



Environmental, Climate Change and Carbon Management Issues - Update

Committee Strategy and Programmes

Date of meeting 22 November 2019

Date of report 18 October 2019

Report by Chief Executive

1. Object of report

The object of this report is to:

- Update the Committee on the progress of the Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Bill;
- Recommend approval of SPT's draft response to the Scottish Government's consultation on "The Role of Public Sector Bodies in Tackling Climate Change", attached at Appendix 1;
- Inform the Committee of SPT's Climate Change Duties annual reporting for 2018/19; and
- Note the timescales for revising SPT's Carbon Management Plan, associated targets, and environmental policy.

2. Update

2.1 Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Bill

Further to earlier reports¹, the Bill has now completed Stage 3 of the parliamentary process, having been approved by the Scottish Parliament on 25 September 2019². The Bill is expected to receive Royal Assent before the end of the calendar year and thereafter will be known as the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019.

The key element of the Bill is the setting of a series of climate change related targets for Scotland, these being:

- Scotland's "net zero emissions target year" is 2045;
- The interim targets are:
 - By 2020, emissions must be at least 56% lower than the baseline year of 1990;

¹ Section 2.3 of Committee report from August 2019:

http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/latest/SP300819_Agenda7.pdf

² Bill as passed:

[https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Bills/Climate%20Change%20\(Emissions%20Reduction%20Targets\)%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/SPBill30BS052019.pdf](https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Bills/Climate%20Change%20(Emissions%20Reduction%20Targets)%20(Scotland)%20Bill/SPBill30BS052019.pdf)

- By 2030; at least 75% lower; and
- By 2040, at least 90% lower.

The Bill also facilitates the establishment by Scottish Ministers of a ‘Citizens Assembly’ which will consider how best to address climate change and make recommendations in that regard.

Once statute, the provisions of the Bill will need to be taken into account by organisations such as SPT in further developing their approaches to carbon management and emissions, including through the emerging new Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).

2.2 Scottish Government consultation on “The Role of Public Sector Bodies in Tackling Climate Change” – SPT response

In light of their recent declaration of a Climate Emergency, the Scottish Government is keen to ensure that all public bodies in Scotland are playing their part in helping to address climate change. To that end, the Scottish Government is looking to strengthen the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties and is undertaking a consultation³ on proposals. SPT’s draft response is attached at Appendix 1 and the closing date for the consultation is 4 December 2019. Key points from SPT’s response include:

- SPT is supportive of proposals which would require public bodies to commit to targets of when they will achieve zero direct emissions, and reduced indirect emissions, to publish what actions they have taken, and to detail how they are using their resources to address the negative effects of climate change.
- SPT highlights however, that many organisations will be reliant on collaborative effort and change across many sectors to achieve both zero direct emissions and reduced indirect emissions. For example, in addition to striving to be more energy efficient through changes within our direct control, SPT will be reliant on working with the energy sector to seek to ensure that the sources for providing the electricity supply for traction on the Subway are moving towards being ‘zero carbon’.
- SPT’s response further highlights that in undertaking actions such as those above, these will need to be backed by the funding to deliver. While in some cases this may be a matter of more efficient use of existing resources, inevitably the requirement to respond to what is defined as an ‘emergency’ will require additional, new funding from the Scottish Government to deliver results.

2.3 SPT Climate Change Duties annual reporting for 2018/19

In line with the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties arising as a result of Part 4 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, SPT has a duty to report progress annually on reducing its impact on climate change. Since the pilot year of 2014/15, SPT has submitted the required information within deadline to the Scottish Sustainability Network (SSN), the custodian body for reporting, which is subsequently made publicly available on the SSN website⁴.

