Moray Climate Action Hub proposal

Introduction

The Scottish Government is supporting the development of a network of climate action hubs to stimulate local community-led climate action, supporting a just transition to low carbon and climate adapted living, and drive wider behavioural change.

The hubs are intended to provide a coordinated and coherent approach to supporting communities across their region, ensuring communities are informed, connected, engaged and empowered to develop and implement local solutions to create low carbon, resilient places.

The local context

This proposal for a Moray Climate Action Hub is based on the outputs of meetings, events, conversations and consultations held during most of 2022 and the beginning of 2023, and is presented here as a draft for consultation (see appendix for scope and list of stakeholders). It brings together a number of key players spanning the private, public and community sectors, building on Moray's existing, and often long-established, community-led activity, groups and networks.

The proposal should be read and assessed within the context of our wider, multi-pronged, systemic approach, seeking to address holistically a number of complementary, intersecting and interdependent issues and policy areas, including:

- addressing the climate and environmental emergencies
- enabling a just transition to a carbon-neutral and sustainable future
- supporting the development of a wellbeing economy
- facilitating community development and capacity-building
- investing in community leadership and community-led local development
- supporting and building on the concept of community wealth building.

What we aim to achieve

Our overarching aim is to support community action and leadership in the development of a wellbeing economy working for people, places and planet[1].

To this end, we will promote and support participation in the development and implementation of a Community Led Vision for Moray, structured as a just transition plan and based on the principles of just transition planning[2].

Within and alongside the framework provided by the Community Led Vision, the Moray Climate Action Hub will focus specifically on:

- raising awareness of the climate emergency,
- widening community participation,
- advancing greater inclusion and diversity,

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[1] See Wellbeing Economy Alliance (weall.org) for more information about the wellbeing economy, underlying concepts, and supporting resources

[2] See National Just Transition Planning Framework - Just Transition - A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Scottish Government response - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

- facilitating sharing of knowledge and experience between groups,
- supporting groups to develop projects that help tackle and/or adapt to climate change including, subject to funding, projects supporting a Just Transition, and
- representing and amplifying community voices to influence and shape local and national policy.

Our operating model

Our proposal envisages a network fulfilling the key functions of a Climate Action Hub through a number of 'nodes' hosted by existing groups, building on existing strengths across Moray, as set out in the *Functions & Hosts* section, below.

The model emerged from engagement and discussion with a wide range of stakeholders. This followed an online meeting for Moray convened and hosted by Scottish Government Climate Change team in March 2022, at the end of which **tsi**MORAY[3] offered to facilitate the development of a proposal for a Moray Climate Action Hub, an offer which was welcomed by participants.

The engagement process was punctuated by two events organized and hosted by **tsi**MORAY (and widely publicized, including through the Scottish Government Climate Change team) in June and November 2022, by participation in the Moray Joint Community Councils' / Zero Carbon Moray's Energy Fair at the end of June 2022, and by the meeting, in December 2022, of an open working group set up at the November event. The proposal was circulated as a consultation draft in late March and early April 2023, attracting support from all responders; report to follow in due course.

The Hub will operate within the context of a Community Led Vision for Moray, currently being developed under the governance and oversight of the Moray Local Action Group[4], which will also oversee and govern the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the Vision.

The Hub coordination and management will be the responsibility of **tsi**MORAY, which will remain responsive and accountable to the members of the network and the wider community through the Moray Climate Assembly[5] and a reconvened and rejuvenated Moray Area Climate Action steering group[6].

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[3] tsiMORAY | Connected People Creating Change **tsi**MORAY is a dynamic, independent local charity operating as a company limited by guarantee. Membership is open to any third sector organisation – i.e. community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprises – based or operating in Moray. It is governed by a Board of unpaid trustees elected by its members

[4] Moray Local Action Group (moraylag.org.uk) The Moray Local Action Group is an un-constituted voluntary association, bringing together people from all sectors, from different walks of life, and with different personal and professional experience, recruited through an open process for the purpose of steering community led local development in Moray. It builds on the legacy of LEADER, a European-funded programme supporting a bottom-up approach to rural development

[5] MORAY CLIMATE ASSEMBLY | tsiMORAY a cross-sector forum catalysing action for a just and green renewal of our communities. The assembly's aim is to inspire new thinking, provide a platform to share the latest environmental actions in Moray, and connect cross-sector change-makers to each other. Anyone with an interest in tackling climate change in Moray is welcome to join the assembly

[6] The **Moray Area Climate Change Action** Steering Group was initially convened by **tsi**MORAY with cross-sectoral support to "regularly convene motivated and willing cross-sector leaders within the Moray Community Planning Partnership area to tackle climate change through a just and green recovery leading up to COP26 and beyond"

