

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Communities Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Climate Change Report 2015/2016
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/16/162
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to approve the first mandatory Climate Change Report submission to the Scottish Government to ensure compliance with the requirements of Public Bodies Duties under Part 4 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The report is due for submission by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and it covers the financial year 2015/2016. Further, Committee Members are asked to approve the recommendations below to ensure continual improvement in reporting practice for next year's submission.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Committee Members:

- a) approve the submissions provided in Appendices 1 and 2 to the Scottish Government.
- b) request that the Chief Executive signs off the submission and
- c) approve that future annual Climate Change Reports are submitted to the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct budget implications arising from the completion of the Climate Change Report. This can be undertaken through existing service budgets and staff allocations.

### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

To improve future Climate Change Reports, the development of streamlined and robust procedures and processes to gather accurate information will be required. To improve procedures and processes the

Emissions Accountant will work with relevant service area officers to identify and support data capture.

Failure to report and show continual improvement to emissions reduction, adaptation to climate change and acting sustainably could result in non-compliance with the requirements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

## 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Under Part 4 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, public sector organisations are required to report on progress against Public Bodies Duties annually. Public Bodies Duties are:

- reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions (mitigation),
- adapting to the impacts of a changing climate (adaptation) and
- having sustainable development as a core value (acting sustainably).

The Climate Change Report follows a standardised reporting methodology used across the public sector to allow the collection of consistent and accurate public sector information and to enable comparison. The Climate Change Report requires that the public sector demonstrate a commitment to tackling climate change, managing climate risks, improving performance reporting and reducing emissions. The Climate Change Report has two sections: "Required" and "Recommended".

The "Required" section (Appendix 1) provides evidence of corporate climate change governance, internal waste, business travel, street lighting, council building utilities, water and projects focusing upon efforts to reduce emissions at a corporate level. In addition it provides information on adaptation and sustainable procurement.

The "Recommended" section (Appendix 2) reflects the influential functions that the Council has in supporting efforts on climate change mitigation and adaptation city-wide, beyond its estate boundary. The "Recommended" section should document relevant achievements not reported within the "Required" section and include evidence relating to communication and partnership working.

### Recommendations.

*a) Approve the submissions provided in Appendices 1 and 2 to the Scottish Government.*

The Scottish Government expect all reports to be published prior to submission and that validation of quantitative and qualitative information is regarded as good practice.

*b) Request that the Chief Executive signs off the submission.*

The Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) expects all Climate Change Reports to be approved by the person with senior responsibility.

*c) Approve that future Climate Change Reports are submitted to the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee.*

To meet Public Body Duties reporting requirements, recording data and monitoring and implementing mitigation and adaptation measures to address climate change, action needs to take place across all directorates. For this reason it is recommended that future Climate Change Reports are presented to Finance, Policy and Resources Committee as per their Orders of Reference, specifically point 2, 22 and 23 a).

## 6. IMPACT

### **Improving Customer Experience –**

Completing a Climate Change Report is a matter of data collection and information gathering. This has little impact upon external customers aside from those responsible for reporting upon public sector emissions, for example SSN. There is a requirement for internal stakeholder involvement in the provision and verification of data. This covers many areas of Council operation including corporate governance, internal waste, travel, utilities, procurement, adaptation and project management.

The area which has the greatest impact on improving customer experience would be the actual implementation of projects designed to reduce corporate emissions and to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate. Such projects would help to improve customer experience through lower utility and resource bills, through efficient management and the provision of better quality environments in which to live and work. This would apply both within our public and office buildings, and also for tenants of Council properties. This report doesn't go into detail in relation to this however, such benefits would be illustrated at the individual project level.

### **Improving Staff Experience –**

As mentioned above, completion of the Climate Change Report requires the collation of data and information. This is obtained from many service areas across the Council. Officers and Heads of Service are requested to provide this data and information in a specified format and in a timely manner; providing raw data, details of assumptions and methodologies, information on projects and commentary. Over the past two years such requests have been made as and when guidance and clarification has been obtained from the SSN on reporting requirements. It is hoped that this process can be streamlined through implementation and improved information gathering processes and procedures. This would help Officers and Heads of Service to better understand their roles and responsibilities within this process and ensure that they are accommodated within future service and workload planning.

