



## Climate Change and Carbon Management – SPT progress update

**Date of meeting** 17 December 2021

**Date of report** 7 December 2021

### Report by Acting Chief Executive

#### 1. Object of report

To update the Partnership on recent progress by SPT in relation to climate change and carbon management.

#### 2. Background

Further to the detailed update to the Partnership in June<sup>1</sup>, officers continue to progress SPT's approach to climate change, adaptation and carbon management through the revitalised internal Climate Change and Carbon Management Group in line with SPT's Carbon Management Plan, and this report summarises recent progress and next steps in that regard.

#### 3. Progress update

##### 3.1 New Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) – Decarbonisation of road transport workstream

As noted in the update to the Strategy and Programmes Committee in November<sup>2</sup>, work continues on development of the new RTS. SPT has commissioned a study on the transition to decarbonisation for vehicles across all modes of road transport in the west of Scotland as a key input to the RTS. This study will look at various factors about decarbonisation, including the future demand and timescales for electric vehicle uptake in the region, the relationship with energy supply including constraint issues, and also opportunities presented by hydrogen. A regional route-map will be developed, with actions that SPT can take both directly and in partnership to help accelerate action.

The study is part of the overall approach that the RTS will take to supporting the national Climate Change Plan, which includes commitments to transition to zero emission vehicles, reduce demand and generate modal shift to sustainable transport. It is worth noting that in December, Transport Scotland will publish its proposed route-map to achieving the national target of achieving a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030, and officers will take this into account in further developing the new RTS.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.spt.co.uk/media/dwbnkgom/p180621\\_agenda7.pdf](https://www.spt.co.uk/media/dwbnkgom/p180621_agenda7.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Section 3.3.1, [https://www.spt.co.uk/media/lq2cl0yr/sp261121\\_agenda10.pdf](https://www.spt.co.uk/media/lq2cl0yr/sp261121_agenda10.pdf)

### 3.2 Carbon Literacy Training

Further to the update to the Partnership in June, officers have identified a Carbon Literacy Training Course to assist in increasing knowledge on carbon reduction and climate change matters. The course, provided by Keep Scotland Beautiful, will be open to all Partnership members and SPT senior officers to attend. Due to restrictions on number of attendees, there will be a range of dates available for the course from February 2022. Further information on this will be provided in due course.

### 3.3 SPT Partnership and Committee reports – Climate Change, Adaptation and Carbon Consequences

Members will be aware that each report to a meeting of the SPT Partnership or one of its Committees includes a 'Consequences' section, which serves to highlight any potential impacts of the proposals contained in the report. Currently, the themes within the Consequences section cover Policy, Legal, Financial, Personnel and Equality issues. The SPT Climate Change and Carbon Management Group is currently looking at the process and procedures for the inclusion of a 'Climate Change, Adaptation and Carbon' theme in the Consequences section for future Partnership and Committee reports. A key consideration is ensuring any assessment of climate change, adaptation and carbon consequences is undertaken in a robust and credible manner, and it is anticipated that after the Carbon Literacy Training in early 2022, future Partnership and Committee reports will include a new Climate Change, Adaptation and Carbon Consequences theme. This will in turn feed into SPT's wider future approach to carbon accounting – the process by which an organisation measures how much carbon it uses – which is also a key focus for the internal Climate Change and Carbon Management Group.

### 3.4 Project development/delivery and external project support

SPT Subway and Bus Operations are in the process of developing project proposals in relation to further installation of solar panels, vehicle charging, and use of alternative fuels such as hydrogen. Officers are also examining opportunities for greater use of electric/hydrogen vehicles in SPT's own fleet.

In support of this work, and in tandem with and through the workstream noted at 3.1, SPT is in the process of securing interim, short-term external project support for the overall Climate Change and Carbon Management workstream. This support will focus on two key areas: firstly, support for SPT operational colleagues in developing project proposals and further identifying any other initial practical actions; and secondly, and for the longer-term, scoping out a future workplan, including identification of level of resources required for delivery.

### 3.5 Energy supply and procurement

Traction for the Subway remains the most sizable part of SPT's energy use, a natural consequence of operating an electrified rail network. While it is anticipated that Subway Modernisation will generate savings in energy use, these will not be fully realised until the transition to the new system is complete. A key factor in SPT being able to reduce the carbon impacts of its energy use is ensuring that our supply is provided from the most sustainable sources possible. SPT currently procures its energy through a Scottish Government national contract, and the scale this contract affords serves to generate benefits beyond any standalone approach. Officers are continuing to investigate opportunities to 'green' not just the source of our energy but the whole of our supply base. SPT's approach to Procurement is currently under review and alterations to its

Standing Orders Relating to Contracts are being made to embed sustainability and net zero carbon within the process, from the creation of the specification to the criteria used to evaluate and ultimately award contracts.

### 3.6 Engagement/Co-ordinated approach

Reducing carbon use and adapting to climate change are key issues for the transport sector and there are currently a significant number of initiatives in development or underway across a wide range of public and private sector partners. Indeed, a key role for SPT as the Regional Transport Partnership for the west of Scotland is to seek to ensure that these workstreams are, as far as possible, carried out in an integrated, co-ordinated and complementary way. Officers therefore continue to engage with a wide range of partners in relation to climate change and carbon management from a policy, funding and operational perspective, including Sustainable Glasgow and Climate Ready Clyde. The recent hosting of COP26 in Glasgow provided an excellent opportunity to increase that engagement, with SPT representatives attending various events and a joint reception with UITP was hosted by SPT during COP26.

