LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

AGENDA

4th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5)

Wednesday 1 February 2017

The Committee will meet at 9.30 am in the James Clerk Maxwell Room (CR4).

1. **The draft Climate Change Plan (RPP3):** The Committee will take evidence from—
   
   Chris Wood-Gee, Steering Group Chair, Sustainable Scotland Network;
   
   Philip Revell, Projects Co-ordinator, Sustaining Dunbar;
   
   Craig McLaren, Director, RTPI Scotland.

2. **The Scottish Social Housing Charter:** The Committee will take evidence from—
   
   Hugh McClung, Regional Network of Registered Tenants Organisations;
   
   Christine MacLeod, Director of Regulation, Scottish Housing Regulator;
   
   Alan Stokes, Policy Lead, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations;
   
   Gordon Campbell, Board Member, Tenant Participation Advisory Service Scotland;
   
   Tony Cain, Policy Manager, Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers;

   and then from—

   Kevin Stewart, Minister for Local Government and Housing, Michael Boal, Social Housing Charter and Regulation Manager, and William Fleming, Head of Housing Services Policy Unit, Scottish Government.

3. **The Scottish Social Housing Charter:** Kevin Stewart (Minister for Local Government and Housing) to move—
4. **Consideration of Evidence (in private):** The Committee will consider the evidence heard at agenda item 1.

5. **Consideration of Evidence (in private):** The Committee will consider the evidence heard at agenda item 2.

6. **Work programme (in private):** The Committee will consider its work programme.

Clare Hawthorne  
Clerk to the Local Government and Communities Committee  
Room T3.60  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
Tel: 0131 348 5232  
Email: Clare.Hawthorne@parliament.scot
The papers for this meeting are as follows—

**Agenda item 1**

Note by the Clerk

PRIVATE PAPER

LGC/S5/17/4/1

**Agenda item 2**

Note by the Clerk

PRIVATE PAPER

LGC/S5/17/4/3

**Agenda item 6**

PRIVATE PAPER

LGC/S5/17/4/5 (P)
Local Government and Communities Committee

4th Meeting 2017 (Session 5), Wednesday 1 February 2017

The Draft Climate Change Plan (Report on Polices and Proposals 3) – Note by the Clerk

Purpose

1. This paper provides background information on the Committee's evidence sessions on the Draft Climate Change Plan (Report on Polices and Proposals 3).

Background

2. The Scottish Government's draft Climate Change Plan was laid in the Parliament on 19 January 2017. Under the provisions of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Parliament has a maximum of 60 days to report on the document. Four parliamentary Committees have identified an interest in scrutinising the draft report: The Local Government and Communities Committee, the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee, the Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee and the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committees. Each Committee will separately consider the elements of the Report within their remit and will report directly to Parliament.

Local Government and Communities Committee consideration

3. The Local Government and Communities Committee will focus its scrutiny on:
   - Local Government and Communities;
   - Planning; and
   - Housing.

4. The Committee is seeking views on the Plan in relation to the above areas and issued a call for evidence on 19 January which will run until 10 February 2017. The Call for evidence can be accessed here:

   http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/103066.aspx

5. At its meeting on 1 February, the Committee will take oral evidence from stakeholders in relation to Local Government and Planning. Scottish Parliament’s Information Centre (SPICe) has produced a briefing summarising key areas of the draft Climate Change Plan and highlighting parts of the plan in
relation to local government and communities and planning. This is attached at Annexe A.

6. Sustaining Dunbar has produced a written submission for this meeting and is attached at Annexe B.

Next Steps

7. At its meeting on 8 February, the Committee will take oral evidence from a number of stakeholders in relation to Housing, before hearing from the Minister for Local Government and housing at its meeting on 22 February.
Local Government and Communities Committee

4th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5), Wednesday 1 February 2017

Draft Climate Change Plan (Report on Polices and Proposals 3)

Background

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act, RPP1 and RPP2

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 set statutory targets for emissions reductions in Scotland, from baselines of 1990 or 1995 levels for key greenhouse gases. These targets are:

- at least a 42% reduction by 2020;
- least an 80% reduction by 2050.

The 2009 Act further requires the Scottish Government to periodically produce a plan outlining how it will hit the climate change emissions reduction targets. Such plans are required after the Parliament has approved batches of annual targets, and should contribute to meeting the overarching 2020 and 2050 targets. The Scottish Parliament approved the third batch of annual targets covering 2028-2032 in October 2016.

