

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	22 February 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Climate Change (Place) Governance Proposals
REPORT NUMBER	COM/23/054
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	David Dunne
REPORT AUTHOR	Alison Leslie
TERMS OF REFERENCE	21

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks Council approval for revised governance proposals to governance for city place based climate change work, as set out in Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap and Aberdeen Adapts: Climate Adaptation Framework.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:-

- 2.1 Approve the climate change (place) governance proposals and refreshed Terms of Reference (Appendix A), updating the Leadership Board to a Net Zero and Adaptation Board and setting out the pilot process to expand the Delivery Unit to collaborative Delivery Hubs.
- 2.2 Appoint an elected member as Chair of the Net Zero and Adaptation Board for a period of 12 months in the first instance.
- 2.3 Instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the appointed Chair of the Net Zero and Adaptation Board, to invite additional external members to the Board to reflect the range of net zero and adaptation themes for Aberdeen.
- 2.4 Instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to engage with other north-east local authorities on place-based climate activity, to share knowledge; and enable dialogue on challenges and opportunities across existing and emerging climate collaborations and partnerships.
- 2.5 Note the proposed approach to developing place-based net zero and adaptation work programmes for Aberdeen.
- 2.6 Note the continued Council support for place-based net zero and adaptation work in the city through the Core Co-ordination Group; and the development and delivery of Council and Council partnership projects.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Background

- 3.1 The Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap, 6 enabling strategies and a refresh of Aberdeen Adapts were approved at Council on 28 February 2022.
- 3.2 These are collaborative documents:
- Work to inform Aberdeen Adapts was developed in partnership and had input from 41 organisations.
 - Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap and 6 enabling strategies were co-created by the Net Zero Leadership Board and Delivery Unit, composed of 24 public, private and community sector partners.
 - The Net Zero Leadership Board was led by the Council Leader at that time and the Delivery Unit by the Chief Officer Strategic Place Planning.
- 3.3 The Leadership Board and Delivery Unit were established in June 2020 at Urgent Business Committee. They were set up following approval of the Net Zero Vision for Aberdeen and a supporting Strategic Infrastructure Plan for Energy Transition and since then led the co-development of the Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap and Net Zero Strategies, which were approved in February 2022.
- 3.4 In February 2022, Council agreed the following: Instructs the Chief Officers – Governance and Strategic Place Planning to work with the members of Aberdeen's Net Zero Leadership Board, Delivery Unit, the Local Resilience Partnership and other groups as appropriate to develop city climate change governance structure/s appropriate for meeting the aims of the Route-Map and Aberdeen Adapts Framework, and report back to a future Council meeting, no later than the next annual update on the Routemap and Adaptation Framework.

City Climate Governance Model

- 3.5 To target, implement and improve delivery of place-based net zero and adaptation action, accelerating collaboration between public, private, further education and community organisations is critical.
- 3.6 The Governance Framework should remain flexible to adjust and respond to changing priorities, drivers, guidance and emerging opportunities. These include from the proposals emerging in Scotland around national and local capacity building for targeting and improved delivery of area-wide climate plans and action and recommendations from a number of areas including:
- The Scottish Parliament inquiry into the *Role of Local Government and its cross-sectoral partners in financing and delivering a net-zero Scotland*, (January 2023) includes recommendations around area-wide emissions, skills, resources, role of local government and support for the scale up and empowerment of local government action. It states, all Councils have in their area a unique *convening power*: the power to build networks and to bring together key individuals, communities and organisations from the private and

public sector to work together for a common purpose. This can also include working on a regional basis with neighbouring councils and stakeholders.

- Accounts Commission recommendations in, *Scotland's Council's Approach to Addressing Climate Change* (September 2022) include for Councils to increase collaboration efforts, though recognises achieving area-wide targets is likely to involve *complex relationships between different partners*.
- An Environmental Standards Scotland investigation underway on the effectiveness of systems to support Local Authority contribution to the delivery of climate change targets, the findings of this are yet to emerge.

3.7 Area-wide territorial greenhouse gas emissions are calculated by local authority boundary and this is reflected in the scope of the Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap. UK climate projections relevant to Aberdeen and the north-east of Scotland informed Aberdeen Adapts. As work programmes are developed some action may benefit from a locality-based approach within the city; while others could extend beyond the city depending on impacts and opportunities. Partnership work through the North East Local Flood Risk Management Plan 2022-28 is an example of contribution to climate adaptation, through reducing flood risk in relevant localities in Aberdeen and across the north east.

3.8 To inform these governance proposals, a review of place-based climate governance in other cities was undertaken looking at what was in place and how it operates; this was alongside a review of existing city and regional partnerships relevant to place-based climate activity. Discussions were held with the Place Based Climate Action Network and Sustainable Scotland Network.

3.9 A joint "Next Steps" workshop session was held in October 2022, bringing together members of the Leadership Board and Delivery Unit. The Workshop included discussion on the Governance review and proposals for the updated Terms of Reference (Appendix A). Following this there was the opportunity for further input.

