

# Public Document Pack

## SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE held Via Microsoft Teams on Friday, 17 September 2021 at 10.00 am

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Present:- Councillors S. Aitchison (Chairman), H. Anderson, J. Greenwell, H. Laing, J. Linehan, and D. Paterson.

Apologies:- Councillors, K. Chapman, G. Edgar and S.Scott

In Attendance:- Chief Planning & Housing Officer (I. Aikman), Corporate Policy Advisor (M. Cook), Environmental Strategy Officer (L. Cox), Cleaning & Facilities Manager (J. Gray), Education rep (D. Matthewson), Waste Manager (R. Sharp-Dent), Project Management Team Leader (E. Doyle), Youth Engagement Officer (P. Rigby), Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)

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### 1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting of 4 June 2021. With reference to paragraph 6.2 of the Minute and the sentence "Councillor Anderson asked if Community Council representatives could be invited to make a presentation..", this should have read "Councillor Anderson asked if representatives of Pesticide Action Network could be invited to make a presentation...".

### **DECISION**

**APPROVED for signature by the Chairman, subject to the above amendment.**

### 2. **SUSTAINABILITY IN COUNCIL CATERING AND CLEANING**

- 2.1 With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 5 March 2021, there had been circulated copies of a joint report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure and the Service Director Young People, Engagement and Inclusion which set out progress following a presentation by the Youth Ambassadors for Sustainability to the Sustainable Development Committee on 5 March 2021 on the subject of 'Stopping the Use of Plastic Bottles in Schools'. The report noted that, while progress in decommissioning plastic bottles, particularly single use bottles, in schools was objectively and symbolically important, it remained an individual step in a broader suite of actions aimed at delivering a sustainable Catering and Cleaning Service. The report placed action in the context of the global climate and nature emergencies, the legal and regulatory obligations upon public bodies to prioritise and take account of climate and the circular economy in their procurement activity and the Council's own commitments pursuant to the Scottish Borders Climate Change Route Map, including the commitment to embed Net Zero practices in SBC's own operations, capital programmes and value chains. Progress had been made through more sustainable product packaging choices in the region's primary and high schools, catering generally and cleaning. Some of the practical challenges in balancing occasionally conflicting priorities to maintain nutritional standards, whilst also removing unsustainable packaging, were also identified. Waste and our collective responsibility to reduce, reuse and recycle was highlighted, together with the vital importance of education, cultural and behavioural change, with schools playing a central role. Current progress on both of those work streams was set out. It was acknowledged that a holistic approach was essential to making further progress in ensuring that products and processes were as fully sustainable as possible, supported by a strategic approach which

built in qualitative and quantitative performance metrics. Lastly, it was proposed a follow up report on Sustainable Procurement in Catering and Cleaning would be brought to the Sustainable Development Committee on 3 December 2021. John Gray, Cleaning & Facilities Manager, provided some context to the report and explained that guest speakers from the food and drinks industry would make presentations to explain what was happening in the sector with regard to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

2.2 Andrew Gibbons of AG Barr joined the meeting. Mr Gibbons gave an outline of the work that was undertaken by his company to improve the carbon footprint of their soft drinks business, this included measures such as using a higher percentage of recycled plastics in their bottles and packaging. The presentation gave an insight into the work that the soft drink industry was doing to reduce the impact of their business upon the environment, including:

- Doing the Right Thing and No Time to Waste Programme
- Contribution to the UN Sustainable Goals and Environmental Standard ISO14001
- Carbon net zero to be achieved by 2040 or sooner if possible
- Packaging to be recycled, not discarded as litter
- 100% of soft drinks packaging currently recyclable
- 100% recycled films in multipacks and paper straws in cartons

2.3 In response to questions from Members, Mr Gibbons advised that information was still awaited on the bottle return scheme which was being set up by Circularity Scotland and would hopefully be in place by summer 2022. Mr Aikman, Chief Planning & Housing Officer, added that previously the Committee had considered the removal of plastic bottles from schools, but this was a much wider issue concerning packaging, products and recycling, which involved not just other Services within the Council, but suppliers as well. Mr Gibbons confirmed that this was a partnership between governments, suppliers and end users, and added that the presentation could be used within schools if desired. Members asked that only scientific details from the presentation were used in schools and not inadvertently the promotion of soft drinks. It was not about the contents but the packaging itself that was the focus.

