



**CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY - PROGRESS UPDATE**

Report by Chief Executive

**PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to provide an update on progress achieved in delivery of the Comhairle's Climate Change Strategy 2022-2027.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Comhairle's Climate Change Strategy 2022-27 provides strategic direction on climate change mitigation and adaptation within the Comhairle. The Strategy was approved by the Comhairle in September 2022 following public consultation.
- 2.2 The Strategic Priorities of the Strategy are (1) Carbon Neutral Comhairle, (2) Net Zero Islands and (3) Climate Resilient Islands. Each priority has strategic outcomes under it, with actions the Comhairle will take to work towards achieving these outcomes set out in the Strategy's Action Plan. The Strategy also sets out performance indicators (PIs) which use data from internal Comhairle records and national databases to provide a consistent basis to assess whether outcomes relating to climate change improve over time.
- 2.3 The Climate Change Strategy Progress Report 2024, appended to the Report, provides an update on progress achieved to-date in delivering against each of the actions in the Strategy. The KPI results for the three years 2021/22 to 2023/24 are also provided in the report.
- 2.4 Progress has been made against each of the strategic priorities, with enabling strategies developed, and consideration of climate change mitigation and adaptation continuing to be embedded into Comhairle processes and service delivery. Significant additional work with partners will be required to fully decarbonise the Comhairle and meet Net Zero Targets, and to further improve resilience to a changing climate in na h-Eileanan Siar.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1.1 **It is recommended that the Comhairle notes the Climate Change Strategy Progress Report 2024 appended to the Report.**

Contact Officer: Anna Hulme, Senior Researcher  
Appendix: Climate Change Strategy Progress Report 2024  
Background Papers: [R-18A-Climate-Change-Strategy.pdf](#)  
[R-18B-Appendix-Climate-Change-Strategy.pdf](#)

## IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

<b>Resource Implications</b>	<b>Implications/None</b>
Financial	There are no financial implications in terms of this report. Full implementation of the strategy will require financial resource to achieve the outcomes.
Legal	The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2019 commits Scotland to Net Zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045 at the latest and requires the Comhairle to use the range of its functions to address climate change, and report annually on compliance with Climate Change Duties.
Staffing	There are no staffing implications.
Assets and Property	There are no implications for assets and property in terms of this report. Full implementation of the strategy will require further consideration of assets and property to achieve the outcomes.
<b>Strategic Implications</b>	<b>Implications/None</b>
Risk	The Comhairle's Strategic Risk Register includes "The Comhairle is unprepared for Climate Change and failure to adapt to the effects of climate change" as a high risk in the Strategic Risk Register. The Comhairle's Climate Change Strategy aims to reduce this risk by providing strategic direction and actions to be taken to mitigate the risk.
Equalities	There are no equalities implications in terms of this report.
Corporate Strategy	Reducing our carbon footprint, developing an island route map to Net Zero and protecting our unique natural environment are strategic outcomes of the Comhairle's Corporate Strategy 22-27.
Environmental Impact	The Comhairle's Climate Change Strategy aims to have a positive environmental impact and minimise negative environmental impacts through implementing climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.
Consultation	No consultation is required.

## PROGRESS

- 6.1 Within the Comhairle, notable successes include the purchase of additional Electric Vehicles (EV) for the Comhairle's fleet, a refreshed EV Induction Training course for employees, the launch of new Climate Change and Net Zero training, and achievement of the Cycling Friendly Employer status. Supporting internal policies and strategies such as the Business Travel Strategy have also been updated to include full consideration of climate change. An internal Climate Change Focus group meets quarterly to coordinate and progress implementation of the strategy.
- 6.2 The Comhairle is working with partners to progress climate action across the islands, for example, through collaborating with the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership Climate Change Working Group, facilitating delivery of the Islands Centre for Net Zero, and supporting Barra and Vatersay through the Carbon Neutral Islands Programme. The Comhairle also collaborates with partners to deliver projects such as the Hydrogen Skills and Innovation Centre, the roll-out of EV infrastructure across the islands and to support delivery of renewable energy activities in the islands. Additional specific plans and strategies such as the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy, and Active Travel Masterplans, have been developed and approved by the Comhairle, with the aim of further enabling targeted strategic action towards Net Zero in the islands.

- 6.3 Progress has been made in identifying climate risks within the Comhairle, with climate change included on the Comhairle's Strategic Risk Register, and embedded within the Comhairle's risk management processes, to ensure consideration by all services. into the Comhairle's risk management and The Comhairle has developed a Resilience Strategy and an updated Outer Hebrides Flood Risk Management Plan is in place, and work with the OHCPP Climate Change Working Group to further improve climate resilience in the islands is ongoing.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The Comhairle's Climate Change Strategy was developed to provide strategic direction on climate action. Progress has been made against each of the strategic priorities, with enabling strategies developed and consideration of climate change mitigation and adaption continuing to be embedded into Comhairle processes and service delivery. Significant additional work with partners will be required to fully decarbonise the Comhairle and meet Net Zero Targets, and further improve resilience to a changing climate in the islands.