Functions & Hosts

Functions, and key people to deliver them or support their delivery, which were identified by local stakeholders as key for a Moray Hub to deliver, or at least support included:

Key function, as identified locally:	Delivered through / led by:
Being a central source of knowledge and/or signposting / facilitating access to expert advice, including:	Hub coordination team and website, employed by **tsi**MORAY and linking up when needed with other resources either national (including online, e.g. by SCCAN and Third Sector Net Zero Working Group) or hosted locally by:
carbon / environmental footprinting	Moray Council Climate Change Team
energy advice	REAP / Zero Carbon Moray
'green your business'	Moray Chamber of Commerce
circular economy	Moray Waste Busters / ReBoot
whole system thinking	Moray Local Action Group / Global Ecovillage Network / **tsi**MORAY, including through the use of the Local Transformation Toolkit developed by Municipalities in Transition
demonstration sites for community level action	REAP / Park Ecovillage Trust / Transition Town Forres / Portgordon Community Trust / Cullen Connected and others
demonstration sites for household level action	Zero Carbon Moray / Park Ecovillage Trust / Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust / Finderne Development Trust and others
Linking / connecting / providing opportunities for groups to share knowledge	Mostly facilitated by **tsi**MORAY, including through Moray Climate Assembly, knowledge exchange platforms and funding
Building community capacity	**tsi**MORAY / Moray Local Action Group / REAP / Transition Town Forres / Park Ecovillage Trust / Zero Carbon Moray
Upskilling people / future proofing job market	ReBoot / Social Enterprise Academy / Moray College-UHI / Local Employability Partnership / NESCAN Just Transition Communities Project / HIE Graduate Placement Scheme / **tsi**MORAY
Tackling food and fuel poverty	REAP / Transition Town Forres / Elgin Youth Development Group / Moray Local Action Group / Zero Carbon Moray / Warmer Moray Group / Fairer Moray Forum Action Group & members, including Citizens' Advice Bureau
Signposting / facilitating access to funding, including:	Hub coordination team, linking up as needed with **tsi**MORAY colleagues and other resources either national (including e.g. Home Energy Scotland, Changeworks, SCVO) or hosted locally by:
from / for renewables	Community Energy Moray / REAP
for retrofitting	REAP / Zero Carbon Moray
PB (participatory budgeting) / PGM (participatory grant making) opportunities & just transition fund	Money for Moray / **tsi**MORAY / NE Just Transition Participatory Budgeting working group / Moray Council UKSPF

Practicing / enabling inclusive communication and engagement, including youth engagement	Hub coordination team / NESCAN Just Transition Communities Project / Elgin Youth Development Group / Moray Council Community Learning & Engagement Team
Supporting environmental protection	Moray Climate Assembly members / Moray Local Action Group

Some of these are already in place and resourced from elsewhere. Others will need additional resourcing through Climate Action Hub funding and/or other sources, as detailed in the Resources section.

While there were different views regarding the advantages and disadvantages of establishing a permanent physical presence for the Hub, most stakeholders seemed to favour a mix of virtual and geographically dispersed presence through participation in events and pop-up hubs both online and in communities and localities across Moray. As a consequence, this proposal does not include plans for a permanent physical presence for the Hub at this stage.

Groups and individuals will be able to access the relevant support / function primarily through a widely publicised and promoted coordination team and online presence, as well as through any node within the network.

Activities & Timeline

As described earlier, the Moray Climate Action Hub will build on a strong foundation of existing activities and well-established connections between a wide range of stakeholders spanning the public, private and third sectors.

A key characteristic of the asset-based community development approach adopted and promoted by **tsi**MORAY, which will permeate the programme proposed here, is to leverage and support the further development of existing community assets, both physical and social. Where existing groups are already engaged in activities furthering or supporting the aims of the Moray Climate Action Hub, or have the skills, knowledge, expertise or connections, or are otherwise well-placed to do so, the Hub will seek to invest in their deployment and further development rather than 'reinvent the wheel'.