2.4 Colin Dyer and Amy Marshall of Campbell Brothers joined the meeting. Ms Marshall gave a presentation that outlined the work that had gone on within their business to alleviate some of the environmental impact of their meat and fish business, including:

- Overview of Campbell Bros butchers and fishmongers only working with sustainable suppliers
- Market trends and developments
- Sourcing meat locally where possible and fish from Scotland when in season
- Accreditations for meat and fish
- Reduction of single use plastic
- Carbon footprint reduction, currently zero waste to landfill and reductions in fleet emissions
- Meat in a net zero world and alternative products

2.5 In response to questions from Members, Mr Dyer explained that due to food safety reasons, when packaging and selling fresh meat products there would always be an element of single use plastic; however work was ongoing to create a biodegradable solution. Regarding short supply chains, Mr Dyer advised the committee that an experiment had taken place with SBC to use locally reared lamb in school meals, however ongoing logistical and economic challenges remained. While the company would like to use Borders lamb and beef, a consistent supply was needed, so while 10kgs of lamb could be needed in a week, this would only be part of the carcass so options on what to do with the remainder remained unresolved. With regard to the impact of Brexit, Mr Dyer advised that the company had confidence in the products they were bringing in to the country and no product was purchased that did not meet their current standards, which was the same as previously. The company had responsibility and accountability to meet BRC accreditation (certification against food, packaging, storage and distribution

standards) so any of their suppliers had to be able to provide the required information. Members thanked the presenters for their attendance and their insightful presentations.

- 2.6 Noting that the focus of the present report and activity it outlined was product packaging, Mr Gray explained to the committee that the two presentations reflected the holistic approach that was required across all of society to make systemic changes to waste and consumer habits. As reflected in the report, extensive decommissioning of single use plastics in both primary and secondary schools. Particular progress had been made in Primary Schools with large scale removal of plastic bottles and the replacement of plastic containers through the use of crockery. The catering offering within High Schools presented more of a challenge as pupils could choose to go elsewhere. The key point was the need to work with suppliers. Mr Sharp-Dent outlined the situation with regards to waste management in schools, explaining that the aim was not to get packaging into the market place in the first place and what there was would be as recyclable as possible, with the use of the least amount of raw materials. There would always be packaging of some sort, so more insight was needed in what was happening within our school buildings. A pilot scheme was proposed for one school which would seek to acquire data and build a case for rolling out further waste management techniques across all schools. The challenge for Waste Services was in identifying resources for this as Covid still provided a challenge. Debbie Matthewson, from the Education Service, commented on a couple of projects within schools on reducing waste. There was a local authority network with Education Scotland and SBC services could also work together to address issues. Members paid tribute to all those involved in the production of the report.

## **DECISION**

### **(a) NOTED:-**

**(i) the progress made in decommissioning the use of single-use plastic bottles for sale as part of the Council's catering offer within Scottish Borders Primary Schools;**

**(ii) the progress made in substituting products for sale as part of the Council's catering offer within Scottish Borders schools which were assessed as more consistent with the Council's sustainable procurement duties;**

**(iii) that progress on Sustainable Procurement sat within the Resilience Theme of the Climate Change Route Map and that Officers were progressing a holistic approach to embedding further sustainable practice, bringing together Education, Catering and Cleaning, Procurement and Waste Services to support further action; and**

**(iv) that it was proposed to scope and seek approval for a pilot waste management exercise in a high school which would involve the provision of comprehensive recycling facilities to assess the behaviour patterns of users of the buildings and the quantities of materials deposited. Subject to approval, progress of the pilot would be reported to the Sustainable Development Committee.**