After each batch of annual targets have been set the Scottish Government produce a report on proposals on policies (RPP) that sets out how the Scottish Government intends to meet its climate change targets.

In 2011 RPP1 was published, and in 2013 RPP2 was published.

Progress reducing emissions to date

According to the most recent figures Scotland’s greenhouse gas emissions, adjusted to take account of the EU Emissions Trading System \(^1\) were 45.8% lower in 2014 than 1990. However Scotland missed the annual emission targets for 2010-2013 but met the 2014 annual target.

In their most recent progress report the UK Committee on Climate Change (CCC 2016) stated that:

---

\(^1\) The EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) covers power stations and energy-intensive industries.
'The fall in emissions was largely due to a fall Scotland's share of the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) and warmer than average winter temperatures reducing the demand for heating in buildings. However, a part of the reduction was from domestic action. The Scottish Government are on track to meet their 2020 target.'

Figure 1 highlights changes in emissions by sector over the period 1990 to 2014. The scale of emission cuts over the period 1990 to 2014 vary by sector. Emissions cuts from the waste sector of 77% and 39% from the energy sector contrast with reductions of less than 3% from the transport sector and 25% from the agriculture and land use sector.

In their 2016 progress report the CCC suggest that more action will be required to meet the targets beyond 2020:

‘To meet high ambition and tighter targets beyond 2020 much more will be required: Whilst emissions have fallen by an average of 3.3% per year since 2009, this has been mostly due to progress in the power sector with reduced coal and expanded renewable generation. There has been little progress in reducing emissions from transport and agriculture and land use, and there is much further to go for renewable heat uptake’

The Draft Climate Change Plan


The document describes:

- Scotland’s emission reduction pathway to 2032
- the approach that has been used to allocate emission budgets across different sectors of the economy
- details of policies, milestones and proposals for each sector
• differences in approach between RPP1, RPP2 and the draft Climate Change Plan
• the response to compensating for excess emissions in the period from 2010-2014
• progress by sector since RPP2.
• the planned approach to monitoring and evaluation

Alongside the Draft Climate Change Plan the Scottish Government also published the following accompanying documents that explore some of the wider benefits of action to cut emissions in specific sectors:

• **Evidence Review of the Potential Wider Impacts of Climate Change Mitigation Options: Built Environment Sector**
• **Evidence Review of the Potential Wider Impacts of Climate Change Mitigation Options: Transport Sector**
• **Evidence review of the Potential Wider Impacts of Climate change Mitigation Options: Agriculture, Forestry, Land use and Waste sectors.**

**The Draft Climate Change Plan**

**Approach and ambition**

The Scottish Government commissioned a model based on a modelling approach developed by the International Energy Agency (IEA). The model is referred to as TIMES and is designed to model the energy system within an economy. Combining technical engineering and economic considerations enables the model to identify the most cost effective path to meet Scotland's climate change targets. The path provides ‘carbon envelopes’ for each sector and measures that would enable emissions within each sector to be constrained within these envelopes (for example the introduction of new energy technologies or take up of electric vehicles). Policies and proposals are then developed to enable these measures to be delivered.

Within each sector the plan describes policy outcomes, policies, policy development milestones and proposals. The document explains these terms as follows:

**Policy outcome**: ‘a measure of change on the ground, resulting from a policy or combination of related policies. An example policy outcome from land use would be the commitment to support an increase in the annual rate of peatland restoration from 10,000 hectares to 20,000 hectares per year.’

**Policy**: ‘a committed course of action which has been wholly decided upon, and to which a policy outcome can be attributed to with a reasonable level of confidence. The land use policies of providing sufficient finance to fund at least 20,000 hectares of peatland restoration per year from 2018/19, and to provide training in peatland restoration, both contribute to the realisation of the policy outcome of 20,000 hectares of peatland restoration per annum.’
Policy development milestone: ‘a government action which is needed to progress or develop a final policy that will reduce emissions in a particular sector. For example, a commitment to consult on the introduction of emission reducing regulations would be considered a policy development milestone. It is not possible to confidently attribute any contribution to policy outcomes from a policy development milestone, although it is a committed course of action indicating a clear intention.’

Proposal: ‘a suggested course of action or exploratory action, the details of which might change as this course of action is explored further. It is not possible to confidently attribute the realisation of a policy outcome to a proposal until it is converted to a policy.’

Structure – pathways and sector envelopes

Based on the TIMES model the Climate Change Plan sets out an emissions pathway to 2032 (Figure 2), how this breaks down by sector and suggests policy outcomes that would need to be achieved to keep within the sector carbon envelopes. The pathway is equivalent to a 66% cut in Scotland’s emissions since 1990 (and a 39% reduction over the period 2017-2032).

