

## Members' Library Service Request Form

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Originator	Jennifer Lothian
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Document Title	The Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan 2018-32

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**REPORT TO:** Members' Library Service

**MEETING DATE:**

**BY:** Deputy Chief Executive, Partnerships and Communities

**SUBJECT:** The Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan 2018-32

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise members of the Scottish Government's 'Climate Change Plan: The Third Report on Proposals and Policies 2018–2032'. This statutory document sets out the Scottish Government's plans to meet ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. There is an expectation on public bodies to lead by example in reducing emissions.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report and in particular the policies to meet carbon emissions reduction targets of most relevance to local authorities, specifically policies relating to buildings, transport and waste and the role of the planning process. The full Climate Change Plan can be accessed at the link at Section 3.2 of this report.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 ('the Act') creates a statutory framework for greenhouse gas emissions reductions, with interim emissions reduction targets of 42% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. The Act can be accessed at the link at Section 7.1 of this report.
- 3.2 The Act includes a requirement for Scottish Ministers to set out their proposals and policies for meeting annual emissions reduction targets. In response, the Scottish Government published its 'Climate Change Plan: The Third Report on Proposals and Policies 2018–2032' in February 2018. This is available at <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/02/8867>.
- 3.3 The Climate Change Plan ('the Plan') details the Scottish Government's policies and proposals to meet ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets set out in the Act, in the period 2018–2032. Specifically,

the Plan details the pathway Scotland will take to achieve a reduction of 66% in carbon emissions by 2032, relative to baseline levels from 1990.

- 3.4 The vision of the Plan is for a low carbon, resilient economy and more sustainable future. It sets out a path to a low carbon economy, while helping to deliver sustainable economic growth and secure the wider benefits to a greener, healthier and fairer Scotland in 2032.
- 3.5 Whilst acknowledging a moral responsibility to tackle climate change, the Plan also recognises the economic opportunities that are likely to arise, the potential of renewable energy resources and opportunities to restore biodiversity and ecosystems to assist with carbon capture and storage. The Plan seeks to achieve energy efficiency and reduced carbon emissions from residential and non-domestic buildings; improved air quality in urban areas; increased walking, cycling, use of sustainable transport and reduction of waste / move towards a circular economy.

Key to the decarbonisation path set out in the Plan is **the creation of a growing, sustainable and inclusive economy** - protecting and growing Scotland's economy, while ensuring that the opportunities and challenges which arise are spread evenly across all parts of society.

- 3.6 The Plan acknowledges that emissions reductions are required across all major sectors of the economy and society. It describes the roles of public bodies, the private sector, third sector, communities and individuals in the transition to a low carbon Scotland, and highlights the **collaborative approach** required to achieve this.
- 3.7 The Plan sets out a clear expectation that **Scotland's public bodies will lead by example** in combatting climate change and make a valuable contribution towards achieving emissions reduction targets. It states "the public sector is critical to the successful delivery of the Climate Change Plan: influencing and enabling positive behaviours; driving change; and acting as an exemplar of climate action and low carbon innovation".
- 3.8 In 2007, all Scottish local authorities created and signed the Scottish Climate Change Declaration<sup>1</sup>, committing to mitigate against climate change and adapt to predicted climate change impacts. Since then there has been a demonstrable reduction in emissions directly attributable to council actions, as evidenced by statutory annual Climate Change Reporting<sup>2</sup>. Under the Act, local authorities play a crucial role in delivering the statutory Public Bodies Climate Change Duties to achieve emissions reduction targets.

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Climate Change Declaration (now superseded by Climate Change Reporting): <https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/sustainable-scotland-network/climate-change-reporting/scotlands-climate-change-declaration/>

<sup>2</sup> Public Bodies' Climate Change Reporting: <https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/sustainable-scotland-network/climate-change-reporting/>

