

ANGUS COUNCIL

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ANGUS SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT 2023

REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, DIRECTOR OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

ABSTRACT

This report provides an update on the progress and implementation of the Angus Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) which is subject to a full review every two years.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Council:

- (i) Note the content of this report on the ongoing work to update progress on SECAP delivery and support the ongoing development of the SECAP steering group via elected member representation.
- (ii) Agree the content of the SECAP progress report for circulation to members of the SECAP steering group; and
- (iii) Note that the SECAP steering group will produce a second phase delivery programme agreed by its members with progress being reported to committee in 2024 as part of the next SECAP progress report.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

- 2.1 Delivery of projects and initiatives from this report will contribute to the following priorities in the Angus Council Plan 2023-2028:

Caring for our Place

- Take action to mitigate against climate change by delivering our Transition to Net Zero Action Plan 2022 to 2030 and leading on the delivery of a Sustainable Energy Climate Action Plan (SECAP) for Angus to reduce area wide emissions.
- Deliver efficient waste services and encourage more recycling and cleaner streets.
- Enhance and restore Angus Biodiversity, corporately and with a range of stakeholders.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In September 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency which recognised the impact of climate change on communities within Angus happening now and in the future. In response to the evolving climate emergency, the Council published a [Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan](#) in October 2021, which outlined actions across a variety of sectors, and involved stakeholders and partners from across the region in its development.
- 3.2 The purpose of SECAP is to support the commitment to sustainable development, environmental management, and the transition to a low carbon economy within Angus. SECAP provides a roadmap demonstrating how carbon emissions can be reduced and resilience of Angus as a region can be increased, whilst at the same time capitalising on the significant economic opportunities offered by a low carbon economy.

- 3.3 After the publication of the SECAP Progress report, contained in Appendix 1 to this report, a full review of the actions will take place, which will evaluate the implementation of those actions and identify remedial actions, or new actions, that need to be taken in order to achieve targets set out in SECAP. This will ensure that the SECAP fully considers and reflects changes to evolving technology, market conditions and environmental concerns.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The following provides a summary of the progress on the existing activity to date, within the four key strands of SECAP. More detailed information can be found in the 2023 progress report contained in Appendix 1 to this report.

SECAP co-ordinator

- 4.2 The SECAP outlines the need to employ a co-ordinator in order to ensure effective delivery of the actions contained in the plan, reiterated in [Report 285/21](#), approved by the Council on 9th September 2021.
- 4.3 As a result of an unsuccessful recruitment process, a review of the post was undertaken and the role transitioned into recruiting for a Project Officer – Climate Change with responsibility for SECAP. It was considered that the main leadership and management requirements of the Co-ordinator post could be undertaken by the Team Leader – Environment and Climate Change with the remainder of the duties fulfilled by a project officer role.
- 4.4 This role of Project Officer – Climate Change was successfully filled, and the officer started in January 2023 with responsibility for reviewing and monitoring SECAP progress.

SECAP Steering Group

- 4.5 SECAP requires good governance to ensure effective implementation and delivery. Central to this approach is the establishment of a SECAP Steering Group. The objective of the SECAP steering group is to monitor delivery of the plan and supporting actions carried out within Angus to deliver emissions reductions across various sectors, including within communities, businesses, domestic and non-domestic buildings. The group will meet quarterly and deliver on the vision of the SECAP as provided below:

'By 2030, Angus will be a major contributor to achieving Scotland's national climate change goals, and a leader in clean growth, environmental stewardship and sustainable communities.'

- 4.6 The first SECAP steering meeting took place on the 5th of September at Webster Memorial Theatre Arbroath. 26 attendees were present at this initial meeting including representation from 18 key partners listed within the SECAP across the action areas of Buildings, Transport, Land Use & Forestry, Agriculture & Food, Waste and Governance & Process.
- 4.7 Next steps following this meeting included the appointment of a Chair and Terms of Reference for the group. During the first steering group meeting attendees were invited to submit an 'expression of interest' to fulfil the role of Chair.

Community Climate Engagement

- 4.8 A series of Climate Change engagement events were organised by the Scottish Community Climate Action Network (SCCAN) and the Council's Planning and Sustainable Growth Service, which took place in Forfar, Brechin and Arbroath. The events aimed to engage with and listen to members of the public about climate change and find new ways to collaborate on addressing the climate crisis. A number of solutions were raised across all sessions, including the need for improved public transport and active travel routes within Angus. There was also a desire to learn from other regions in Scotland to implement community energy projects distributing locally generated electricity.

- 4.9 Alongside the engagement events detailed above, the Planning and Sustainable Growth Service are developing a Climate Change Story Map which will include community groups and ongoing community projects in the region. This will enable an online representation of community environmental activity in the region and there will be an option for communities to add any new projects or groups.

SECAP initial work programme

- 4.10 SECAP sets out a long list of deliverable actions, involving key partners across the 6 priority action areas: Buildings; Energy; Transport; Land Use & Forestry; Agriculture & Food, Waste, Governance & Process.
- 4.11 The SECAP initial work programme was developed and designed to enable the Council and partners to implement immediate actions involving 13 priority projects across the majority of the SECAP themes. This shortlist of priority projects was informed by consultation with key stakeholders within the Council, combined with learnings from best practice elsewhere. These projects were specifically prioritised to build and add value to existing Council plans (across all departments), by filling delivery gaps and joining-up resources to support Council commitments to sustainable development, environmental management, and a low carbon economy.
- 4.12 The activities in the SECAP initial work programme have received updates and are outlined in the SECAP Progress Report 2023, contained within Appendix 1.

5. SECAP PROGRESS REPORT

- 5.1 A 2023 SECAP Progress Report has been prepared and is attached as Appendix 1 of this report. The progress report gives an update on SECAP actions from publication in October 2021 to the present, including more detail on the four key strands of action outlined above.
- 5.2 Members should therefore note the content of this report on the ongoing work to update progress on SECAP delivery and continue to support the ongoing development of the SECAP steering group. Members should also note that the SECAP steering group will produce a further delivery programme agreed by its members, of which, progress on that delivery programme will be reported to committee as part of the next SECAP progress report in 2024.

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Following the publication of this initial SECAP progress report, a full review of the actions will take place in order to reflect the shift in lead action owner from Angus Council to partnership working with external organisations, with these being reported back to Council as part of the next progress report in 2024. This shift is due to the publication of the Transition to Net Zero Action Plan 2022 – 2030 which focuses on internal organisational emission reductions.
- 6.2 At the first steering group meeting in September 2023, a call for expressions of interest was raised in order to appoint a Chair. Steering group members have been invited to submit a notice of interest to become Chair and a nomination process will be undertaken.
- 6.3 Prior to and during the initial meeting, information was gathered from key partners about their organisational sustainability priorities and ongoing work within the region. This information will aid the creation of a Terms of Reference for the group which will outline aims and objectives going forward.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The SECAP steering group facilitation, ongoing monitoring of the document, and community engagement will be met from existing budgets.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 A screening Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached to this report.

NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

[Report No 242/20](#) – Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) Update

[Report No 337/21](#) – Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) & Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

[Report No 118/23](#) – Appointment of Elected Members to the Sustainable Energy & Climate Action Plan Steering Group

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Angus Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan: Progress Report (2023)