

Moray Council Climate Change Engagement

Outline Strategy for Engagement

Context or Introduction

Moray Council approved its Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan in March 2021, setting out the council's aim to have net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The national approach to tackling the global climate crisis places a legal duty on local authorities to reduce their emissions, adapt to climate change impacts and to act sustainably. It also recognises the crucial leadership role that local authorities will have in supporting the national goal for Scotland to be net-zero by 2045. Under the [UN Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) and the [Paris Agreement](#), people in the UK have a legal right to information and education on climate change and how it will affect them and to participation in decision making processes.

The Scottish Government's climate change engagement strategy, Net Zero Nation¹, highlights that although public concern for climate change has greatly increased in the last decade, behaviour changes have not followed this upward curve. The evidence suggests that targeting individuals, specific behaviour related nudges, raising awareness and providing information are not effective at changing behaviour on their own. Furthermore, experiences of distress around the climate and ecological crisis are now widespread, which can counterintuitively lead to a sense of powerlessness and inaction.

As a result, the new national strategy emphasises the need for a holistic, systemic approach that positively communicates the fundamental shifts taking place, and which are required by society. For behaviour change to be successful, engagement and messaging should: be combined with enabling infrastructure; connect people with the wider action taking place in the transition to net zero, therefore normalising net zero living; celebrate our collective (rather than personal) responsibility and the many benefits arising from action on climate change.

Moray Council must use this approach to embed action on climate change throughout the organisation and workforce, and at the same time engage with our wider community and use local voices to shape climate based service improvements in ways that work for the people of Moray. To support the Moray-wide contribution towards the national net zero goal, the council should seek to promote positive stories that connect people with what is happening both locally and beyond.

This engagement plan will support the journey to net zero by outlining a framework for engagement and associated actions. It will therefore act as a guide for the council to use best practice in communicating and engaging with internal and external stakeholders on climate and biodiversity related issues, and also keep a record of engagement actions within the wider Strategy and Route Map.

Aims and what we want to achieve

We aim to support action on climate change and biodiversity loss through effective engagement and communication with council staff, elected members and the Moray community.

¹ Net Zero Nation <https://www.gov.scot/publications/net-zero-nation-public-engagement-strategy-climate-change/>

Our strategic objectives align with the Net Zero Nation approach which is based around the three pillars; Understand, Participate and Act¹.

Understand

- *We will **communicate** the wider transformational changes that are happening in order to meet net zero, and how these **relate** to our work, communities and personal lives*
- *This will look like a low carbon culture **embedded** across the council and **underpinning decisions and actions** taken by staff*

Participate

- *We will **involve** council staff and the wider community in **shaping** the changes required by the climate crisis*
- *This will look like communities and all council staff **engaged** in shaping the council's response to the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis and related activities;*

Act

- *We will **normalise** low carbon living and **inspire** positive changes to take place*
- *This will look like council staff and the wider community feeling **supported and empowered** to make the collective changes required to meet net zero targets*

Principles for engagement

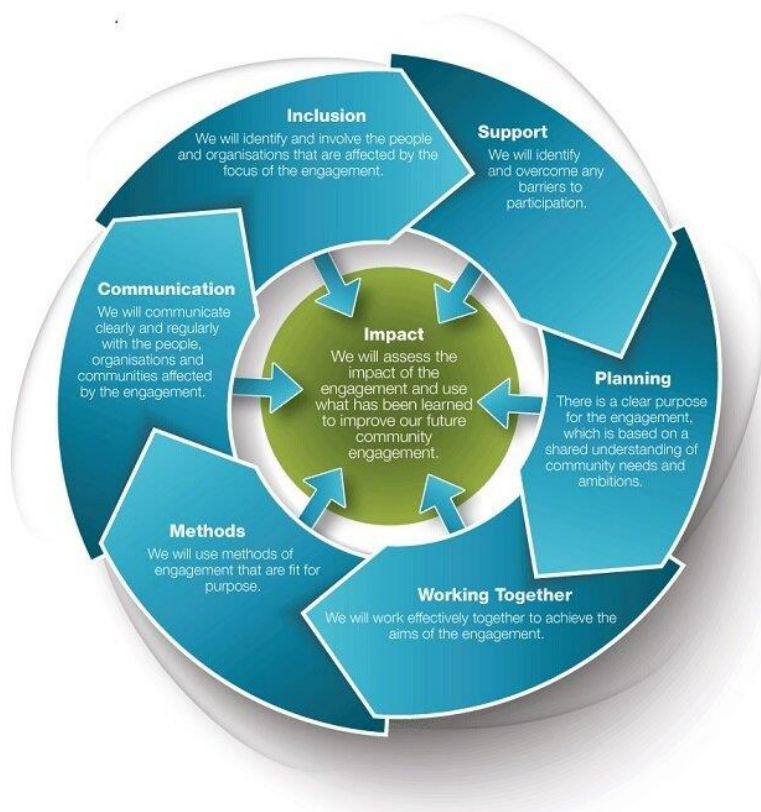
The evolving relationship between the public and climate change will be monitored. It will be important to be responsive to policy changes and to make the most of moments when issues are high on the agenda. Equally important is a sensitivity to the capacity of people to act, therefore it will be essential to co-ordinate messages and engagement around interventions for which the enabling infrastructure is in place.