- 3.9 The Climate Change Plan sets out key emissions reduction targets by sector (summarised at Section 3.15 of this report). Of particular relevance to local authorities are targets for transport, waste, residential and non-domestic buildings.
- 3.10 The Plan also highlights the significant **role of the planning system** in providing a framework to support and encourage low carbon lifestyles and the transition needed to achieve decarbonisation - determining the location of new development; ensuring buildings are more energy efficient and ensuring new developments contain infrastructure to encourage behaviour change and reduce carbon emissions. Green networks, greenspaces and woodland creation all support and encourage healthy, active, outdoor lifestyles and provide important roles in carbon reduction and storage.
- 3.11 The Plan highlights the **role of local communities** in helping to achieve emissions reduction targets alongside public bodies and by working in partnership. Local communities have a key role to play in reducing emissions through locally-led projects that encourage behaviour change.
- 3.12 Activities which assist Scotland's transition to a low carbon economy, i.e. projects which encourage communities to walk, cycle and use low carbon transport, assist communities to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste, increase the energy efficiency of homes and community buildings, and produce food locally, are at the heart of partnership working between local authorities and communities promoted by the Plan. In addition to reducing emissions, such projects can improve local communities and help them to adapt to the impacts and challenges of a changing climate.
- 3.13 With its abundant natural resources, Scotland is well placed to take advantage of the **economic opportunities afforded by transition to a low carbon economy**. The Plan encourages development of renewable energy projects, creating investment opportunities to deploy renewable energy technologies, innovation and leadership.
- 3.14 The Plan is closely aligned to Scotland's Economic Strategy<sup>3</sup>, which focuses on sustainable and inclusive business growth. Investment in low carbon products and services, opportunities to repurpose oil and gas infrastructure for carbon storage and sustainable business opportunities contributing towards the transition to a circular economy, will create opportunities for innovation, employment and economic growth.
- 3.15 The Plan provides details of the **decarbonisation pathways to 2032** by sector. The key emissions reduction targets for each sector over the period of the Plan are summarised as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> Scotland's Economic Strategy, published by the Scottish Government (2015): <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-economic-strategy/>

- **Electricity:** By 2030, 50% of all Scotland's energy needs to come from renewables, with emissions from electricity to fall by 28%;
- **Buildings:** Emissions from residential and non-domestic buildings to fall by 23% and 53% respectively, leading to an overall emissions reduction of 33%. 35% of heat for domestic buildings will be supplied by low carbon technologies, where feasible;
- **Transport:** Emissions to fall by 37%; petrol and diesel cars to be phased out; with a proposed transition to ultra-low emission electric and hydrogen vehicles and encouragement of active travel;
- **Industry:** Emissions to fall by 21%; industrial energy efficiency to enable heat recovery with its associated benefits and development in low carbon technologies to create business opportunities;
- **Waste:** Emissions to fall by 52% and the longer term transition to a circular economy to deliver further emissions reductions. The landfilling of biodegradable municipal waste to be phased out by 2021 and by 2030 a 50% reduction in food waste is expected;
- **Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry:** This sector to increasingly act as a net carbon sink - by 2030, 250,000 hectares of peatland to have been restored and by 2032, woodland cover to have increased from around 18% to 21% of Scotland's land area;
- **Agriculture:** Scotland's agricultural sector to be among the lowest carbon and most efficient food producers in the world, with an emissions reduction target of 9%.

3.16 The Scottish Government will monitor progress against the policies in the Plan by means of a range of indicators including annual greenhouse gas emissions statistics. Published annually, these are the ultimate measure of progress in meeting the overarching aim to reduce emissions.

## 4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no policy implications directly arising from the Climate Change Plan.
- 4.2 The Council will publish an East Lothian Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategy in 2019, which will align with proposals and policies set out in the Plan. This will provide strategic direction to reducing carbon emissions across the county, with an action plan containing targets, milestones and indicators, to enable annual progress monitoring. The Strategy will complement the wider objectives of the Council Plan 2017-22 and East Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2017-27.

## 5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and no negative impacts have been identified.

Alongside the Climate Change Plan, the Scottish Government published three independent evidence reviews of the potential wider impacts of climate change mitigation options on agriculture, forestry, waste and related land use; the built environment and transport. The reviews highlighted the potential for positive social, economic and environmental impacts to result from the Draft Plan. Reports can be accessed at the following links: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/01/5347>  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/01/3358>  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/01/2646>

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – There are no direct resource implications directly arising from the Climate Change Plan, although key to the decarbonisation path set out in the Plan is the creation of a growing, sustainable and inclusive economy. The Plan also seeks to take advantage of the economic opportunities afforded by transition to a low carbon economy.

Implementation of the associated East Lothian Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategy will impact on the detailed financial planning arrangements of services over the Strategy term, both in relation to required interventions and anticipated realisation of future financial efficiencies and / or income generation for the Council.

- 6.2 Personnel – None

- 6.3 Other – None

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 can be accessed at:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Environment/climatechange/2009ClimateChangeAct>
- 7.2 In May 2018 a new Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament, proposing even more ambitious carbon emissions reduction targets for Scotland. The Bill can be accessed at:  
<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108483.aspx>

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