

# The City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday, 28 June 2018

## Sustainability

<b>Item number</b>	8.4
<b>Report number</b>	
<b>Executive/routine</b>	Executive
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Council Commitments</b>	

### Executive Summary

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This report summarises how the council intends to make progress on sustainability and climate change across the work of the organisation. The council currently has a breadth of activity progressing across a number of directorates. However, our approach could potentially benefit from more strategic coordination and focus that reflects the wider council ambitions of the Edinburgh 2050 Vision, and better prepares the council to deliver on the council business plan and associated legislative commitments and council strategies. This includes by working better with the strong and vibrant wider environmental sector present in the city.

Elected members are asked to note that officers will work with the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation - as part of the wider collaboration the council has with the University of Edinburgh - to provide an expert independent audit of council activity alongside recommendations as to how the council might continue to improve the cumulative impact it has on sustainability and climate change.

Recommendations from the audit would be shared with Corporate Policy & Strategy Committee (CP&S) and, subject to political agreement, taken forward by the council. Dependent upon the results of the audit, these findings would also form the basis for developing a new Edinburgh Council Sustainability Strategy which is due by 2020.

## Sustainability

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Council notes:
- 1.1.1 the intention to work with our external partners who are experts in climate change and sustainability to provide an independent audit of council activity and recommendations as to how the council might continue to improve the cumulative impact it has on sustainability, and
  - 1.1.2 that the outcome of this audit and its recommendations would be taken to CP&S by December.

### 2. Background

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- 2.1 A council question from 3 May sought confirmation as to how sustainability was being led across the council. The response indicated that conversations were already ongoing between Strategy and Insight, Place and Resources Divisions as to how the council activity on sustainability could be better coordinated and have greater impact. Officers were asked to return to full council with the outcome of those discussions within two cycles.

### 3. Main report

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- 3.1 Currently the council progresses a number of activities relating to sustainability. The paragraphs below give a high level summary of that activity.

#### **Environmental, economic and social sustainability**

- 3.2 The council works with and supports the Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership and has adopted the Sustainable Edinburgh 2020 Framework. This framework is due for review and will need to take account of any wider ambition within the Edinburgh 2050 Vision around carbon and sustainability. The council is also a key player in supporting the city to maintain its fair trade status, promoting the three strands of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental). Implementation of the council's Economic Strategy further prioritises supporting Edinburgh's transition to a low carbon economy.
- 3.3 The council has a statutory duty to protect the city's habitats and biodiversity and does this through the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan which outlines a partnership approach to biodiversity conservation across the city. More than 30

members of the Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership contribute to delivery of the Plan, including the Council.

### **Climate Change**

- 3.4 The City of Edinburgh Council has a legislative duty under the terms of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to submit an annual report on what it is doing to meet its statutory Public Bodies Climate Change Duties. As listed below, many council divisions are working on reducing the council's carbon emissions, and the Council's Carbon Management Plan is the route map for further reductions. The council is also committed to looking at Carbon Budgeting.
- 3.5 Citywide the council is responsible for delivery of a Sustainable Energy Action Plan for Edinburgh. The council fulfils its climate change adaptation duties under the Act through being a lead partner in Edinburgh Adapts, ensuring delivery of the city's first Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2016-2020. Strategy and Insight, Planning, Flood Prevention and Parks work on adapting the city to the impacts of climate change. The council has also set up its own Energy Services Company with a key remit to deliver strategic energy projects through the Sustainable Energy Action Plan, reducing carbon emissions and supporting climate change objectives.

### **Sustainable Food**

- 3.6 The council is leading and co-ordinating the development of an Edinburgh Food Growing Strategy, a requirement of the Community Empowerment Act, through the vehicle of the Edible Edinburgh Partnership. Related actions also provide evidence that the council is acting sustainably under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act. Edible Edinburgh helps to fulfil Council Commitments on healthy eating, child poverty (food security and nutrition) and food growing initiatives.
- 3.7 The council and the Edible Edinburgh Partnership most recently secured additional resources under the Sustainable Food Cities Network to employ a Sustainable Food Cities Coordinator for one year to support this work. The Edinburgh Food for Life partnership works to improve the sustainability of food procurement and catering in the Council and NHS Lothian.

### **Transport**

- 3.8 The council is continuing work to develop and implement Low Emission Zones (LEZ) in Edinburgh. Existing programmes of work to monitor and manage local air quality have led to improvements in air quality in Edinburgh. In May 2018, Transport and Environment Committee agreed that Edinburgh takes a comprehensive approach to LEZs as a step towards protecting Edinburgh's citizens from the harms of poor air quality. Air quality continues to be monitored across the city. The council has declared a number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) where levels of NOx and particulates are closely monitored and works to make improvements for example through the Open Space Strategy. Work continues to address this issue which will be closely aligned with the work on low emission zones.