The Net Zero Nation strategy identifies seven guiding principles to underpin effective climate change engagement;

- Positive – *uplifting, motivating, relatable, co-benefits*
- Putting people first – *communities play a key role*
- Participative – *conversation and discussion*
- Just – *understanding and engaging with those most affected*
- Inclusive – *equal and accessible engagement*
- Evidence based – *using sound science, improving engagement through active reflection*
- Open and transparent – *ensuring our actions are seen and understood*

These principles will be followed alongside the national standards for community engagement²;

² <https://www.voicescotland.org.uk/national-standards>



Delivery

The Climate Change Strategy outlines the discrete responsibilities for its delivery, however all individuals of every level within Moray Council are encouraged to be engaged themselves and to demonstrate leadership within their own sphere of influence towards the net zero goal.

Where specific actions from the Climate Change Strategy and Route Map are assigned to departments, they will take the lead on engagement in these areas. Services who may engage on climate change issues through their work areas include, but are not limited to, Energy, Housing and Property, Strategic Planning and Development, Economic Development, Transport, Environmental Protection, Procurement, Education, ICT, Catering and PR.

Climate change officers will work with other departments to co-ordinate and monitor engagement actions, supporting delivery of engagement that is consistent with this plan and aligned with the Scottish Government's approach and the latest evidence.

Strategy Review

This engagement strategy will be reviewed and updated every three years. Lessons learned and feedback received will inform future updates.

Engagement actions will be monitored for progress and updated as appropriate. Progress reports will be included within the overall Climate Change Strategy reporting framework.

Engaging within the Council

Stakeholders

All council staff and elected members will contribute to the council meeting its emission reduction target, acting sustainably and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Key stakeholders and partners include those in decision making capacities (management as well as elected members) and those working in sections with greater carbon implications or in public facing roles (including teachers).

In order to bring about the transformation required to meet the 2030 target and prepare for the impacts of climate change, significant improvement is required to fully engage staff with the Climate Change Strategy. A key priority will be to build and deliver narratives that resonate with a diverse range of values that staff and members may hold.

Methods of engagement

| Rationale | Potential methods |
|--|--|
| Build capacity and skills | Networks, e-learning, in person training (Carbon Literacy) |
| Feedback and information gathering | Pop up coffee chats (free cake!), networks, suggestion 'box' |
| Disseminate info/ influence behaviour change | Interchange, Connect, Team Brief, story maps, themed campaign/ promotion |
| Monitor engagement, track attitude and behaviour change | Surveys |
| Engage wider staff group (including offline and not otherwise engaged) | Focus groups Pop up coffee chats (free cake!) |

Monitoring and Review

Engagement of the council workforce is essential for the council to meet the challenges of climate change and meet our ambitious net zero goal. Initial figures indicate a significant gap in engagement on the issue of climate change, with a 2021 survey circulated to all staff stimulating a 2.5% return rate which is lower than average Pulse survey response rates and is therefore not representative and is likely also skewed by sampling bias (for example having stronger views or an interest in climate change issues). However, the survey also highlighted that, *of those who responded*, only 49% were either moderately or very aware of the Climate Change Strategy itself, indicating there is likely a very low level of awareness across the full staff population of the council's response to this crisis (and perhaps their role in this).