**(b) ENDORSED the broader approach to prioritising and taking account of climate and circular economy in the Council's procurement activity.**

### **(c) AGREED that:-**

**(i) the Council would provide dedicated support to develop the Learning for Sustainability agenda within all Scottish Borders Council schools. This officer resource would link strategic management decisions to curriculum opportunities supporting**

**positive behaviour changes both within schools and in wider domestic and community life; and**

**(ii) a follow up report on Sustainable Procurement in Catering and Cleaning, setting out further progress, would be brought to the Sustainable Development Committee on 3 December 2021.**

#### **MEMBER**

Councillor Patterson left the meeting during discussion of the above item.

### **3. REGIONAL LAND USE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

3.1 Senior Policy Advisor, Douglas Scott, gave a presentation on the Regional Land Use Partnership (RLUP). He explained that Regional Land Use Partnerships were a key element of the National Land Use policy. They aimed to identify opportunities for land use change to deliver environmental, socio-economic and climate change through the production of a regional Land Use Framework. This would be achieved through collaborative working with all stakeholders to optimise land use in a fair and inclusive way. A joint bid from Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC), Scottish Borders Council (SBC) and South of Scotland Enterprise Agency (SOSE) was submitted in January 2021. The South of Scotland (SoS) was chosen as one of five pilot Regional Land Use Partnerships in Scotland in April 2021. The first phase of the project up to March 2022 was for the pilot regions to undertake the development of the required governance and to build to the appropriate relationships to enable the RLUPs to function. The second phase from April 2022 to March 2023 was for the RLUP to develop its Regional Land Use Framework. The final stage from March 2023 onwards would focus on delivering the objectives in the framework by making collaborative land use change decisions in the SoS. The project would be managed through a steering group comprising senior officers from SBC, DGC, SOSE and chaired by the two Councils. Scottish Borders Council would administer the award, SOSE would carry out the appointment process with the two Councils, and SOSE would employ the project manager. The application process to appoint the Project Manager was ongoing, with interviews scheduled to take place on 23 September 2021.

3.2 Members expressed their gratitude for the update. In response to a question regarding Members' representation on the steering group, Mr Scott explained that they would set up the governance of the group and make recommendations. The group would be guided by consensus. Mr Scott confirmed that a report would be presented to Council with further details in due course.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED the presentation attached as an Appendix to this Minute.**

#### **MEMBER**

Councillor Paterson re-joined the meeting during discussion of the above item.

### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE ROUTE MAP PROGRESS UPDATE**

With reference to Paragraph 10 of the Minute of the Meeting of Scottish Borders Council on 17 June 2021, the Chief Housing and Planning Officer, Ian Aikman, provided an update on the Climate Change Route Map. Transport, Energy and Waste were identified as the first themes of the key priority actions. Potentially significant funding opportunities associated with the UK Government Levelling Up Fund had been identified to support projects across the Transport theme and town centre regeneration which would also support access to local services - thus offering emissions reductions in both domestic energy and local travel. Candidates had been interviewed for the post of Climate Change Officer, however the preferred candidate had chosen not to accept the position. Officers were considering how to proceed, including the modification of the role description and the terms and conditions. This was an area where quite a number of other local authorities and organisations were currently trying to recruit. In terms of carbon literacy training, it was confirmed that 19 people had now received certification. Mr Aikman

further explained that part of the Officer Group was to share best practice and encourage partners to do likewise, so there was mutual support in driving the agenda forward. The current focus was on key things that the Council could do but as we moved forward in the medium/longer term, that focus could shift to a Borders-wide perspective. On the topic of corporate Governance changes, it was noted that John Curry, Director of Infrastructure & Environment was now providing oversight and had helped link key elements together, which had moved the work agenda forward.