The area which has the greatest impact upon improving staff experience would be in the actual implementation of projects designed to reduce corporate emissions and to adapt to the impacts of changing climate. Such projects would help to improve staff experience through lower utility and resource bills, through efficient management and the provision of better quality work environments. This report doesn't go into detail in relation to this however such benefits would be illustrated at the individual project.

### **Improving our use of Resources –**

Public Bodies Duties require the Council to act:

- in the way best calculated to contribute to delivery of the Act's emission reduction targets of 42% by 2020 and 80% by 2050;
- in the best way calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programme. *Climate Ready Scotland*, the Scottish Adaptation Programme was approved in 2014; and
- in the way it considers most sustainable.

The primary function of the Climate Change Report is to monitor Council performance against the above legislative requirements and our own relevant corporate plans, policies and strategies. This information is made publically available and should provide information in a transparent and accountable manner. The Climate Change Report can help to identify areas of best practice and areas for improvement in order to support future decision making.

### **Corporate -**

Implementation of the recommendations outlined in this paper, will support the goals and priorities set out in '*Aberdeen – the Smarter City*'.

'*Aberdeen – the Smarter City*' vision includes high-level priorities in its '*Smarter Environment (Natural Resources)*' section:

- Design and construction of all new infrastructure to be energy efficient by maximising the use of low carbon technology and materials and using recycled materials where appropriate;
- Increase energy efficiency and introduction of carbon reduction measures in corporate process and housing and non-housing assets to reduce carbon footprint, save money and to bring people out of fuel poverty;
- Manage waste effectively and in line with UK and European legislative requirements by maximising recycling and reducing waste to landfill, thereby reducing costs and the carbon footprint; and
- Provide a clean, safe and attractive streetscape and promote biodiversity and nature conservation as well as encourage wider access to green space in streets, parks and countryside.

The Climate Change Report can be a management tool to improve corporate, cross-directorate working, challenging the inefficiencies inherent from stand-alone working and promoting joint working internally across Council services.

## **Public –**

All Climate Change Reports are made publically available through both our own corporate website and that of the SSN. The information may be of interest to certain stakeholders in relation to how the Council is performing in reducing emissions, adapting to the impacts of a changing climate and complying with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

The Climate Change Report itself is not required to have an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) or Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA). The information and data used to populate the report is predominantly taken from corporate activity. However, projects and actions that form part of any emissions reduction and adaptation activity should be assessed on an individual basis and may require their own EHRIA and PIA.

The recommended reporting section of the Climate Change Report (see Appendix 2) looks at city-wide emissions. This part of the Climate Change Report would be covered by the EHRIA and PIA associated with the Full Council paper regarding Powering Aberdeen approved in May 2016.

## 7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The purpose of the Climate Change Report is to ensure legislative compliance, limit reputational risk and provide evidence to support efficiencies that reduce financial risks to the Council.

As the Climate Change Report is made publically available and is submitted direct to Scottish Government via SSN, it is imperative that the Council adopts a plan of continual improvement. This is to illustrate positive changes to performance year on year. By not adopting such practice there could be consequences that lead to reputational damage, reduced funding opportunities and increasing utility costs and penalties associated with the Carbon Reduction Commitment for example (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/crc-energy-efficiency-scheme-qualification-and-registration>).

To manage the Climate Change Report accuracy and ensure information is fit for the public realm a system of validation has been established requiring Heads of Services to verify Officer input. Further, the Climate Change Report must be submitted through corporate reporting processes offering the opportunity for additional scrutiny prior to sign off by the Chief Executive.

The “Risk that processes to manage and benefit from the effects of severe weather and climate change are not effective” has been included in the Council Strategic Risk Register. This is to ensure that the Council is compliant with key legislative requirements, including Public Bodies Duties under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Implementation of the statutory annual climate change monitoring and

reporting requirement from 2016 is a key control for this risk and this is currently assessed as partially effective.

Please note that this paper is discussing only the submission of the Climate Change Report. The management of any negative or positive risks associated with any corporate activities would be detailed at the individual project level.

## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- CHI Bulletin Required Reporting 2015
- CHI/15/247 – Powering Aberdeen: Aberdeen’s Sustainable Energy Action Plan Draft for Public Consultation
- Orders of Reference

## 9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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