

Agenda Item	<b>18</b>
Report No	<b>HC/29/22</b>

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Date:** 22 October 2022

**Report Title:** Draft Terms of Reference – Climate Change Committee

**Report By:** Acting Depute Chief Executive & Executive Chief Officer for Performance and Governance

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report presents the draft terms of reference for the Climate Change Committee.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Discuss and agree the Terms of Reference for the Climate Change Committee.

### 3. Implications

3.1 Resource - There are no resource implications arising from this report. However, it should be recognised that facilitating the successful function of the Climate Change Committee, providing regular update reports and undertaking additional workstreams arising from requests from the Committee will necessarily have resource implications.

3.2 Legal - The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 places a legal duty on the Council to support national efforts to tackle climate change. The Climate Change Committee will have a critical role in supporting and scrutinising the Council's performance in this regard.

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)/Island – There are no community or island implications arising from this report.

3.4 Climate Change/Carbon CLEVER – There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report. However, in undertaking the functions set out in the proposed Terms of Reference, the Climate Change Committee will be expected to make a positive contribution to reducing the Council's climate change impacts.

3.5 Risk – Given increasing public awareness of the issues around the climate and ecological

emergency, there is a potential reputational risk to the Council from not being seen to be delivering climate and ecological action at a sufficient pace.

3.6 Gaelic – There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

#### **4. Background**

4.1 At the meeting of The Highland Council on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022, it was agreed to establish a Climate Change Committee. This was in recognition of the strategic significance of the climate and ecological emergency on a Highland, national and international level.

4.2 This paper presents a draft Terms of Reference document for the Climate Change Committee, setting out the scope of its functions and activities.

#### **5. Overview**

5.1 The Terms of Reference, which can be found at **Appendix 1**, have been framed in a way to provide Members of the Climate Change Panel with a clear understanding of their role in moving forward the climate change agenda at The Highland Council.

5.2 At a recent workshop meeting of the Climate Change Committee the draft Terms of Reference were approved by Members of the Committee. Members are therefore asked to formally approve the Terms of Reference.

Designation: Acting Depute Chief Executive & Executive Chief Officer for Performance and Governance

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022

## Climate Change Committee

### 1. General

1.1 To provide advice and guidance on the climate, ecological and environmental sustainability agenda, and identify, support and champion climate and ecological progress across the Council whilst providing an appropriate level of critical challenge for the organisation.

### 2. Specific

2.1 Public Bodies Climate Reporting Duties - As set out in The Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020 including emissions baselining and monitoring.

2.2 Oversight, on the Net Zero Strategy, Action Plan and Programme, including setting and scrutiny of performance targets relating to the following Programme workstreams

- Built Estate and Energy/Asset Management
- Social Housing (HRA)
- Fleet, Staff Travel
- Waste and Circular Economy
- Procurement and Community Wealth Building
- Planning, Land Use and Environment
- Capital Programme
- Net Zero Funding Strategy

2.3 Responses to external policies and consultations.

2.4 Policy considerations and project progress and achievements in relation to climate and environmental related matters such as Just Transition, Adaptation, Land Reform, Food Growing and Land Use, Biodiversity etc

2.5 To support and champion Highland's high quality environment, air, land, water, food products and renewable energy resources to bring appropriate commercial opportunities, maximise income whilst raising awareness of the need to protect and enhance our critical environmental assets

2.6 Review and monitoring of climate impact of Council policies.

2.7 Oversight of internal and external communication and engagement, and partnership building in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

2.8 Promotion of Climate Change and Ecological issues and actions through the delivery of presentations at committee and oversight of development of internal and external facing events.

To consider and make recommendations to The Highland Council and / or any other appropriate strategic committee in relation to these matters, including any proposed changes or developments to Highland Council policy & strategy.

### **Membership**

Membership of the Committee will be agreed by The Highland Council. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee will be decided by the Highland Council.

### **Governance**

Committee minutes will be reported to Full Council.

### **Powers and Duties Delegated to the Committee**

All of the powers and duties detailed above other than those specifically reserved under Part 1 of the Scheme and those otherwise fully delegated to Strategic Committees.