SPT’s carbon footprint for 2018/19 was 4,792 tCO₂e⁵, the majority of which came from electricity usage on the Subway, specifically traction for the trains. This is a reduction

³ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/role-public-sector-bodies-tackling-climate-change-consultation/>

⁴ <https://sustainablesotlandnetwork.org/reports/strathclyde-partnership-for-transport-spt>

⁵ Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

of 17% on the previous year of 2017/18, and a 52% reduction on our baseline year of 2008/09. This substantially exceeds our Carbon Management target of a 35% reduction by 2024/25 and, while welcome, further emphasises the need for a full review of our Carbon Management Plan, associated targets and environmental policy to ensure they are appropriately challenging and ambitious enough in scale to deliver towards Scottish Government and partners' targets.

2.4 SPT Carbon Management Plan, associated targets and environmental policy - timescales

Further to the report to the previous Committee, and the Committee's approval of the creation of a revised SPT Carbon Management Plan (CMP), associated targets and environmental policy, officers continue to progress work in this regard. It is anticipated that, recognising the need for an urgent response to the climate emergency, the revised CMP, associated targets and environmental policy will be presented to the Partnership for approval in December 2019.

As referenced earlier in this report, in taking forward this work, targets set by the Scottish Government and other partners will need to be taken into account. For example, while the Scottish Government's net-zero emissions target year has now been confirmed as 2045, Glasgow City Council has recently committed to being net-zero by 2030⁶. The scale of this ambitious target sets a framework in which SPT can consider how it can further play its part in delivering the significant reduction in carbon emissions required. It is worth highlighting that this in turn could present business opportunities: for example, greater usage of the Subway - and a higher profile and marketing opportunities for it - due to its 'green' credentials. Further, there may be opportunities to partner with energy companies and academic institutions to accelerate our shift to net-zero.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 The profile of and interest in climate change related issues is currently very significant and likely to continue to grow in future. Concomitant with that interest is the expectation that public bodies such as SPT will increase their efforts to reduce our cumulative impact on climate change, carbon emissions and the environment.
- 3.2 The developing Regional Transport Strategy provides a strategic opportunity for all organisations tasked with delivering transport in some form in the west of Scotland to adopt a co-ordinated, integrated and transformative approach to reducing transport's impact on climate change. Through such means as the Climate Change Duties annual reporting, SPT can seek to demonstrate publicly the progress it is making in this field, and similarly, can do the same through a new SPT Carbon Management Plan, targets and environmental policy which will be presented to the Partnership in December.
- 3.3 Further to this, SPT is broadly supportive of the Scottish Government's intention to strengthen the climate change duties placed on public bodies, albeit highlight that such strengthening must be accompanied by an increase in funding to deliver the change required. Officers will continue to keep the Committee apprised of progress in relation to the issues noted in this report.

4. Committee action

⁶ <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/article/25066/Council-Sets-Target-Of-Carbon-Neutral-Glasgow-by-2030>

The Committee is recommended to:

- Note the progress of the Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Bill;
- Approve SPT's draft response to the Scottish Government's consultation on "The Role of Public Sector Bodies in Tackling Climate Change", attached at Appendix 1;
- Note SPT's Climate Change Duties annual reporting for 2018/19; and
- Note the timescales for the creation of a revised SPT Carbon Management Plan, associated targets, and environmental policy.

5. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>In line with the current RTS, and the new developing RTS will have a strong focus on climate change, carbon management and environmental issues.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>The impacts of climate change and any policies to mitigate its effects will need to be closely monitored for impacts across equality groups.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>None at present.</i>

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APPENDIX 1

Scottish Government - “BIG CLIMATE CONVERSATION” - The role of Public Sector Bodies in tackling climate change - A Consultation

Response by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Q1. What additional training, information or guidance do you think Public Sector Bodies need to help them increase their action on climate change?

SPT response:

SPT supports the positive proposals outlined in the consultation report in relation to a ‘Climate Solutions’ qualification and training for middle and senior managers, and supports the previously issued guidance on climate adaptation and the Climate Change Duties.

