

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Officer: Roads & Neighbourhood****Infrastructure Regeneration and Economic Development Committee:****21 February 2024**

Subject: Net Zero Cooperation Agreement**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to seek permission from Committee to enter a Net Zero Cooperation Agreement developed between West Dunbartonshire Council (The Council) and Glasgow City Council (GCC). The Agreement proposes to share expertise, skills, resources and infrastructure to help deliver our Climate Change Action Plans to deliver Net Zero ambitions.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) Approves the proposal to enter into the Net Zero Cooperation Agreement with Glasgow City Council;
- (ii) Notes that the agreement will be governed through the establishment of a Project Board;
- (iii) Notes that updates will be provided to committee within the Climate Change Action Plan annual monitoring report; and
- (iv) Authorises the Chief Officer Regulatory and Regeneration to enter the Net Zero Cooperation Agreement on such conditions as considered appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1** The Council's Climate Change Strategy was approved in November 2020 in response to the global climate emergency, setting a long term target for West Dunbartonshire becoming Net Zero by 2045. The target set follows a similar trajectory to the national target set for Scotland as a whole.
- 3.2** The Council's Climate Change Action Plan approved in October 2021 sets out actions and objectives to transition towards Net Zero. In addition national guidance and legislation outlines targets and expectations for councils.
- 3.3** A key challenge in the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan is the availability of resources, skills and financial implications.

3.4 The Council's Climate Change Action Plan is monitored through an annual report to the IRED Committee.

4. Main Issues

4.1 GCC and the Council share common objectives in relation to achieving Net Zero and meeting the targets placed on councils by the Scottish Government under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 as amended by the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019.

4.2 Both councils also have statutory duties in common including:

- provision of municipal waste management and recycling services (Environmental Protection Act 1990 and The Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012),
- provision of heat network zoning (Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021),
- duty to secure best value (Local Government in Scotland Act 2003).

4.3 Both councils have set out their approach to the Climate Emergency and this is detailed in their respective strategy documents; GCC's Climate Plan and the Council's Climate Change Strategy.

4.4 There is an opportunity to develop a Cooperation Agreement to share expertise, skills, resources and infrastructure where collaboration would provide a mutual benefit to delivering our Climate Change Action Plans and transition to Net Zero.

4.5 The Net Zero Cooperation Agreement sets out four initial areas of collaboration:

- Energy Sustainability
- Transition to Electric Fleet
- Waste Strategy
- Sustainable Transport

Working groups will be established for each of the four workstreams with Officers with appropriate skills, expertise and knowledge in attendance.

4.6 Energy Sustainability

Both councils are required to deliver a Local Heat Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) which sets out plans and priorities for reducing energy demand, decarbonising heat and improving the energy efficiency of buildings. The following are examples of the activities that this workstream could explore:

- Identification of LHEES opportunities for sharing,
- Investigate district heating systems and renewables opportunities with a focus on cross boundary working and use of the River Clyde channel,

- Exploration of cross boundary measures to adapt to impacts of climate change including increased flooding, as well as developing plans to capture carbon emissions.

Early discussions are likely to focus on identifying how LHEES Priorities identified in the Councils' respective Strategies may be delivered through emerging delivery plans which seek to address demand and exploit opportunities irrespective of local authority boundaries.

4.7 Transition to Electric Fleet and Wider Vehicle Electrification

Both councils are required to develop a programme of transition to Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles or Zero Emission Vehicles as part of a fleet decarbonisation programme to comply with ambitious targets set by the Scottish Government. Actions could include:

- Developing the vehicle replacement programme to transition to ultra-low and zero emission fleet including identifying appropriate vehicle options for best value and operational service delivery,
- Upskilling and training of workforce to maintain and repair the electric fleet,
- Development of policies and incentives that encourage a change in employee travel behaviour to limit the use of fleet vehicles or private cars and review use of pool cars,
- Identification of fleet and public electric vehicle charging infrastructure requirements and locations for depot and shared charging hubs.

In respect of this limb of the cooperation agreement both councils currently participate in the wider City Region Electric Vehicle Charging Senior Officers Group, but under this agreement the two councils will additionally develop vehicle charging sites with mutual benefit for fleet operations and public charging opportunities.

4.8 Waste Strategy

Both councils have committed to The Charter for Household Recycling, and associated Code of Practice, designed to support the increase of quantity and quality of recyclables, provide access to and encourage use of recycling services for all residents and implement efficient service delivery.