Within and alongside the framework provided by the Community Led Vision for Moray, the initial activities for the Hub will therefore focus on:

- recruiting a Hub Coordination team and connecting them to the key people and organisations detailed in the Functions & Hosts section
- resourcing, supporting and/or linking to existing capacity and capability in the key Hub network 'nodes' identified above
- developing and implementing a communication & engagement strategy and supporting implementation plans for the Hub
- commissioning the development and publication of a new dedicated Hub website, and the development of additional layers for a reinvigorated and expanded Moray Community Map, already hosted by **tsi**MORAY

- building on and systematising our existing knowledge by carrying out an initial mapping of relevant activity already happening in Moray, including activity by groups that might not consider themselves as being climate-focused, and identifying both 'hot' and 'cold' spots
- capturing and publicising our findings in line with the communication & engagement strategy, including through developing existing databases to feed into the Hub website and the relevant layers of the Moray Community Map, and using the findings to inform our activities and priorities
- increasing and diversifying the activity of the Moray Climate Assembly, to strengthen its appeal to current members as well as to increase – and publicise – its relevance to a broader audience through communication and engagement activities, e.g. releasing appropriately targeted and supported media information, hosting open events and programmes
- reconvening and supporting the activities of the Moray Area Climate Action steering group
- supporting capacity-building of existing groups and initiatives, as well as the development of new ones, including through:
  - providing resources through grant-funding and commissioning activity
  - organising and facilitating learning & development opportunities and
  - organising and facilitating learning exchanges, both within and beyond Moray
- supporting the development of climate action plans and projects, including a pipeline of community-led projects and initiatives that can support a Just Transition and be funded through the Just Transition Fund and/or other sources
- further developing links with other local, regional, national and international actors and networks for mutual support and shared learning, as well as to represent and amplify community voices to influence and shape local and national policy
- communicating and engaging with groups which do not currently recognise the relevance of their activity in relation to the climate emergency and/or the impact of the unfolding emergency on their work and beneficiaries
- communicating and engaging with new audiences and the wider community to increase awareness of the climate emergency
- building community capacity to address the climate emergency through community-led action, including through mitigation, adaptation, increased resilience and regeneration.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

The Moray Climate Action Hub will be outcome-focused; it will draw on the expertise available within and beyond the **tsi**MORAY team, and on tools developed by Evaluations Support Scotland and others to monitor and evaluate its impact. This will enable the Hub both to report to its many stakeholders and to share its learning not only on the basis of the activities it carries out, but also in terms of how its activities contribute to its aims and to those set out in the Community Led Vision for Moray.

The key outcomes the Hub will seek to achieve are:

CH1.   more people in Moray are aware of the climate emergency,
CH2.   more people in Moray are engaged in climate action,
CH3.   a more diverse range of people is engaged in climate action in Moray,
CH4.   groups are better able to share knowledge and experience about climate action

CH5.   more groups are supported to develop projects that help tackle and/or adapt to climate change

CH6.   more groups are successful in their effort to secure funding to deliver projects that help tackle and/or adapt to climate change

CH7.   community voices are better able to influence local and national policy.

Subject to funding, the Hub will also seek to achieve the following key outcomes in relation to supporting a Just Transition:

JT1.   more people in Moray are aware of Just Transition plans and funding streams,

JT2.   more people in Moray are engaged in Just Transition planning and activities,

JT3.   more groups are supported to develop projects that support a Just Transition,

JT4.   a more diverse range of groups are able to bid for Just Transition funding,

JT5.   more groups are successful in their effort to secure funding for Just Transition projects.

Progress on some of the longer term outcomes will be beyond the capacity of the Hub to measure directly, so the Hub will, at least initially, focus on tracking progress using key indicators related to outcomes CH4 to CH7 and JT3 to JT5.

The Hub will also wish to track its contribution to outcomes and indicators identified in the Community Led Vision for Moray currently in development, as well as to engage with ongoing work by Local Action Groups and others, across Scotland and beyond, seeking to develop and apply evaluation approaches and tools designed to embrace complexity, such as Human Learning Systems, Social Value Engine, the Local Implementation Toolkit and others.

Resources

To complement and build-on existing resources, funding for the Climate Action Hub and a Just Transition will be needed to:

1. recruit and employ a community engagement and development specialist to support community engagement and capacity-building in relation to climate awareness, climate action, and just transition

2. recruit and employ a technical specialist to support climate action and transition focused project development

3. contribute to the cost of deploying energy advisors

4. fund:
   a. set up costs (ICT & office equipment)
   b. communication and engagement strategy and plans
   c. website and systems development
   d. operations and engagement activities / materials
   e. grant-funding specifically for climate action and just transition, including seed funding and preparatory work for bigger bids, e.g. feasibility studies
   f. commissioning activity, including project support, training and learning programmes and learning exchanges (including hosting fees and other costs related to the delivery of functions by the hosts identified above)

5. contribute to cost of assigning a member of the Leadership Team of **tsi**MORAY to provide strategic leadership covering the whole scope of the Community Led Vision for Moray, and

helping to ensure activities remain closely aligned and synergise with those of the wider **tsi**MORAY team as well as external partners and stakeholders

6. contribute to administrative resource spanning Community Led Vision and closely aligned with Third Sector Interface (TSI) functions
7. contribute to communication resource spanning Community Led Vision and TSI functions
8. contribute to systems specialist spanning Community Led Vision and TSI functions

Finances

Responsibility for managing the Hub's finances will sit with **tsi**MORAY, which will be the accountable body for the Hub while remaining responsive and accountable to the members of the network and the wider community, as set out in the operating model section. **tsi**MORAY has acted and continues to act successfully as the accountable body for the last LEADER and subsequent Community Led Local Development programmes.