**DECISION**

**NOTED the presentation attached as an Appendix to this Minute.**

5. **URGENT BUSINESS**

**Under Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Chairman was of the opinion that the items dealt with in the following paragraphs should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, in view of the need to keep Members informed.**

6. **COP 26 UPDATE**

The Corporate Policy Advisor, Michael Cook, gave an update on matters relating to COP26. He outlined the different zones that would be present at the event: the UN managed blue zone; the UK Government managed green zone and fringe events managed by the Scottish Government. Regarding participation in the event, it was explained that the first application made was for the green zone for the South of Scotland natural capital proposition. COSLA was responsible for co-ordinating a Local Authority application, and that application had been lodged. Unfortunately, the South of Scotland application had been unsuccessful. Mr Cook noted that the application process was opaque and that no feedback had been provided on why applications had not been successful. Given the timeframe, Mr Cook went on to explain that any official participation by SBC was now extremely unlikely. The Chairman thanked the officers involved for their excellent work in preparing the applications on behalf of the Council, expressed his disappointment at the outcome and resolved to participate in any way that technology would allow.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

7. **PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK**

With reference to paragraph 6.2 of the Minute of 4 June 2021, the Chairman advised that the possibility of a pilot to go pesticide-free in Peebles was still being investigated. Officers in Neighbourhood teams were so involved in their day to day work it had not been possible to arrange a meeting yet, but it would hopefully happen over the next few weeks. Covid was still impacting heavily on Council front line services, the provision of which needed to be maintained.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

***The meeting concluded at 12.24 pm***

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# South of Scotland Regional Land Use Pilot - Progress to Date

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Presentation to Scottish Borders Council Sustainable  
Development Committee

Friday 17 September 2021

Minute Item 3



## **Regional Land Use Partnerships - What are they ?**

- **The establishment of Regional Land Use Partnerships is a key element of national land use policy.**
- **The aim of the RLUPs is to identify opportunities for land use change at a regional and landscape level to deliver environmental, socio-economic and climate change goals through the production of a regional Land Use Framework.**
- **To be achieved through partnership working which enables national and local government, land owners, stakeholders and local communities to work together to find ways to optimise land use in a fair and inclusive way.**



## **South of Scotland Regional Land Use Pilot - Why get involved?**

- **Places the Scottish Borders and South of Scotland in the vanguard of a land use initiative, important to the future of the region.**
- **Follow on from the pilot regional land use frameworks work carried out in Scottish Borders in 2013 by Scottish Borders Council.**
- **Complement the work on the Borders Inclusive Growth Deal Natural Capital Programme.**
- **Links to the land use and natural capital aspects of the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy and of the Interim South of Scotland Regional Spatial Strategy.**
- **Supports delivery of Scottish Borders Council policies such as the Scottish Borders Climate Change Route Map.**



## **South of Scotland Regional Land Use Pilot – What was the outcome of the Bid?**

- **Joint bid from Dumfries and Galloway Council, Scottish Borders Council and South of Scotland Enterprise Agency submitted in January 2021**
- **The South of Scotland chosen as one of five pilot Regional Land Use Partnerships in Scotland in April 2021 together with:**
  - **Cairngorms National Park**
  - **Highland Council area**
  - **Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park**
  - **North East Region (Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council areas)**



## **South of Scotland Regional Land Use Pilot - What will it involve?**

- **The first phase of the project up to March 2022 is for the pilot regions to undertake the development of the required governance, and to build the appropriate stakeholder relationships that will enable RLUPs to function.**
- **The second phase from April 2022 to March 2023 is for the RLUP to develop its Regional Land Use Framework (RLUF).**
- **Third and final phase March 2023 onwards - the focus will be on delivering the objectives in the Framework by making collaborative land use change decisions in the South of Scotland. The findings from the monitoring and evaluation of the pilots will inform any future activity of the RLUPs.**



## **South of Scotland Regional Land Use Pilot – How will the project be managed?**

- **Management of project through steering group comprising senior officers from SBC, DGC, SOSE and chaired by the two Councils.**
- **£50,000 allocated by Scottish Government for 2021/22.**
- **Appointment of South of Scotland Regional Land Use Project Manager to carry out Phases 1 and 2.**
- **Scottish Borders Council administering the award, SOSE carrying out appointment process with the two Councils and SOSE employing the project manager.**
- **Appointment process still underway.**