Given this shared commitment, there is a clear opportunity to cooperate and shape strategy through knowledge transfer and the sharing of lessons learned in respect of waste management and recycling services, for example:

- Improving waste management and recycling services to meet statutory and legislative obligations,
- Sharing waste treatment and storage infrastructure to deliver best value, resilience and promote more sustainable services that are compliant with forthcoming legislation,
- Developing improved education and communications to support recycling and reuse of materials in accordance with the circular economy,
- Exploring use of technology to improve customer experience and operational efficiency.

An early outcome of this agreement will be the processing of West Dunbartonshire Council's Residual Waste at the Glasgow City facility (GREC) in Polmadie which as well as addressing West Dunbartonshire Council's residual waste requirements, will increase recycling of waste on a Council and City Region basis.

4.9 Active and Sustainable Travel

Ambitious targets are set out in the national and regional transport strategies and within the route map to achieve a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030 requiring the improvement of existing active travel path networks. With both councils being members of the Glasgow Regional Bus Partnership and the Clyde Metro Project Group. There is an opportunity to cooperate by:

- Sharing knowledge, expertise and skills to implement the design and delivery of sustainable and active travel infrastructure,
- Joint development of key boundary linkages such as quality bus corridors, cycle and walking routes and sustainable transport hubs,
- Identifying route options that improve connectivity and reduce social exclusion by improving access to education and employment,
- Promoting sustainable and active transport within the respective workforces and our communities through development of Active Travel Strategies and behavioural change initiatives.

4.10 Governance

A Project Board will oversee and resolve any issues arising during the life of the cooperation agreement. The board will be responsible for monitoring progress of the activities identified within the workstreams, reviewing

proposals for further collaborative activities and report annually to the respective councils.

The working groups will manage day-to-day matters.

4.11 Funding and Costs

Each council will make a financial contribution reflective of their own respective costs and expenses under the cooperation agreement.

The Project Board will assess the financial contribution for each financial year and this will be reported via the Council's financial reporting process with an annual financial position set out in the annual monitoring report.

4.12 Agreement Duration and Termination

The term of agreement will be until cancelled by either council with 12 months written notice.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There are no current people implications however as the workstreams develop proposals any people implications will be considered within that process.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** Both councils will benefit financially from the Cooperation Agreement. A financial contribution will be made by each council in relation to joint activities being undertaken following agreement on quantum and scope. The detail of this will be agreed by the Project Board and reported to Council within the Climate Change Action plan annual monitoring report.

It is too early to accurately estimate the quantum of financial benefit for both councils however it is anticipated that considerable financial as well as social benefit will accrue to both parties through common and complementary approaches to pursuing net-zero. The level of financial benefit for the Cooperation agreement as a whole will be monitored through the service financial monitoring reports and the Project Board and through an annual report to the Council.

- 6.2** Where potential future procurement opportunities arise from the Cooperation Agreement each requirement will be subject to a position paper outlining the project details with the relevant resource and a procurement strategy to consider the optimum route to deliver best value for both parties. Each procurement will be reported in line with the Council's standing orders and will follow relevant procurement regulations and be presented to the relevant Project Boards and future committees as required.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 The Cooperation Agreement seeks to address the opportunities for inter-authority collaboration in a number of regulated areas which focus on the Net-Zero and Climate Change challenges which both councils face in the coming years. As the approach is innovative the councils have, as well as considering advice from its own internal legal services, sought external legal advice and consideration of all such advice has contributed to the approach adopted in the Cooperation Agreement and will influence the councils' approaches to advancing the agreement while minimising risk.

8. Environmental Sustainability

8.1 The Cooperative Agreement will support both councils to deliver the climate change requirements in relation to their respective action plans.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

9.1 Activities will be screened and an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken if required.

10. Consultation

10.1 Consultations have been undertaken with Finance, Legal and respective teams who are responsible for the delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan.

11. Strategic Assessment

11.1 This proposal will contribute to the following strategic priorities:

- Our communities are resilient and thriving;
- Our environment promotes a greener future.

Gail Macfarlane
Chief Officer: Roads and Neighbourhood Services
Date: 21 February 2024

Person to Contact: Gail Macfarlane.
Email: gail.macfarlane@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices: None

Background Papers:

Report to West Dunbartonshire Council Dated 25 November 2020, Climate Change Strategy

Report to West Dunbartonshire Council Dated 27 October 2021, Climate Change Action Plan

www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/key-council-documents/plans-and-strategies/sustainable-development/climate-change

EIA Screening (Number 969)

Wards Affected: All