Measuring the level and quality of engagement will highlight areas where more work is needed and will support evaluation of progress in delivering the overall strategy. Ongoing engagement will be regularly monitored, and feedback actively sought, with the aim of improving the methods and reach of future engagement activity.

Specific events will be followed by evaluation and reflection on what worked well and how to learn from what was less successful. Evaluation will seek to identify barriers to engagement and change, and inform future approaches that address these issues.

Examples of measurement criteria:

- Qualitative analysis of comments and feedback
- Analytics e.g. survey response rates, story map engagement
- Evidence of engagement from staff across *all* council departments
- Evidence of how engagement has shaped changes in working practice
- Number of learners having completed training

Engaging with the wider community

Stakeholders

Climate change affects the whole Moray community and so all local residents are stakeholders and will be encouraged to engage with the transition to net zero and to create resilient and sustainable communities.

Individuals, communities and organisations across Moray are already working hard to support and inspire climate action and the council will work with them to wherever we can. The council will demonstrate leadership through our actions, and support community groups and businesses seeking to reduce their carbon footprint adapt to changes in climate and look after our natural environment and biodiversity. We will collaborate closely with our partners in public and third sector organisations who are working to deliver these objectives.

In particular, reducing Moray's area wide emissions will require a broad cultural shift and adoption of new norms. It will be important to build and deliver narratives that resonate with a diverse range of values and concerns. It will also be essential that we listen to the voices of those who are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including children.

Methods of engagement

| Rationale | Potential Methods |
|---|---|
| Disseminate info/ influence behaviour change | Social media (Moray Council accounts), press releases, story maps, videos |
| Feedback and information gathering | Workshops, focus groups, consultation events, surveys, online tools/ apps |
| Involve community in decision making | Participatory budgeting |
| Monitor engagement, track attitude and behaviour change | Surveys |
| Provide advice and information | Climate change web pages on council site |
| Build capacity and skills | Promote training and e-learning resources |
| Engage youth | Arts and creativity, games and tech |

Monitoring and Review

Acting on climate change is largely viewed as the responsibility of the public sector and so the council must demonstrate strong leadership in this area to the Moray community. As resources allow, measuring levels of engagement will highlight areas that require a more targeted approach and will support evaluation of progress in delivering the Climate Change Strategy.

Ongoing engagement will be regularly monitored and feedback actively sought from partners and participants to inform how to improve the methods and reach of engagement activity in future.

Specific events will be followed by evaluation and reflection on what worked well and how to learn from what was less successful. Evaluation will seek to identify barriers to engagement and change, and inform future approaches that address these issues.

Examples of measurement criteria:

- Qualitative analysis of comments and feedback
- Analytics from social media and surveys

APPENDIX 3

- Evidence of engagement with hard to reach groups
- Evidence of how engagement has influenced council services and that feedback has been provided to participants
- Evidence of productive partnership working with stakeholders/community groups

Engagement Actions

Most of the actions within the Climate Change Strategy and Route Map to Net Zero will involve elements of engagement or communication.

Engagement actions on climate change are central to the Climate Change Strategy and are included throughout the action plan in the [route map to net zero](#). The Climate Change Strategy aims to consult, raise awareness, communicate and engage with residents, businesses and organisations across Moray about climate change. Please refer to these documents for further information and the full list of actions. Below is an overview of those actions identified as being most relevant to this engagement strategy.

Wider community

Strategic local development | *Climate change route map actions 7.15 to 7.24*

Strategic Planning and Development will be leading on the Local Development Plan 2027 (LDP) consultation, with early stakeholder and community engagement to inform the LDP evidence report ongoing until late 2023. A wide variety of engagement tools will be used, including apps and other online tools, workshops and drop ins. The outcomes for this stage are:

- Early meaningful and inclusive engagement meeting National Standards for Engagement
- Youth Engagement linked to the Curriculum for Excellence
- Geographic and demographic spread of engagement
- Spatial outputs from engagement to inform “Place” based plan
- Partnership working to engage beyond Local Development Plan both locally and strategically on Moray Growth Deal, Regional Spatial Strategy and Locality Plans
- Deliver engagement through a climate change lens

Following completion of the Evidence Report, several stages of informing and consulting will take place until adoption of the new LDP in 2027. This will involve website and social media updates, drop in exhibitions, direct correspondence and making copies of the final plan available to the public.

