

CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION - IMPLEMENTATION AND RESOURCING

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report presents the Committee with information on the Climate Emergency Declaration agreed at Full Council on 27 June 2019. In making this Declaration, Members agreed a 12-point plan of commitments and determined that the implementation of the plan would be overseen by a Climate Emergency Cross Party Working Group. In agreeing the Declaration, Members were clear that they wished the commitments to progress at pace and to ensure that there is early action to demonstrate these.

1.2 Full Council agreed that the Economy and Resources Committee would receive a report at this meeting which provides advice on resourcing and implementing the agreed 12-point plan, including the establishment of a Cross Party Working Group.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to:-

2.1 note the commitments made in the Climate Emergency Declaration attached as **Appendix 1**;

2.2 agree the approach to establish a Climate Emergency Cross Party Working Group (paragraph 3.3 and **Appendix 2**);

2.3 note the considerations on the resources required to support the Council to deliver its 12-point plan. This includes co-ordinating and assisting Council services to progress the commitments, supporting the leadership of the Working Group and establishing a Citizens' Panel, all with the aim of preparing a Climate Change Strategic Action Plan and a new Council Priority (paragraph 3.4);

2.4 agree to request that the Finance, Procurement and Transformation Committee allocates funding from the Council Change Fund for the resources required to implement the 12-point plan of commitments, this to include the proposed post of Climate Emergency Project Officer (paragraph 3.4.14); and

2.5 note that regular updates will be provided to this Committee on the work of the Cross Party Working Group and progress on the Climate Change Strategic Action Plan.

3. Considerations

3.1 The Full Council considered and agreed a Notice of Motion on 27 June 2019 and declared a Climate Emergency. In doing so, Full Council agreed a 12-point action plan, which is provided as **Appendix 1** of this report. Councillor Dougie Campbell was also appointed as the Council's Environment Champion - one of the actions included within the plan.

3.2 In agreeing the Declaration, Elected Members decided to receive a report at this Committee meeting which seeks Members' agreement to consider the resourcing and implementation of the plan. This report provides information to commence implementation of the 12-point plan and identifies the early actions and associated resources required to achieve this.

3.3 Establishing a Cross Party Working Group

3.3.1 The Declaration states that the commitments in the plan will be implemented following the establishment of a Climate Emergency Cross Party Working Group. This Working Group will oversee the implementation of the 12-point plan. In agreeing the Declaration, the Council recognised that this represents a radical and comprehensive step change in the Council's approach. Consequently, a collegiate cross-party alliance is crucial.

3.3.2 Membership of the Working Group - it is suggested that all political groups or groupings nominate one Member each, with the first meeting to be held in early October 2019 during Scotland's annual Climate Week, which runs from Monday 7 to Sunday 13 October 2019, and future meetings every eight weeks thereafter. This would allow for progress to be made between meetings on the commitments; for engagement with stakeholders and the planned Citizens' Panel; and for other reporting to Council Committees.

3.3.3 Terms of Reference - initial broad terms of reference are outlined in **Appendix 2** for consideration; with Members' agreement these will be developed further.

3.3.4 Agenda for first Working Group meeting - Members may find it helpful to focus on orientation of the Working Group, familiarisation of activities around climate emergency and options to establish a Citizens' Panel. Establishing a baseline of current activity through relevant data would also be a focus for the initial meeting.

3.4 Resourcing the Declaration and 12-point plan

3.4.1 As evidenced in the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration, local government has an important contribution to make in addressing climate change issues and stopping global warming. Many organisations and professional networks including, for example, the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) Scotland, the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) and the Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) are publishing papers, running events and keeping a watching brief on local authorities' climate change activities. 220 Councils, including 10 Scottish Councils, have declared climate emergencies. Briefings have highlighted that a significant proportion of emissions could be reduced by action in sectors where local authorities have influence such as transport, planning, housing, infrastructure and citizen engagement.

The UK Committee on Climate Change is due to produce a special briefing shortly on the topic of what local government can achieve locally by committing to net zero emissions. The Scottish Government is also planning to launch a consultation on "The role of Public Sector Bodies in tackling climate change" during September 2019.

3.4.2 After reviewing the activities outlined within the 12-point action plan accompanying the Climate Emergency Declaration (**Appendix 1**), and in line with action being taken by a number of other local authorities across the UK delivering a climate emergency declaration, it is recognised that a dedicated resource is required to support the actions contained within the plan.

3.4.3 Whilst several activities identified within the plan have been discharged, such as the Climate Emergency Declaration and the identification of an Environment Champion, the remaining activities revolve around the following four key areas which will require additional support:

- The development of arrangements to deliver the Climate Change Strategic Action Plan and new Council Priority (Climate Emergency Declaration Action Points 10 and 3)
- The support for the Cross Party Working Group as outlined in paragraph 3.3
- The establishment and support for a Citizens' Panel (Climate Emergency Declaration Action Point 9)
- The urgent review of all policy and practice across Council services to identify ways to move further and faster on carbon reduction measures (Climate Emergency Declaration Action Point 4)

3.4.4 At its meeting on 22 January 2019, the Economy, Environment and Infrastructure Committee agreed the Council's Environmental Policy Framework, which has a focus on sustainability, to guide and support services. This Policy Framework provides a basis to support the development of the Climate Change Strategic Action Plan which will assess, collate, prioritise and monitor the activity areas identified within the 12-point action plan.