- 3.9 The current phase of LEZ work underway includes developing options and engaging with key stakeholder to inform the impact of implementing LEZs in Edinburgh. A further report on progress to develop LEZs will be presented to Transport and Environment Committee in August, in advance of a public engagement process scheduled to commence in September 2018. LEZ development is being undertaken in conjunction with the Edinburgh City Centre Transformation project and the review of the City Transport Strategy, to ensure relevant transport and placemaking initiatives are aligned.
- 3.10 The council is also progressing ongoing projects such as the City Centre West to East Cycle Link, West Edinburgh Active Travel Network and Meadows to George Street route, as well as supporting the introduction of a bike hire scheme by Transport for Edinburgh which is due to come in later this summer.

### **Housing**

- 3.11 The council and partners are delivering 20,000 new affordable and low cost homes across Edinburgh over the next ten years. All 20,000 homes will be constructed to a high energy efficiency rating and to a Silver Building Standard. Innovative solutions to go beyond current standards are being explored by the council and partners, including projects exploring passive house standards and indoor air quality and ventilation pilots.
- 3.12 Investment in council homes has been accelerated to ensure they meet the Scottish Government's energy efficiency targets by 2020. Where technically and financially feasible, the council will look to go beyond current targets and future proof investment so that existing homes are as energy efficient as new homes. Funding to help private homeowners improve the energy efficiency of their homes has also been secured. Behavioural change is being promoted through the introduction of a new tenant Energy Advice Service and other energy support services for all residents.
- 3.13 The council helped set up, and is a member of, Our Power, a national not for profit energy provider, for the purpose of providing affordable and stable energy to households on low incomes particularly council and housing association tenants. Supported by the Scottish Government, Our Power, is based in Craigmillar and has developed a number of strategic partnerships with local authorities across Scotland and the UK. Our Power is a community interest company established by housing associations and a number of local authorities including Edinburgh.

### **Planning**

- 3.14 The current Local Development Plan's spatial strategy and its detailed policies promote sustainable development: from design principles, conservation of the built and natural environment, directing shopping and other leisure activities to sustainable locations and promoting sustainable travel modes through site layouts. These ensure that sustainability is considered in the determination of planning applications.

- 3.15 The Edinburgh Design Guidance sets out the council's expectations for the design of new development in Edinburgh, supporting the creation of a compact, sustainable city. All planning applications (apart from domestic alterations and extensions and changes of use for local developments) are required to set out how they are achieving carbon reduction through low and zero carbon equipment.
- 3.16 The next local development plan (LDP) project is now underway. The main project objectives are to adopt a new LDP which can be used to deliver the vision, aims and outcomes identified by the council in the Council Business Plan including that Edinburgh is a low carbon, connected city with transport and infrastructure that is fit for the future.

### **Property and Facilities Management**

- 3.17 Property and Facilities Management are responsible for energy and sustainability across the council's operational property portfolio. This includes ensuring the council meets legislative requirements as well as contributing to the council's wider obligations under the Climate Change Act (Scotland).
- 3.18 The council's Corporate Asset Strategy and Property and Asset Management Strategy define the strategic framework for the improved sustainability of the council's estate, and the Council's Energy Policy, outlines its approach to energy management. Active energy management of the council's operational estate is a key focus across P&FM. There are several large-scale projects underway, across new constructions and existing buildings, to improve sustainability, energy efficiency and reduce associated energy spend.
- 3.19 For the past three years, Property and Facilities Management have been engaged in a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with Edinburgh Napier University to implement a mid to long term energy strategy for operational buildings. To help build on success achieved to date, and create a sound platform from which to deliver continued energy improvements, Property and Facilities Management are working towards ISO50001 accreditation; an Energy Management System focussed on delivering best practice.

### **Waste and Recycling**

- 3.20 The Council's Waste and Recycling Strategy was published in 2010, and runs to 2025. It is currently being reviewed to reflect on progress since 2010, as well as to encompass the Council's Cleansing function which was previously devolved under Neighbourhood Management. The strategy review covers waste prevention and reuse, recycling, and diversion of residual waste from landfill.
- 3.21 In addition, while the council does not operate a commercial waste collection service for businesses, the Waste and Cleansing Service's Compliance Team ensures that businesses are disposing of their waste in an appropriate manner by promoting the segregation of waste, ensuring that legitimate collection contracts are in place and that bins are only presented during the appropriate times.

3.22 Management of the waste arising from the council's estate is the responsibility of Business and Building Managers across the estate, with support from the FM teams which service buildings. The Waste and Cleansing service provides a recycling and waste collection service to Business and Building Managers across the estate. Waste and Cleansing has a policy on Waste from Council Premises approved by Transport and Environment Committee in May 2018.