Figure 2 Emission reduction pathways 2017-2032

The planned emission reductions by sector over the period 2017-2032 vary considerably and are summarised in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Emissions change 2017-2032</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>-12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>-120%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste</td>
<td>-71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transport | -31%
Residential | -76%
Services | -96%
Land use/land use change & forestry | +139%**
Total | -39%

* The pathway describes a wholly decarbonised electricity system by 2030 and states that ‘from the late 2020s, Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), along with gas from plant material and biomass waste, has the potential to remove CO2 from the atmosphere (i.e. negative emissions).’

** The pathway describes the land use/land change and forestry sector switching from being a net sink of emissions to being a net source (as a result of a decline in the rate of woodland creation over the past 40 years and conifer plantations established in the mid-20th century being felled and replanted.

The plan describes the modelling approach used to develop the overall, and sector, emission pathway:

‘By constraining TIMES with the annual emission reduction targets, the model helps us understand least-cost ways of achieving emission reductions by assessing how effort is best shared across the economy, taking account of both individual sectors and how those sectors interact.’

The plan does not provide further information on how the emission envelopes by sector were arrived at. However the document also states that other considerations were also used to ‘constrain’ the model and in this way guide the outputs produced by the model:

‘While TIMES is a powerful tool for considering the implications of changes in the energy system on emissions it is simply a guide rather than a predictor of the future. As such an important part of the modelling process has been engagement with sector experts and consideration of the wider consequences of particular pathways….This engagement was carried out via both analytical working groups and the Senior Suppliers Group of government officials. As a result of this engagement a number of delivery considerations were identified which resulted in additional constraints being placed on the model.’

The plan provides the following graphical representation of this process:
The draft Climate Change Plan does not provide any details of the constraints that were placed on the model following the engagement described above, or any particular policy outcomes that were rejected in various iterations.

**Key assumptions**

The draft Plan relies on a range of assumptions and ambitious rates of change across many sectors. These include

- The role of EU policy measures. Seven policies in the draft plan refer to EU policy to support implementation.

- The complete decarbonisation of the electricity sector by 2027, and a reliance on carbon capture and storage and energy generation from material/biomass to secure this.

- The operation of technologies such as carbon capture and the injection of hydrogen into the gas grid to secure emission reductions from the industrial sector.

- 80% of domestic buildings’ heat supplied using low carbon heat by 2032 (and 18% by 2020). Currently 79% of households use mains (natural) gas as their heating fuel, 12% of households use electric heating, 7% oil.

- A 50% increase in the area of woodland planted each year from the current target of 10,000 ha to 15,000 ha by 2025. In 2015 the woodland planting rate was 7,600 ha.

- 40% of new car sales being ultra-low emission cars each year by 2032, and this includes an assumption that the proportion of new car sales that were ultra-low emission in 2016 will more than double by 2017 (from a current rate of c.1.2% in 2016 to 2.5% in 2017).
Monitoring and evaluation

The draft Climate Change Plan does not include a completed monitoring and evaluation framework, however Chapter 6 of the plan describes the proposed approach. According to the plan this will include:

- Monitoring progress on policy implementation, policy outputs and the development of proposals.
- Developing polices that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time limited (SMART).
- Maintaining information online and publishing a summary report each year from 2018 onwards.

The draft plan states that ‘We will continue to develop the monitoring framework and intend to publish an update alongside the final Climate Change Plan later in 2017. The final version will be published in 2018, from when we plan to publish annual summary monitoring reports.’

Planning

The Climate Change Plan includes just one page on the role of the planning system in meeting emissions reductions targets, this states that:

“Ensuring the planning system supports decarbonisation is another essential element of the Scottish Government’s approach to meeting the statutory climate change targets. Because development allowed today will be around for decades or maybe hundreds of years the most important decision the planning system makes is where that development should be built.”

It goes on to list policies set out in the National Planning Framework for Scotland 3, Scottish Planning Policy and Creating Places (the three main Scottish Government planning policy documents) which aim to minimise greenhouse gas emissions from new development, which are identified as:

- a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development
- support for the transition to a low carbon economy
- that we build high quality places that are resource efficient
- that we build in town centres and on previously used land first
- there should be a mix of development in town centres so people can live, shop, work and play there
- travel opportunities should prioritise walking and cycling before public transport and cars
- the development of a wide range of electricity generation from renewable sources is supported, with a plan in place for where wind farms could go
- support for the development of heat networks in as many locations as possible
that there is no need to make a planning application for a range of small scale renewable energy technologies like solar panels and heat pumps, so they can be installed quickly

The Scottish Government published Places, People and Planning, the planning white paper, on 10 January 2017.