## Sustainable Development Committee

### Climate Change Route Map – Update on Actions

#### 1. Overview

Since the Climate Change Route Map (CCRM) was approved by Council on 17 June the Sustainable Development Core Group has focused activity on assessing priority actions across the 5 themes of the CCRM. An amendment was agreed at the Council meeting June that a priority action plan be prepared and presented to Council by February 2022. Officers have been working to identify priority actions from both the approved CCRM and also from the significant amount of preparatory work which was done prior to the completion of the document.

Pressure of other priorities, for example UK Govt Levelling Up Fund, SoS Regional Economic Strategy, regional Growth Deals, has resulted in additional officer time being focused on these areas.

The commitment made within the 2021-22 Council budget to allocate funding for the establishment of 9 community/engagement/support posts, including a Climate Change Officer, has allowed a recruitment exercise to be undertaken. A preferred candidate was identified, but, unfortunately, decided not to accept the offer of the role. Officers are considering how to proceed, including modifying the role description, the current terms and conditions and re-advertising.

#### 2. Priority Actions

It is proposed that the focus for priority actions over the next 2 years should be on activities which the Council have full or significant control over. These actions will therefore be related to the CCRM themes of Transport (including SBC Fleet), Energy and Waste as the first areas of focus, reflecting the Council's strong direct involvement in these activities. At the same time, Nature-based solutions will be a strong area of initial focus with the Council engaging broadly with partners across the South of Scotland and beyond in responding to land use emissions and biodiversity imperatives through the South of Scotland Regional Land Use Partnership and the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, particularly the Natural Capital Proposition and elements of Destination Tweed.

There are potentially significant funding opportunities associated with the UK Govt Levelling Up Fund to support projects across the **Transport** theme (e.g active travel and passenger transport) and town centre regeneration which would also support access to local services thus offering emissions reductions in both domestic energy and local travel.

Key actions within the **Energy** theme are likely to focus on continued energy efficiency investments with the Council buildings estate and delivery of actions within the Affordable Warmth and Energy Efficiency Strategy. Further strategic energy action will flow from the South of Scotland Enterprise Energy Transition Group and Borderlands Energy Masterplan. Actions under the **Waste** theme will be further prioritised from those identified within the CCRM.

The Council commissioned Keep Scotland Beautiful earlier this year to deliver 2 cohorts of **Carbon Literacy training** to staff. The courses comprise four 1 hour workshops, covering the science and history of anthropogenic climate change, likely impacts for Scotland and the Scottish Borders, possible effects on Council service provision and infrastructure, and how the Council can respond to these challenges. The course is certificated on completion of the modules. The second cohort of training is running currently and will be completed by mid-September when the 2 courses will be assessed by Organisational Development, and proposals developed for a Council programme of training including Elected Members.

### 3. Governance & Engagement

Officers have been strengthening the Council's internal governance structures to support (through delivery of the CCRM) what will be one of the biggest, most complex and longest programmes of activity the Council has been involved in. This activity has involved clarity around our key workstreams of activity, lead officers and the groups of supporting officers vested with taking the workstreams forward.

- **Programme Board** – a programme board structure is being developed to direct the development and implementation of the CCRM. The definition of roles and responsibilities within this structure are currently being identified, the key work streams reflect the Themes within the CCRM. This structure may also form the governance vehicle for the Council's wider commitments to embed and deliver against the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

- **Advisory Group and Citizens Assembly**

The CCRM set out commitments for engagement and oversight of progress towards a 2045 net zero target for the Scottish Borders.

The proposal papers attached have been produced to establish and maintain -

- A high-level **Advisory Group** to provide external oversight and review of the Scottish Borders Climate Change Route Map (CCRM) and to consider additional interventions and actions required to achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2045, or sooner.
- A **Citizens Assembly** as a key engagement tool, a sounding board, and as an integral element of our CCRM governance'. The proposal is to design, develop, facilitate and report on a Citizens' Assembly for the Scottish Borders.

