

**Scotland's Climate Change Declaration
2013/14 Statement to Convention of Scottish Local Authorities**

Report by Ian Johnson, Head of Communities and Economy

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the completed template appended here as the Council's statement on its climate change actions during 2013/14.

2 Background

- 2.1** The Climate Change (Scotland) Act requires public bodies to contribute to delivery of national greenhouse gas reduction targets and programmes for adapting to a changing climate.

- 2.2** All Scottish local authorities are signatories to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, committing them to: reducing greenhouse gases; taking steps to adapt to climate change impacts; working in partnership, including with communities, to respond to climate change; and publishing statements on their climate change response. The statement template appended here covers these various commitments, with the statement process overseen by the Sustainable Scotland Network (part of Keep Scotland Beautiful) and CoSLA.

- 2.3** Of particular note in the completed template is that:

- per capita 'territorial' emissions for the Midlothian area over which the Council can have some influence have fallen 17% from 2007 to 2011;
- emissions within the scope of the Carbon Management Plan 2013/16 (i.e. Council estate, fleet, street lighting and all waste handled by Council) are on target to be 25% below the 2006/7 baseline by 2015/16;
- emissions from commuting have risen 24% from 2006/7 to 2012/13;
- emissions from non-fleet business travel (claimed mileage only, assuming an 'average car') are more than a fifth of that from the Council's fleet proper;
- targets for adapting to climate change impacts are currently on target.

- 2.4** Challenges ahead in delivering the Council's Corporate Climate Change Strategy include:

- within current budgetary constraints, securing sufficient resources for the preparation and monitoring of the Carbon Management Plan, a Council commitment as a signatory to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, and the breadth of climate change work to which the Council is committed as a declaration signatory; and
- obtaining more robust and up-to-date data in relation to non-fleet business travel and commuting which would likely involve business travel claims procedures capturing emissions data for different vehicles.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

3.2 Risk

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☒ Sustainable growth
- ☒ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Failure to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate is likely to prejudice economic growth and environmental quality.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Reducing Midlothian's greenhouse gases and adapting the area to climate change impacts are outcome areas for improvement in the Single Midlothian Plan 2014/15. Tackling issues related to climate change is a priority for the year.

Preparation and submission of the statement is an action in the Council's Climate and Sustainable Development Action Plan 2014/15. Implementation of the Action Plan is a commitment in the Communities and Economy Service Plan 2014/15, underpinning the above Single Midlothian Plan priority.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The Scottish Parliament Finance Committee has stated that preventative spending could have impact in "areas of policy such as the early years, climate change and health and social care". The impacts of failing to tackle climate change will fall hardest on the poorest and least able to respond, e.g. higher energy bills.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The involvement of communities and other stakeholders is referred to in the completed template.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

No actions with 'people implications' are proposed that would necessitate Equalities Impact Assessment.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

Preparation and submission of this statement is an action in the Council's Climate Change and Sustainable Development Action Plan 2014/15.

3.10 IT Issues

There are no IT issues arising directly with this report.

4 Recommendations

4.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) approves the completed template appended here as the Council's 2013/14 statement under Scotland's Climate Change Declaration; and
- (b) refers this report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee for its information.

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Report Contact:

Brian Forsyth 0131 271 3473
brian.forsyth@midlothian.gov.uk

Background Papers: None