Funding is being sought from a number of sources able and willing to engage with the approach proposed here. Funders are being asked to recognise that seeking to address simultaneously a number of complementary, intersecting and interdependent issues and policy areas will require a holistic approach and a degree of flexibility. This will include the recognition that most community-led and place-based activity will be likely to span more than one area of interest or departmental responsibility.

The following table sets out how an initial proposal of how funding may flow from specific funders to support the resources and activities identified above.

Resource	Funded by	Notes
1	Climate Hub funding (or 50/50 Climate Hub / Just Transition)	Hosted by **tsi**MORAY
2	Just Transition (or 50/50 Climate Hub / Just Transition)	Hosted by **tsi**MORAY
3	Climate Hub funding (+ contribution from Just Transition?)	Hosted by REAP
4a – 4c	Climate Hub funding (+ contribution from Just Transition?)	Non-recurring costs
4d	Climate Hub funding (+ contribution from Just Transition?)	Recurring costs
4e – 4f	Climate Hub funding (seed-fund); Just Transition (project prep work, JT project funds); Rural Communities / Community Led Local Development / Community Led Vision (feasibility studies, project grants); as well as potentially other sources	Potential for Moray Local Action Group role in sourcing and distributing grants
5 & 6	Rural Communities / Community Led Local Development + Climate Hub funding + Just Transition	Community Led Vision resource
7 & 8	50% Rural Communities / Community Led Local Development + Climate Hub funding + Just Transition + 50% **tsi**MORAY	Community Led Vision / TSI resource

tsiMORAY – 20 April 2023

Appendix – stakeholders and scope of consultation

The proposal has been informed by meetings, events, conversations and consultations held during most of 2022 and the beginning of 2023, and it builds on work done by many stakeholders in recent years.

It was circulated as a consultation draft through a number of networks, including the Moray Climate Assembly distribution list (over 350 members) and the Moray stakeholder list held by colleagues at the Scottish Government Community Climate Action Team. The consultation was also be publicised through other media, including the **tsi**MORAY bulletin, which goes out weekly to a list of over 1,400 recipients.

The purpose of the consultative stage of engagement was to:

1. evidence community support for the proposal
2. identify any gaps in the list of functions and hosts set out in the relevant section
3. identify any gaps in the resources to be funded through investment from Climate Action and Just Transition funds

Stakeholders involved in meeting and conversations which have informed this proposal so far, and who were consulted on this draft, include colleagues from:

- Community Energy Moray
- Cairngorms National Park Authority
- Dufftown & District Community Association
- Ekopia Social Investments
- Forres Area Community Trust
- Global Ecovillage Network
- Highlands & Islands Climate Hub
- Highlands & Islands Enterprise
- Moray Chamber of Commerce
- Moray Climate Assembly
- Moray Council Climate Change / Community Learning & Engagement / Economic Development / Planning & Development teams
- Moray Local Action Group
- Moray Waste Busters
- NESCAN
- Outside the Box
- Park Ecovillage Trust
- Portgordon Community Trust
- REAP
- ReBoot
- SCCAN
- Scottish Government
- Transition Town Forres
- **tsi**MORAY
- Third Sector Net Zero Working Group
- XR Forres
- Zero Carbon Moray

In addition to the above, and to general circulation of the draft proposal, we targeted colleagues from a range of other groups, including:

- Cullen Connected
- Elgin Youth Development Group
- Fairer Moray Forum Action Group & members, including Citizens' Advice Bureau
- Finderne Development Trust
- Local Employability Partnership
- Money for Moray
- Moray College-UHI
- NE Just Transition Participatory Budgeting working group
- NESCAN Just Transition Communities Project Team
- Social Enterprise Academy
- Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust
- Warmer Moray Group

While a full report on the consultation will be published in the coming weeks, it is worth noting here that all responses were supporting the proposal, with some respondents asking for more additional focus and attention to be given to the biodiversity and wider environmental dimension of the current climate and nature emergency, and for a request for plainer language to be used.

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