### 4. Net Zero Commission for SOS

South of Scotland Enterprise has proposed that a Net Zero Commission for the South of Scotland is established to drive forward and co-ordinate the transition to net zero.

An initial meeting took place on 18 August with a further meeting likely to be scheduled prior to November's COP26 in Glasgow. The key objective of the Commission is cohering and leveraging the South of Scotland natural capital and transition assets and capabilities into a competitive package to secure inclusive benefit for the region, such as through private investment in net zero initiatives. It is recognised that the field of Climate Action, in particular, is a crowded space, and that in the South of Scotland, as elsewhere, there is a preponderance of initiatives moving at different speeds. SOSE and the two South of Scotland local authorities are due to discuss further the practical aspects of a SOS

Net Zero approach in the context of the respective local authority Climate Change Route Maps. Clearly, partners are determined to marshal their capacities to optimal effect.

## **5. Reporting to Members**

Reporting progress against CCRM commitments and the embedding of the UN Sustainable Development Goals is delivered through the Sustainable Development Committee, which has the primary oversight role in relation to climate action and sustainability issues. However, the SDC does not have decision-making powers, so matters requiring a formal decision by committee are remitted to full Council, or the Council Executive Committee.

At its meeting of 17 June 2021, Council agreed:

- (a) to approve the Climate Change Route Map set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (b) that officers be tasked with producing a plan of priority actions to be undertaken over the next two years; the plan's development to be scrutinised and informed by the Sustainable Development Committee, with a view to reporting back to full Council in February 2022.

The present update represents the first opportunity to update the SDC on progress with the CCRM since the Council meeting of 17 June. It is intended that further updates will be provided to future meetings of the SDC through to reporting back to full Council in February 2022.

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## CLIMATE CHANGE ROUTE MAP

### PROJECT INITIATION/SCOPING OF HIGH LEVEL ADVISORY GROUP

#### 1. PURPOSE OF PROJECT

To establish and maintain a high-level Advisory Group to provide external oversight and review of the Scottish Borders Climate Change Route Map (CCRM) and to consider additional interventions and actions required to achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2045, or sooner.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

The establishment of a high-level Advisory Group is a specific commitment of the CCRM agreed by SBC on 17 June 2021 with the objective of establishing a clear relationship between key regional strategic stakeholders in assuring collaboration and clear and joined up strategic agenda in delivering a pathway to net zero GHG for the Scottish Borders, together with an appropriate programme of adaptation across the local authority area to address the effects of climate change which cannot be mitigated by emissions reduction.

#### 3. PROJECT GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

Scottish Borders Council

Council

Sustainable Development Committee

Community Planning

High-level Advisory Group

Citizens Assembly

It is proposed that the membership of the HLAG shall include: SBC, SOSE, SW, SEPA, Forestry Scotland, Forestry and Land Scotland, Nature Scot, and Historic Environment Scotland, SPEN, Borders College, RSLs, NHS Borders, Chamber of Trade, Citizens Assembly. The chair role and secretariat will be a shared responsibility between members.

#### 4. PROJECT DEFINITION

Scoping of proposal

Identification of members

Preliminary discussion with key partners/members (to include agreement of remit, secretariat arrangements and cycle of meetings)

Secretariat

Inception meeting/agreement of remit

Meetings cycle and dates

#### 5. BUSINESS CASE - Financial and Carbon Savings (Net Zero Pathway)

Detailed financial and carbon savings do not emerge from the establishment of the HLAG itself, but (together with the Citizens Assembly) the HLAG is a critical element of the governance and collaboration across partners which will be needed to deliver both the Council's organisational drive to net zero and the Scottish Borders' drive to net zero as a

region. Within the Council as well as across the region, progress can only be achieved/optimised through shared endeavour and joint action. For example -

- Organisationally, the Council cannot deliver the required outcomes in its estate without co-operation with partners including Scottish Government, Hub SE, and SPEN.
- Regionally, we cannot plot a successful pathway to net zero unless private business and Registered Social Landlords, among others, are party to solutions in housing, or if farmers and landowners, among others, are not central to addressing emissions from land use and sequestration and storage opportunities.