The white paper focuses on four key areas, which the Scottish Government summarises as follows:

1. **Making plans for the future.** We want Scotland’s planning system to lead and inspire change by making clear plans for the future. To achieve this, we can simplify and strengthen development planning.

2. **People make the system work.** We want Scotland’s planning system to empower people to have more influence on the future of their places. To achieve this, we can improve the way we involve people in the planning process.

3. **Building more homes and delivering infrastructure:** We want Scotland’s planning system to help deliver more high quality homes and create better places where people can live healthy lives and developers are inspired to invest. To achieve this, planning can actively enable and co-ordinate development.

4. **Stronger leadership and smarter resourcing:** We want to reduce bureaucracy and improve resources so Scotland’s planning system can focus on creating great places. To achieve this, we can remove processes that do not add value, and strengthen leadership, resources and skills.

The white paper emphasises that developments should “…set out a vision for places which are low carbon and resilient to the future impacts of climate change.” That the National Planning Framework will be influenced by the Climate Change Plan and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and recognises that island communities are at particular risk from climate change impacts.

The white paper also proposes extending permitted development rights (i.e. categories of development which are automatically deemed to have planning permission) to development which helps to meet commitments to reducing emissions that cause climate change, e.g. different types of microgeneration equipment; installations supporting renewable heat networks; cycle networks, parking and storage; and facilities to support low carbon and electric vehicles.

The white paper proposes repealing Section 72 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, which inserted a new section into the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. This new section (3F), is reproduced below:

“**3F Greenhouse gas emissions policies**

A planning authority, in any local development plan prepared by them, must include policies requiring all developments in the local development plan area to be designed so as to ensure that all new buildings avoid a specified and rising proportion of the projected greenhouse gas emissions from their use,
calculated on the basis of the approved design and plans for the specific development, through the installation and operation of low and zero-carbon generating technologies.”.

The white paper states that “An independent study recently found no evidence that there is any added value from this requirement – instead, building standards are driving down emissions”. The Scottish Government’s Sixth Annual Report on the Operation of Section 72 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 – published on 22 March 2016, concludes that:

“10.4. As required by Section 73(2) of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act, we conclude that this assessment, does not clearly indicate that Section 3F is no longer required at this time, nor does it demonstrate that there are significant benefits for meeting our climate change targets. On that basis, the Scottish Government has concluded that the legislation should remain in force.”

Local Government and Communities

The role of Local Government and Communities in delivering the Climate Change Plan

The plan recognises that, amongst others, local government and communities have important roles to play in achieving the emission targets:

‘… the Scottish Government cannot, and should not, attempt to meet the ambitious emissions reductions targets on its own. Local government, other public bodies, the private sector, the third sector, and communities and households all have important roles to play.’

Local Government

The plan highlights the work that local authorities have undertaken to date to support action on climate change, referring to the Scottish Climate Change Declaration and the duties that the Climate Change (Scotland) 2009 Act place on local authorities.

Section 44 of the Act requires a public body to act ‘in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of the targets set in or under…this Act’

In many parts of the plan the document refers to local authorities as one of the partners involved in the delivery of specific policies and proposals. Examples include:

- supporting the implementation of Home Energy Efficiency Programmes
- increasing the uptake of low emission/electric vehicles
- delivering waste reduction, recycling and landfill diversion targets

The plan also refers to the wider influence that local authorities have in influencing individuals and communities:

‘…However, it is not only with regards to directly attributable emissions that councils have played their part. The work of local authorities affects all sectors
of Scottish society, and influences individuals and communities across the country.'

In the plan the Scottish Government state that:

‘Over the course of this Plan and beyond, the Scottish Government will continue to work with local government to empower councils to meet local challenges so that they can continue to make a valued contribution to Scottish targets, policies and proposals.’