A further recent example of engagement includes attendance by SPT senior officers at a roundtable discussion hosted by the UK Climate Change Committee to discuss their 2021 report to the Scottish Parliament on progress towards the Scottish Government's 2045 Net Zero target. The focus of the roundtable was to discuss the next steps that must be taken to support the transition to net zero.

The internal Climate Change and Carbon Management Group also recently engaged with Glasgow City Council's Green Economy Manager on the 'Glasgow Green Deal', a nine-year mission aiming to fundamentally reshape the city's economy, and designed to bridge the gap between aspirations and action around the Climate and Ecological Emergencies to deliver equitable, Net Zero carbon, climate resilient living by 2030. A "Call for Ideas" has been launched for the Green Deal and officers are in the process of preparing a response to this.

### 3.7 Funding

Officers continue to seek to identify potential sources of funding for carbon reduction initiatives. A good example of recent focus has been the Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) Green Economy Fund (GEF) which was established in 2018 to support the drive to a low-carbon economy and achieving net-zero. A priority of the GEF is transport, to promote the uptake and infrastructure provision for electric vehicles or other low carbon solutions.

A key thrust of the fund has been partnership working, and to this end SPT has assisted in a number of projects, including providing match-funding to GEF projects funded by SPEN in the Community Transport sector:

- During 2019-20, £40k match-funding from SPT to Coalfields Community Transport for a zero-emission electric minibus, operating in East Ayrshire; and
- During 2020-21, £75k match-funding from SPT to Community Transport Glasgow for five new electric minibuses. £10k was provided to Getting Better Together towards a zero-emission electric minibus, operating in the Shotts area of North Lanarkshire. £42k match-funding was also provided to the Rural Development Trust for a zero-emission electric minibus, operating in the Clydesdale area of South Lanarkshire.

In addition to the above match-funding, SPT liaised with SPEN and First Glasgow to enable the purchase of First Glasgow's first two electric low-floor buses and charging

infrastructure at their Caledonia depot. The buses entered service in 2019 and were the first two zero emission buses on First Glasgow's network, operating the M3 service between Milton, Balornock, Springburn and Glasgow city centre.

In addition to the above, SPT has funded, via the capital programme spread over several years, a phased refurbishment of Kilmarnock Bus Station. This has included the installation of a pantograph vehicle charger, in order to allow 'opportunity charging' of a new fleet of six Volvo electric buses introduced by Stagecoach West Scotland. SPEN provided £2m from its GEF to part-fund these buses which operate on the Kilmarnock to Darvel service, the first use of such vehicles on a rural service as opposed to a more urban environment. The 'opportunity charging' arrangement allows buses to operate longer mileages than is possible with a depot-only overnight charging arrangement. The provision of the charging infrastructure at Kilmarnock Bus Station is the first such use of this arrangement in Scotland and its use can be expanded as necessary to meet any growth in demand. Officers will continue to explore opportunities for future funding through the GEF and other avenues as necessary, and keep members updated on progress.

### 3.8 Regional Transport Climate Resilience Group

In line with an action from the Climate Ready Clyde Adaptation Strategy to create a Regional Transport Climate Resilience Group, SPT in partnership with Network Rail is arranging an initial discussion of potential partners for such a group in mid-December. The purpose of the group would be to identify future issues for our transport network arising through the impacts of climate change, and to look collectively about how to address them. Invitees to the initial meeting include Transport Scotland, ScotRail, Confederation of Passenger Transport, Caledonian MacBrayne, the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland and Sustrans.

### 3.9 Actions for Carbon Management

The significant work underway highlighted in the sections above will remain SPT's focus at present. Given that some of this work, with particular reference to sections 3.1 and 3.2 is to complete in coming months, it is anticipated an updated SPT "Actions for Carbon Management" will be presented to the Partnership in March 2022.

## 4. Conclusion

COP26 and its outcome – the "Glasgow Climate Pact" - significantly raised the profile of climate change and carbon management in Scotland but the focus now is on what happens next. As a result of the Pact and other agreements made arising from COP26, there may be further changes to national targets on climate change but at present, through the work highlighted in section 3, SPT continues to progress delivery of a range of measures in seeking to ensure we are playing our part in delivering the change required. Officers will continue to update members as matters progress.

## 5. Partnership action

The Partnership is recommended to note the contents of this report.

## 6. Consequences

Policy consequences

*Reduced Emissions is an outcome of the current RTS, and measures to assist in achieving net zero*

*are likely to feature prominently in the new RTS in development.*

Legal consequences

*None at present.*

Financial consequences

*A Category 2 budget of £200,000 is included in the current year SPT Capital Programme for carbon management.*

Personnel consequences

*None at present.*

Equalities consequences

*Just Transition impacts on equalities groups of future policy and projects in relation to climate change and carbon management will need to be considered and addressed.*

Risk consequences

*None at present.*

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