We believe that there should also be training and guidance for elected members on climate solutions, and any further information published by the Scottish Government on action on climate change should continue to take a positive stance, highlighting not only opportunities for taking action, but also the wider economic and social benefits of these.

We would emphasise that fundamental to public bodies being able to increase their action on climate change will be a full reassessment of their budgetary priorities and potentially procurement criteria, and also, crucially, more funding being made available from the Scottish Government to help with climate action in this regard. It would therefore be helpful if there could be clarity over funding for future years, on what additional funds will be made available for climate action, and what other potential private / public sector sources of funding could be available to public bodies wishing to increase their action in this important area.

Q2. What are your views on the proposed structure for the High Ambition Climate Network of Chief Executives and Elected Members?

SPT response:

SPT is supportive of the proposals in this regard as strong leadership will be an essential element in trying to address the climate emergency. From a transport perspective, we would emphasise the importance of and opportunity presented by Regional Transport Partnerships and their respective Regional Transport Strategies in leading the way on reducing transport’s contribution to climate change.

Q3. Do you agree that Public Sector Bodies should be required to set targets for when they will achieve zero direct emissions, and for reduced indirect emissions?

SPT response:

Yes /no /don’t know

Please explain your answer.

SPT is supportive of this proposal as it will give added impetus to each organisation in trying to focus their energies on transformative change and deliver real, tangible results. However,

we also welcome the acknowledgements within the consultation document that many organisations will be reliant on collaborative effort and change across many sectors to achieve both zero direct emissions and reduced indirect emissions, and look forward to further dialogue with partners including the Scottish Government in this regard. For example, in addition to striving to be more energy efficient through changes within our direct control, SPT will be reliant on working with the energy sector to seek to ensure that the sources for providing the electricity supply for traction on the Subway are moving towards being 'zero carbon'.

We would also highlight two factors which must be given greater consideration in taking this proposal forward. Firstly, when a public sector organisation is setting its climate change targets, and making those targets public, it must have the confidence that it will have the funding in place to deliver them, particularly if the organisation will be held accountable should it not be able to achieve its targets. Secondly, given that transport is now the most emitting sector in Scotland, consideration should be given to the Scottish Government establishing a transport emissions task force of relevant partners with the specific focus of accelerating collaborative working to reduce transport emissions. Such a grouping could build on the success of the Scottish Transport Emissions Partnership (STEP) but would require a much stronger and more powerful remit to deliver the real change required.

As a final point, while we recognise the reasons for the Scottish Government focusing on public bodies in this consultation, there must be similar action taken in the private sector if the climate emergency is to be addressed at national level.

Q4. Do you agree that Public Sector Bodies should report annually on how they use their resources to contribute to reducing emissions?

SPT response:

Yes /no /don't know

Please explain your answer.

SPT is supportive of this as it will again provide focus and concentrate minds on how effectively and efficiently a public body is being in reducing its environmental impact. We would however, highlight again that it is essential that public bodies have sufficient funding in place to deliver the change required.

Q5. Do you agree that the details of what Public Sector Bodies are required to report on should be set out in statutory guidance instead of on the face of secondary legislation (otherwise known as an Order)?

SPT response:

Yes /no /don't know

Please explain your answer.

This proposal would allow the flexibility and agility likely to be required in future to remain focused on delivering real change in a timely manner.

Q6. Do you agree to the proposed changes to the list of Public Sector Bodies that are required to annually report their emissions?

SPT response:

~~Yes / no / don't know If you answered no, please specify which aspect of the proposal you disagree with and why.~~

Q7. Do you agree with our proposals for amending the reporting requirements as set out above?

SPT response:

~~Yes / no / don't know If you answered no, please specify which aspect of the proposal you disagree with.~~

Q8. Is there anything else you think should be added to the reporting duties, or anything else you think should be removed?

SPT response:

No

Q9. Do you agree that Public Sector Bodies should each make their own report on emissions reductions publicly available?

SPT response:

~~Yes / no / don't know Please explain your answer.~~