Communities

The Climate Change Plan refers to the need to secure widespread support and ownership:

‘Most importantly, the outcomes and associated actions in the CCP must be supported and owned by the people of Scotland. We know that the majority of people don’t discuss climate change on a regular basis although many are actively involved in climate friendly behaviours at home, work or in their communities. However, in implementing this Plan, we will touch on the lives of everyone in Scotland: on the way we travel and move our goods around; the way we heat our homes and buildings; the way we manage our land and produce food; the jobs and training opportunities to which we will have access; the new energy infrastructure we will need…’

In relation to the role that communities play in supporting actions to cut emissions the plan states that:

‘We have been encouraging communities in Scotland to talk about these issues in a number of different ways – through the Climate Challenge Fund and the Climate Conversations to name just two.’

In their submission Sustaining Dunbar state that while many people would be willing to take actions to cut emissions they face barriers in doing so:

‘Our experience in Dunbar and District is that most people would be very happy to make many of the lifestyle changes required to reduce their household carbon footprint. However, they still face many barriers, as well as perverse incentives and mixed messages that discourage change.

During the development of the plan the Scottish Community Alliance set out their views to the Scottish Government in relation to the development of the Climate Change Plan. The new normal: Strengthening the contribution of communities in fighting climate change. In the document they highlight the importance of communities in delivering emission reductions:

‘Communities are the places where the attitudinal and lifestyle changes needed to deliver our ambitious emission reductions targets can be normalised. In order to achieve the necessary buy-in to the process of
decarbonising our country, the potential of our communities to instigate and integrate the 'new normal' needs to be fully harnessed.'

Engagement in the development of the plan

In a [letter](#) to the Scottish Parliament’s Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee in November 2015 the Scottish Government stated their intention to secure widespread participation in the development of the plan, including engaging with community groups:

‘The production of RPP3 is intended to be a wide participative process that builds collective ownership and responsibility. With engagement focused on two key work streams, climate conversations and engagement on potential scenarios, and engaging across a wide range of audiences, including the public, community groups, climate change stakeholders, businesses, the public sector and Scottish Parliament (including MSP’s and parliamentary Committees).’

Annex D of the draft Climate Change Plan sets out how stakeholders were engaged in the development of the plan. The document highlights that this engagement included:

- An interactive seminar on the TIMES model in September 2016
- A cross-sector stakeholder event in December 2016.

The Scottish Community Alliance highlighted their concerns at the limited community engagement in developing the plan:

‘To date, active engagement with communities on this agenda has been limited. We see this as a missed opportunity to capture the energy, enthusiasm and ingenuity that is inherent in all of the places we live.’

The draft Climate Change Plan provides details of the Scottish Government’s broader programme of public engagement work on climate change ‘Climate Conversations’. According to Annex C of the draft plan 178 people participated in 20 conversations across Scotland. The document summarises the key findings from this engagement. According to the document these include the following:

- A general awareness of climate change as an issue and need for action to tackle it.
- A willingness to act on climate change but a desire for more information on it, including the impacts of it and actions they can take
- Popular themes in discussions were local energy and public transport with strong support for improvements in public transport and increased renewable energy generation
- Strong views on the wider benefits, for example for health and wellbeing, of measures to improve energy efficiency and source energy from renewables.
- The importance of a transparent and consistent approach to climate change across government.
The document states that ‘the conversations are continuing through local groups across Scotland’ and that the outcomes of these will feed ‘into policy developments.’

**Implementation and funding**

The Scottish Community Alliance also made a number of recommendations including for the Scottish Government to:

‘Make an explicit statement within the Climate Change Plan committing local and national government to work with the community sector on the co-production and implementation of the Plan.

‘Recognise the contribution that locally led place plans (ref. review of Scotland’s planning system) can play in the identification of key challenges and opportunities that exist within communities to tackle climate change and in shaping what action local people will take in their transition to a low carbon future.’

The plan highlights that the Scottish Government have provided £75.7 million to communities since 2008 through the Climate Challenge Fund.

In their submission to the Committee Sustaining Dunbar suggested while appreciative of funding through the Climate Challenge Fund communities would benefit from a more ‘joined-up’ approach to Government funding:

‘.. together with Scottish Community Alliance, we would welcome a more joined-up approach to Government funding streams to encourage and enable longer-term, more strategic, local climate action focused on long-term transformational change through building community resilience, instead of a narrow focus on short-term projects and quick carbon savings.’

**Dan Barlow (Climate change/local government & communities)**  
**Alan Rehfisch (Planning)**  
*SPICe Research*  
27 January 2017

---

Note: Committee briefing papers are provided by SPICe for the use of Scottish Parliament committees and clerking staff. They provide focused information or respond to specific questions or areas of interest to committees and are not intended to offer comprehensive coverage of a subject area.

