regarding the Natural Environment as part of their work.

- NZET Members were invited and some attended the North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership's Conference in March 2024.

9.2 Service updates were also provided to Members throughout the year to provide additional information on topics which were not reported to Committee. These were:-

- [Aberdeen B-Lines](#)
- [ACC Biodiversity Duty Report 2023](#) and [Appendix](#)
- [Den Burn Restoration update](#)
- [Environmental Services Highlights 2023-2024](#)
- [Progress Report for Hazlehead Play Park](#)
- [Intelligent Transport Systems Unit](#)
- [Road Safety Plan Annual Update](#)
- [Strategic Car Parking Review - funding update](#)
- [Update on Waste Performance Numbers](#)

9.3 Further development opportunities will be considered for next year based on Committee business throughout the year, Executive Lead proposals and Member feedback on what may be required to assist them in performing their roles.

10. Code of Conduct Declarations and Transparency Statements

10.1 2 declarations of interest and 31 transparency statements were made by Members during the reporting period. Information in respect of declarations of interest and transparency statements is measured to evidence awareness of the requirements to adhere to the Councillors' Code of Conduct and the responsibility to ensure fair decision-making. The number of transparency statements has doubled since last year, however this is likely as a result of the number of reports increasing from 29 to 45 since last year's report.

11. Civic Engagement

11.1 During the course of the reporting period, there has been consultation with the public and staff in relation to the following, prior to the reports being presented to Committee:-

- Various Small Scale Traffic Management
- Draft Local Transport Strategy
- City Centre (Traffic Management) (Experimental) Order
- A92 Murcar North Active Travel Scheme
- Garthdee / Kaimhill Controlled Parking Zone

- South College Street Phase 2
- Aberdeen Rapid Transit
- Westhill to Aberdeen City Centre Active Travel
- Implementation of Citywide 20MPH Limit
- A947 Bucksburn to Parkhill Multi-Modal Corridor
- Staff Travel Policy and Council Travel Plan

11.2 There has also been ongoing engagement with community partners and the public through the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) UK Britain In Bloom Awards; 'It's Your Neighbourhood'; Keep Scotland Beautiful Beach Awards; Clean Up Aberdeen; Meadow-In-A-Box and many more initiatives.

12. Executive Lead to the Committee - Commentary

12.1 Over the last twelve months the Committee has overseen a significant body of work, across a broad range of projects and topic areas. As with last year, Members have taken the opportunity to delve into and consider important related issues on the Council's work on Net Zero, Environment and Transport.

12.2 The Committee has overseen and scrutinised important statutory and non-statutory reports outlining the Council's past efforts and future plans on climate and nature, including Climate Change and Biodiversity Duty Reporting, Nature Awareness Campaign; the Open Space Audit Report; the annual Net Zero Aberdeen and Aberdeen Adapts report; and a paper on options to increase recycling and reuse.

12.3 A significant range of transport projects have been overseen by the Committee this year, including progress on delivering Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART). The Committee also took time to review responses made to the public consultations on the Draft Local Transport Strategy and City Centre Transport Measures.

12.4 In addition to the added value through training and development approaches and information circulated through service updates (ref. Section 9), in the year ahead Officers will continue to respond to any feedback from Members of the Committee to ensure that reports are presented in an informative way to allow effective decision making to take place.

13. The Year Ahead

13.1 As mentioned above, the 2025 Scheme of Governance review will look at the operation of this Committee over the previous 12 months and take on board any amendments to Terms of Reference which may be needed. There is also an existing instruction to officers to review the Committee structure, due to be reported to Council in February 2025 for consideration.

13.2 In line with the NZET Committee Terms of Reference, the new Pupil Climate Change President will be invited to attend a meeting of the Committee. This year's President

was unable to attend a meeting as a result of school and exam commitments, therefore early contact will be made with next year's President to ascertain if they will be able to join a meeting.

13.3 The business planner sets out a range of pieces of work which are due to come back before Committee in 2024/25 for consideration, including:-

- Revised Draft Local Transport Strategy
- Net Zero Aberdeen & Aberdeen Adapts: Annual Report 2023/24
- Bus Lane Enforcement programme
- Aberdeen Rapid Transit
- Update on Implementation of Pavement Parking Prohibition

13.4 Officers will continue to identify suitable training and information to share with Members throughout the year.

Appendix 1 – Local Outcome Improvement Plan Stretch Outcomes

Economy	
1.	20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/ or not be able to heat their home by 2026
2.	74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026
People (Children & Young People)	
3.	95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026
4.	90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026
5.	By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026
6.	95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026
7.	83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026
8.	100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination
People (Adults)	
9.	10% fewer adults (over 18) charged with more than one offence by 2026
10.	Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026
11.	Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026
12.	Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.
Place	
13.	Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate
14.	Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking; 5% of people cycling and wheeling as main mode of travel and a 5% reduction in car miles by 2026
15.	26% of Aberdeen's area will be protected and/or managed for nature and 60% of people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for by 2026
Community Empowerment	
16.	100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026