#### 6. PROJECT COSTS

No specific project costs are identified. However, working with partners, the Council will require to support the secretariat necessary to the HLAG providing effective oversight and review of the CCRM. For the Council, it is anticipated that this would be supported through existing establishment, including the new Climate Change Officer. Note adequate clerical/administrative support is essential (please see 8. Risk and Issues).

#### 7. TIMESCALE

Scoping of proposal

Identification of members

Preliminary discussion with key partners/members (to include agreement of remit, secretariat arrangements and cycle of meetings)

- **The above to concluded by 30 October 2021**

Inception meeting/agreement of remit

Secretariat

Meetings cycle and dates

- **Agreement of the above to be concluded by 15 December 2021**

#### 8. RISKS AND ISSUES

- a) That partners do not commit or buy into the HLAG and its intended purpose in co-ordinating and driving a shared approach to a CCRM for the Scottish Borders so that, in short, the governance model and the objective of co-ordinated leadership fails.
- b) That, despite partners nominally participating, the HLAG and its contribution to delivering the CCRM is poorly or insufficiently supported with sub-optimal consequences for progress against the CCRM, for Council progress against its Climate Change responsibilities and with detrimental impacts also on the plans of partners.
- c) That the Council and partners apply insufficient resources to support the secretariat and the essential job of administration and co-ordination which will be needed if the HLAG is to be effective.
- d) That the HLAG is simply ineffective whether through its membership, or its ability to influence and promote action within partner organisations and across the region.

**CLIMATE CHANGE ROUTE MAP****CITIZENS ASSEMBLY – PROJECT INITIATION/SCOPING****1. PURPOSE OF PROJECT**

The Council has committed to the establishment of a Citizens Assembly as a key engagement tool, a sounding board, and as an integral element of our CCRM governance. Our aim is twofold: first, to create a deliberative and collaborative space in which the public inform our climate decisions and policy, and second, to encourage co-governance of our approach, particularly in relation to the just transition to a green economy.

This proposal is to design, develop, facilitate/manage and report on a Citizens' Assembly for the Scottish Borders.

**2. BACKGROUND**

A Citizens Assembly will provide a network for communication, development of good practice, peer support and skills development in both climate change mitigation and adaptation activities. A Citizens Assembly will be the central mechanism for the Council to work collectively with citizens and businesses to secure the actions required to achieve a Net Zero region by 2045. Such a structure will also facilitate the development and delivery of educational and awareness raising campaigns which will help to refocus expectations across the area on a collective response to the climate crisis, which results in fundamental changes in the functioning of partners across the Scottish Borders.

This paper sets out the requirement and justification for the establishment of an Assembly, and provides options and opportunities to ensure the highest quality outputs are achieved to help to address the Council's requirement to establish a broadly based and diverse Citizens' Assembly.

The intention is that an Assembly will bring together representatives from across the area, harnessing the skills, experience and innovation present within our communities to inform and influence the action required for the Scottish Borders to meet the national target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. A fully representative Assembly will encompass the needs, interests and suggestions of individuals and communities.

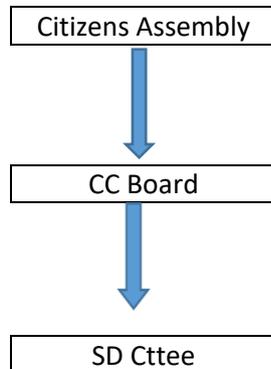
The establishment process for an Assembly will ensure a fully representative body of circa 35-55 citizens, who are geographically, demographically and socially and economically representative of the Scottish Borders population.