### **Fleet management**

3.23 Fleet Services are pro-actively working to manage the council fleet and use the technologies available to improve vehicle utilisation. Departments that operate larger fleet actively manage route planning to reduce mileages, costs and emissions. The council is aiming to purchase the lowest emission vehicles appropriate to their role, without increasing the cost of ownership to the council. This includes exploring the possibility of moving the lighter fleet over to electric.

### **Procurement**

3.24 The council has had a comprehensive Sustainable Procurement Policy in place since 2012. The sustainable procurement policy and objectives are addressed within every procurement plan, which is at the start of each procurement process. Thus, the policies build awareness and are discussed with stakeholders. There is also a mandatory sustainability risk assessment of procurement projects as part of the individual procurement plan is a practical tool to ensure compliance with climate change duties.

3.25 The Sustainable Procurement Policy also informs the council's terms and conditions of contract. The Council's Commercial and Procurement team also use sustainability as selection and award criteria and seek to constantly evaluate processes that minimise the impact of the procurement for example in construction off-site fabrication, use of electric vehicles and use of local suppliers to reduce transport emissions are encouraged and scored accordingly.

3.26 Commercial and Procurement Services (CPS) work closely with Joined up for Business to manage delivery of community benefits. CPS is also further developing the community benefit questions to support service areas managing contracts deliver more meaningful benefits to our citizens.

### **Localities**

3.27 Within localities, the council uses its own workforce and locally-based businesses and services, which support the local economy and reduce regional travel to maintain and develop local roads infrastructure and place-making projects. We also use external framework contracts to package up road maintenance works and environmental projects.

3.28 Locality Improvement Plans focus on outcomes agreed with the local community around various themes, and include actions that aim to improve transport and active travel infrastructure; improve local recycling facilities, cleaner streets and

reducing waste; and address environmental issues. Locality parks services use recycled bark and mulch, diverting green waste from landfill and use reclaimed materials in parks development projects.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessments**

- 3.29 The council completes SEAs with advice and guidance for council plans and strategies with major environmental impacts.

### **Next Steps**

- 3.30 The above paragraphs are not exhaustive but give a sense of the scale and breadth of activity already progressing on sustainability and climate change across the council. However, it was felt that independent analysis of this activity from one of our expert partners could help the council to identify ways to continue to improve its impact on sustainability and climate change. It was also felt that Edinburgh has a vibrant environmental sector – particularly in respect of the third sector - and this analysis could also consider how the council better delivers its objectives by working with our environmental partners across the city.
- 3.31 As such, it is envisaged that we seek an independent high-level audit of the varied activity across the council with recommendations as to how the council could deliver further improvement. This critical independent challenge is essential in supporting the council to improve and if necessary, change its approach to continue to improve on sustainability outcomes. This work would also fulfil the outstanding audit action which was set out in the plan to resource SEAP.
- 3.32 Recommendations from the audit would be shared with CP&S and, subject to political agreement, taken forward by the council. Dependent upon the results of the audit, these findings would also form the basis for developing a new Edinburgh Council Sustainability Strategy which is due by 2020.
- 3.33 As part of progressing this approach, officers have had constructive early discussions with the Edinburgh Centre of Carbon Innovation which is part of the University of Edinburgh who are a key strategic partner of the council. Amongst other things, ECCI hosts the Centre of Expertise on Climate Change - which supports Scottish Government with their climate change analysis and evidence; hosts the Scottish Sustainability Network, which supports public bodies across Scotland to report their climate actions; co-hosts staff working on Adaptation Scotland activities. The ECCI also has the largest low carbon business innovation incubator in Scotland.
- 3.34 Council officers are working with the ECCI as part of that wider collaboration with the University of Edinburgh to agree a suitable way to take forward this piece of work. The specific scope of this work would be agreed in partnership. In the meantime, the council activity detailed above will continue. These are predominantly led by Strategy and Insight and Place and as such, monthly meetings between the relevant senior officers will ensure better coordination and collaboration on this work in the short term while we await the outcome of the audit.

#### **4. Measures of success**

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- 4.1 An independent audit of the council approach to sustainability will be delivered with recommendations to CP&S as to how the council might improve and deliver a new more ambitious approach to sustainability into the future.

#### **5. Financial impact**

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- 5.1 No additional costs to the council are associated with this report as the independent audit will be delivered as part of our partnership with key sustainability experts in the city and in recognition of the significant contribution that the council can make to improving sustainability outcomes.

#### **6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 No adverse risks or policy impacts have been identified as associated with this report. Outputs from the programme of work outlined in this report will be used to identify and mitigate potential risks to the council.

#### **7. Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 Equalities impacts arising from this work will be considered as part of an Integrated Impact Assessment.

#### **8. Sustainability impact**

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- 8.1 The future committee reports will detail sustainability impacts but they are expected to be positive.

#### **9. Consultation and engagement**

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- 9.1 The independent expert would be responsible for determining any consultation and engagement but given the high level nature of the activity, this is likely to be minimal.

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#### **10. Appendices**

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None