Other engagement alongside the LDP process will include a review of the Forest and Woodland Strategy, consulting with key stakeholders and industry representatives. Public consultation will involve all stakeholders including local landowners, community councils and active community organisations to ensure the needs of the local community are met, especially in terms of leisure and recreation.

Opportunities to bring stakeholders together to progress biodiversity actions as part of the LDP and development management will be explored. Engagement around biodiversity and our natural environment will be a priority for development planning.

The LDP aims to support the concept of “20 minute neighbourhoods”. Public engagement will support the design of places that enable residents to meet their day-to-day needs within a 20 minute walk of their home; through access to safe walking and cycling routes, or by public transport.

The Moray Growth Deal will present opportunities to showcase innovation and leadership in net zero design, construction and operation of projects to the wider community and businesses in Moray.

Skills and knowledge in the community | *Climate change route map actions 5.4, 7.8 and 7.9 to 7.14*

Increasing the provision of skills and knowledge required to progress a greener economy will involve cross-council collaboration between Strategic Planning and Development, Procurement and Economic Development. This will involve awareness raising to promote opportunities for existing businesses in the green economy transition.

Climate change officers will support partners to develop and deliver climate emergency training that is specific to the area. Further support to communities will involve supporting the work of the Moray Climate Assembly, the development of a Moray climate action hub and good communication between the Council and local organisations regarding climate change policy and action.

Connecting people to resources | *Climate change route map actions 3.4, 6.2, 7.6 7.9, 7.12, 7.13 7.14*

Communities will be supported to access information and advice for renewable energy projects. Climate Change and Economic Development Officers will work with Moray climate action hub to engage with community groups. Similar support for communities will be developed for tree planting/offsetting.

Raising awareness of the opportunities for just transition and the circular economy will highlight the multiple benefits businesses can realise through taking action on climate change. This work will involve officers from across the Council.

Climate change officers will also work with other council departments and partner organisations to promote campaigns that connect people, community groups and businesses to information, support or enabling infrastructure as they emerge.

Sustainable Travel | *Climate change route map actions 2.2, 2.3 and 7.3*

Transport will deliver the Council's [Active Travel Strategy 2022-2027](#), which includes several actions that correspond with the Climate Change Strategy. Employers will be encouraged to develop active travel plans to reduce the use of car travel to work. Similarly, schools will be supported to develop active travels plans alongside a wider campaign to encourage active travel to school.

Staff Engagement

Learning | *Climate change route map actions, 4.12 and 4.13*

Climate change officers will co-ordinate and deliver certified carbon literacy training to staff to increase knowledge and empower individuals to embed climate action throughout their work. This training will be offered to all staff but will also be delivered to target groups such as elected members, senior management and key service areas. A short e-module will provide a snapshot of climate emergency training and will be included as part of staff inductions.

Education will continue to lead the delivery of Learning for Sustainability within the curriculum, supporting CPD for teachers and increased opportunities for pupils. Climate change officers will support teachers and pupils to access relevant resources and information.

Knowledge exchange | *Climate change route map actions 4.6 and 7.6*

Climate change action plans will be kept up to date through regular engagement with staff.

Behaviour change / *Climate change route map actions 1.6, 2.2, 4.1*

Energy officers will encourage a reduction of energy use in Council buildings through engagement with staff, delivery of workshops in schools on an ongoing basis. Climate change officers will support this and also lead on promoting resources to support homeworking staff to reduce emissions at home.

Transport will develop and promote Moray Council's travel plan, encouraging staff to increase active travel, public transport, and car share options.

Links

Net Zero Nation <https://www.gov.scot/publications/net-zero-nation-public-engagement-strategy-climate-change/>

Moray Council climate change web page, including the Strategy and Route Map
http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_136444.html

Moray Council Interchange staff climate pages
http://interchange.moray.gov.uk/int_standard/Page_143298.html