The Council already facilitates a 'Peoples Panel' to gauge opinions and circulate information on Council and national and local partner proposals, changes to services, etc. Consideration has been given to the option to use this current panel of around 270 individuals as a Citizens Climate Assembly. However, this option has been discounted because:

- Available data on the makeup of the panel (demography, socio economic profiles, etc.) is very limited and it is unlikely that it would provide a solid basis for a fully representative group
- Use of the panel facility has been very sporadic therefore it is not possible to tell how engaged/responsive members are
- The perceived need is for a new and dynamic structure and the existing structure would therefore be inadequate.

### 3. PROJECT GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

Overall responsibility for the facilitation and management of a Citizens Assembly would sit with the Council, reporting on the activity, issues raised and addressed, proposals, good practice, accessing local opinions and expertise. This would be reported to the Climate Change Board and then to the Sustainable Development Committee.



It also anticipated that representatives of the Assembly will sit on the High Level Advisory Group (HLAG) to be established to provide external oversight and review of the CCRM and to consider additional interventions required to achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2045, or sooner. The scale of representation will be explored in dialogue with the HLAG and the Assembly.

### 4. PROJECT DEFINITION

The proposal is to procure external support for the establishment and facilitation/management of a Citizens Climate Assembly for 12 months. A key output of this work would be to provide a clear set of recommendations for the continued functioning of an effective Assembly, allowing the Council to forward plan and allocate the required resources. Potential external expertise is available from community engagement and communications consultants such as the Community Chartering Network (currently contracted to D&G Council) <https://www.communitychartering.org/>

### 5. BUSINESS CASE

A similar procurement exercise undertaken by Dumfries & Galloway Council recently had a budget allocation of £50k, this is to establish and facilitate a Climate Assembly for 12 months. The D&G commission was set out as *'The appointed Contractor will design, develop, facilitate and report on a Citizens' Panel for Dumfries and Galloway and provide options and opportunities to ensure the highest quality outputs are achieved to help to address the Council's requirement to establish a broad based and diverse Citizens' Panel, which will bring together representatives from across our region, harnessing the skills, experience and innovation our people possess to inform and influence the action we will take as a council'*.

The specification for this has been assessed by SBC officers and it is felt that to undertake a similar process would also incur costs of this level. If external support was not resourced by adequate budget, the establishment and running of an Assembly would require to be done 'in house'. At this point, without the recruitment of a Climate Change Officer, it would not be possible to deliver this piece of work within our current staff capacity.

## 6. PROJECT COSTS

As noted above, the anticipated costs to procure appropriate external support are circa £50,000 for the establishment and running of an Assembly for 12 months, it is proposed that the funding for this is accessed budget availability from delayed recruitments to the suite of Community Empowerment posts.

## 7. TIMESCALE

Proposed timescale to be agreed with Procurement Services –

- Project scoping and specification – early Oct- early Nov 21
- Issue ITT – early Nov 21
- Contract award – late Nov 21
- Project period – Jan-Dec 22 including reporting, assessment, recommendations for next steps.

## 8. RISKS AND ISSUES

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
That ITT is not successful and procurement cannot proceed	Review ITT (using feedback if available) and re-issue
That ITT proceeds but tenders are not of adequate quality or within budget	Review ITT (using feedback if available) and re-issue
That recruitment to and interest in Assembly is insufficient and cannot proceed	Review timescales for project delivery and realign to allow increased focus on recruitment.
That Assembly is established but members are not committed and membership dwindles	Review timescales for project delivery and realign to allow increased focus on induction/ support for Assembly members.
That views and suggestions from Assembly are limited, impractical, or inappropriate	Review project outputs to assess need for altered communications/training for members.
That political commitment to take on board suggestions reduces efficacy and purpose of Assembly	Identify need for increased engagement with local Elected Members.
That the Council and HLAG partners are not fully committed to provide resources to support the functioning of the Assembly and that the influence and opportunity provided by the Assembly is undermined.	Engage support from local Elected Members and senior officials to encourage commitment from partners.

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