3.10 In summary, revisions to the Terms of Reference include:

- i. Renaming the current Net Zero Leadership Board to a Net Zero and Adaptation Board, to reflect an extension of the current net zero remit to also include adaptation. The Board will provide expertise, advice and scrutiny to support the city transition to net zero and to increase climate resilience.
- ii. Widening the current membership of the Board to include additional areas expertise to encompass the net zero and adaptation themes.
- iii. Existing members have indicated the preference would be for the Council to continue provision of a Chair for the Board for 12 months, in the first instance, to support continuity.
- iv. The Singular Delivery Unit to transition into multi stakeholder Delivery Hubs for the collaboration, co-ordination, development and delivery of net zero and adaptation work programmes. These will plan, prioritise, drive implementation of the transition elements to meet Routemap, Net Zero strategies, Adaptation Framework targets/ outcomes.
- v. The transition to Delivery Hubs will be follow the development of the theme work programmes.

- vi. Communications between Delivery Hubs would be facilitated through 6 monthly meetings, to progress linked threads between themes including skills, monitoring, communication.
- vii. Council support with co-ordination, monitoring and reporting for city place based climate work remains through a Core Co-ordination Group.

Developing work programmes

- 3.11 The governance proposals recognise that many projects/ initiatives contributing to net zero and climate resilience in Aberdeen will already have their own governance, approval mechanisms and project pipelines.
- 3.12 The development of net zero and adaptation work programmes across key themes will be prioritised and progressed in 2023. This will be done by bringing together stakeholders relevant to those themes through facilitated means to collate information on what is already happening, identify areas to prioritise activity, address gaps and develop collaborative actions.
- 3.13 An approach to developing these collaborative work programmes and engaging potential Delivery Hub stakeholders will be piloted commencing with the Circular Economy theme.
- 3.14 Zero Waste Scotland are providing funding for a contractor to design and facilitate a series of circular economy theme workshops for relevant Net Zero Aberdeen partners and wider stakeholders. These workshops are expected to take place before the end of March 2023 and outputs will include a list of priority projects for those involved to take forward. The pilot will test an approach to developing the work programmes and where successful learning, will be applied to developing the work programmes for the other net zero and adaptation theme areas.
- 3.15 An Aberdeen Climate and Nature Pledge scheme was launched in November 2022. This invites organisations to make a commitment to acting on climate change; collaborate to reduce emissions, build climate resilience; and join the collective journey expressed in Net Zero Aberdeen and Aberdeen Adapts. Information and opportunities to join events and workshops and get involved will be shared with signatories of the pledge.
- 3.16 There is already a wide range of Council and Council partnership projects contributing to place-based climate action in Aberdeen. These projects and the pipeline of any additional Council and Council partnership projects contributing directly or indirectly to Net Zero Aberdeen or Aberdeen Adapts will continue to go through internal approval processes, where applicable relevant governance mechanisms and report to the relevant Council committees.
- 3.17 As work emerges it will be a complex and active picture. UK Government has approved funding through the Aberdeen City Council Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan for software to help model emission scenarios and identify key areas for place-based climate activity. This will provide an accessible platform to enable high level oversight of Council, wider partner and emerging transition elements, supporting collaborative climate work.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.
- 4.2 However, there is a need to identify external funding and resource opportunities and work with partners to investigate options for alternative finance and funding mechanisms for place-based net zero and adaptation to support the delivery of partnership activity.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.
- 5.2 Work towards emission reduction targets under Net Zero Aberdeen and adaptation goals under Aberdeen Adapts contributes to the Council's and other public bodies duties under Part 4 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The recommendations in this report will have a positive impact on the development and delivery of place-based climate actions to support emission reduction and the delivery of city net zero targets and on climate resilience supporting adaptation goals.
- 6.2 The governance model will enable improved dialogue among stakeholders on the environment, reducing risk of duplication and maximising opportunities to deliver actions.

7. RISK

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 for Net Zero and	Strengthened place-based governance approach. Place-based climate risk included in the Corporate Risk Register.	M	Yes

	adaptation goals.			
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.	Use of climate project and scenario tools. Ongoing support for the delivery of collaborative place based climate work programmes.	L	Yes
Financial	No direct financial risk.	Assess appropriate funding mechanisms, relevant to project priorities, including opportunities for economies of scale	L	Yes
Reputational	Failure to support the governance structure.	Council Core Co-ordination 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

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the aspects of the policy statement, where the Council has scope to influence - to work with partners to deliver a just transition to net zero and plan to make Aberdeen a net-zero city.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 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.</p> <p>The paper seeks approval for the development of the existing city climate governance model which supports the LOIP key driver 13.1 Reducing</p>

	emissions across the city through delivery of Aberdeen's Net Zero Vision & Routemap.
Regional and City Strategies	The proposals within this report support the Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap; Net Zero Buildings and Heat Strategy; Net Zero Energy Supply Strategy; Net Zero Mobility Strategy; Net Zero Circular Economy Strategy; Net Zero Natural Environment Strategy; Net Zero Empowerment Strategy; Aberdeen Adapts: Climate Adaptation Framework.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [COM/20/099](#) Net Zero Vision and Infrastructure Plan Governance
- 10.2 [COM/22/504](#) Climate Change – Citywide Strategy and Council Carbon Budget
- 10.3 [COM/22/277](#) Place Based Investment Programme and UK Shared Prosperity Fund

11. APPENDICES

A. Terms of Reference - Net Zero and Adaptation Governance Framework.

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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