3.4.5 Other Council plans which will contribute to the Climate Change Strategic Action Plan include the Council's Carbon Management Plan 2 (CMP2) adopted by the Policy and Resources Committee on 17 January 2012; the climate change activities and progress outlined in the Council's mandatory Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report 2017-18 approved by the Economy, Environment and Infrastructure Committee on 23 November 2018; and the approach to phase out single use plastics from Council sites and schools agreed by Full Council on 25 September 2018.

3.4.6 In order to provide support to the Cross Party Working Group and the Citizens' Panel, additional resources will be required to create an active research, lobbying and policy co-ordinating role within the Council with responsibility for the delivery of the 12-point action plan.

3.4.7 After reviewing activities undertaken by a range of other local authorities, a dedicated officer role for a fixed term period will be required to lead on the activities outlined in paragraph 3.4.3 and to co-ordinate the development and establishment of arrangements to deliver and monitor a new Climate Change Strategic Action Plan. The Action Plan will be the vehicle to assess the Council's performance on climate change, mitigation and adaption, and carbon reductions in line with the Council's agreed deadline of 2025 (**Appendix 1**).

3.4.8 To secure the skills set needed to deliver and be responsible for the activities outlined above, it is proposed that a Climate Emergency Project Officer is recruited for a period of two years to establish the Working Group and Citizens' Panel and arrangements to develop and deliver the Climate Change Strategic Action Plan, including reporting and support for the Working Group.

3.4.9 A dedicated resource is essential to facilitate those activities already underway in the Council as outlined within this report, together with the wider activities and co-ordination of climate-related policy across the full range of Council services. To do this it is proposed that an operational task (tactical) group be established to bring together relevant officers across Council services, this group to support the Cross Party Working Group in its oversight of the 12-point action plan. There is already a precedent for the formation of tactical groups in other cross-Council policy work, for example, Anti-Poverty. The Climate Emergency tactical group would lead on identifying and ensuring implementation of innovative actions to mitigate against climate impacts and carbon emissions and supporting the Cross Party Working Group. The initial focus of this tactical group would be Climate Emergency Declaration Action Point 4 referred to in paragraph 3.4.3, urgent review of all policy and practice across Council services.

3.4.10 The Council has a number of resources available to support the wider integration of climate change mitigation activities and awareness-raising. These include, for example, its impact assessment tool which considers environmental sustainability, climate change and energy management impacts in all new or refreshed policies, strategies, plans or projects. Another example is the consideration of other organisations' climate change and carbon commitments through the Council's procurement policies and procedures.

3.4.11 In terms of a Citizens' Panel, the Council is well placed to lead on bringing key stakeholders and interests in the region together to develop the local Climate Change Strategic Action Plan; indeed it will be helpful to draw on the positive partnership working involved in the production of the 2017-18 Climate Change Duties Report referred to in paragraph 3.4.5.

3.4.12 The Climate Emergency Citizens' Panel would be established in line with the Council's Community Participation and Engagement Strategy and Guidance, following consideration by the Cross Party Working Group and a report back to this Committee.

3.4.13 With the current position and science on climate change and associated activities evolving, the proposed Project Officer post will provide, in support of the Elected Member Environment Champion, a focus for the Council's interaction with national bodies and professional networks to identify and adapt emerging activities which will positively impact on the Council's work and actions, through to providing a national platform to showcase our achievements, efforts and best practices.

3.4.14 As referred to in paragraph 3.3.1, the Council's agreement of the Climate Emergency Declaration represents a significant step change in its approach to climate change over the last decade. Given the cross-Council approach and wide-ranging work required to take forward and realise the commitments in the 12-point plan, it is important that the Declaration is recognised as a change initiative and resourced accordingly. The

Committee is therefore asked to agree to request the Finance, Procurement and Transformation Committee to allocate change funds to resource the ambitions in the plan. Estimated initial costings to formulate the Climate Change Strategic Action Plan are based on resources allocated to other Council initiatives and in comparison with other local authorities. An allocation of £100k per annum would be requested; this includes the costs associated with the proposed post of Climate Emergency Project Officer and the establishment and operation of the Citizens' Panel. Any costs associated with the delivery of the Climate Change Strategic Action Plan itself would be a matter for consideration through Service Committees and the Council's budget process in due course.

4. Governance Assurance

The Corporate Management Team has been consulted and is in agreement with the information contained in this report.

5. Impact Assessment

As this report does not propose a change in policy/strategy/plan/project, it is not necessary to complete an Impact Assessment.

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Appendices - 2

Appendix 1 - Dumfries and Galloway Council Climate Emergency Declaration
 Appendix 2 - Proposals for establishment of Dumfries and Galloway Council Climate Emergency Cross Party Working Group

Background Papers**Committee Reports**

[Policy and Resources Committee - Item 5, Carbon Management, Energy and Climate Change - Carbon Management Plan \(CMP2\), 17 January 2012](#)

[Communities Committee - Item 4, Dumfries and Galloway Council Community Participation and Engagement Strategy, 7 March 2017](#)

[Dumfries and Galloway Council - Item 14, Notice of Motion - Single Use Plastics Reduction Strategy, 25 September 2018](#)

[Economy, Environment and Infrastructure Committee - Item 19, Climate Change Duties Report 2017-18, 23 November 2018](#)

[Economy, Environment and Infrastructure Committee - Item 12, Environment Policy Framework, 22 January 2019](#)

[Dumfries and Galloway Council - Item 18, Notice of Motion - Dumfries and Galloway Council Climate Emergency Declaration, 27 June 2019](#)

Other Sources

[Dumfries and Galloway Council Strategies, plans and policies web page, Carbon Management Plan 2](#)

[Dumfries and Galloway Council Impact Assessments web page](#)