The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP [www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk)
Thank you for the opportunity to submit some initial thoughts concerning the recently published draft Climate Change Plan on behalf of Sustaining Dunbar.

Sustaining Dunbar is a Community Development Trust that is also a part of the global ‘Transition Network’ of communities. We believe that how we navigate and manage our transition away from fossil fuel dependence is the greatest challenge of our time.

The challenge that we are facing is one of complex systems change. As our ecological support systems become increasingly stressed and degraded so our social, economic and political systems are becoming less and less fit for purpose, pushed further from equilibrium and liable to sudden, unexpected and unpredictable change.

We need to become skilled at dealing creatively with change and finding the leverage points where we can intervene most effectively to create the sort of future we want.

For most human beings, the most meaningful level of scale at which to understand and engage with systemic change is at the level of community. At this level it becomes much more possible to build the strong, trusting collaborative relationships and the sense of common purpose, agency and connection which enable and support us to identify what needs to change locally and take action together to make that happen.

Successful climate action cannot be delivered purely by top-down direction. Instead, we need to create conditions which support and empower people, groups and institutions to find new ways to collaborate, to design and bring into being new experimental technologies, processes and structures and to then share their learning with others. Our communities need to become resilient enough, not just so as to be able to cope with inevitable forthcoming crises and bounce back to ‘normal’ but to actively engage with creating and shaping the new, locally adapted, low-carbon ‘normal’ that is waiting to emerge.

Sustaining Dunbar’s ‘Local Resilience Action Plan’ produced in 2011, following a two-year community engagement project, was an early attempt to paint a shared vision of the sort of low-carbon future we could create -and the opportunities this could bring to build a better, stronger, more resilient community.

As a member of the Scottish Communities Climate Action Network, we participated in their February 2014 Gathering that produced a shared vision for Scotland, which can be found at [http://www.scottishcommunitiescan.org.uk/vision-for-scotland-2024/](http://www.scottishcommunitiescan.org.uk/vision-for-scotland-2024/).

---

On reflection, we feel this lacks sufficient emphasis on social justice and inclusion, a culture of creativity and innovation and cross-community links and partnerships as vital components of resilient communities.

In November 2016, the Scottish Communities Climate Action Network convened a workshop for other member networks of the Scottish Community Alliance to collate views of the community sector to contribute to the drafting of the Climate Change Plan. This can be found at http://www.scottishcommunitiescan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/SCA-paper-Climate-Change-Plan.pdf. It makes a plea for commitment from local and national government to work with the community sector on the co-production and implementation of the Plan.

Our experience in Dunbar and District is that most people would be very happy to make many of the lifestyle changes required to reduce their household carbon footprint. However, they still face many barriers, as well as perverse incentives and mixed messages that discourage change.

At high level, these include a disconnect from the land and from ‘local’ democracy that creates a sense of disempowerment and lack of control over decisions which have a local impact. There are particular local issues around housing, land prices and lack of affordable (or any) workspace. Perverse incentives include flights being cheaper than trains whilst mixed messages include the Scottish Government’s mantra of ‘sustainable economic growth’.

As an organization we are very grateful for the various Scottish Government Grants, including from Climate Challenge Fund, that we have received to implement a wide range of projects in line with our Local Resilience Action Plan. However, together with Scottish Community Alliance, we would welcome a more joined-up approach to Government funding streams to encourage and enable longer-term, more strategic, local climate action focused on long-term transformational change through building community resilience, instead of a narrow focus on short-term projects and quick carbon savings.

Philip Revell  
Projects Coordinator, Sustaining Dunbar  
January 2017

---

3 This disconnect is explored further in the research paper: Community Resilience and the New Narrative of Community Empowerment in Scotland: http://www.scottishcommunitiescan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Community-Resilience-and-Community-Empowerment-in-Scotland-.pdf
Local Government and Communities Committee

4th Meeting 2017 (Session 5), Wednesday 1 February 2017

The Scottish Social Housing Charter – Note by the Clerk

Purpose

1. This paper provides background information on the Committee’s evidence sessions on the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

Background

2. Part 3 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 (‘the 2010 Act’) introduced the Scottish Social Housing Charter (‘the Charter’). The Act requires Scottish Ministers to set out the standards and outcomes that social landlords should achieve for their tenants and other customers.

3. The current Charter, which has been in place since April 2012, has 16 standards and outcomes. In 2011, the Scottish Government undertook an extensive programme of work to develop the charter including the establishment of a sounding board, initial consultation and a discussion paper involving key bodies, a dedicated website and series of roadshows.

4. The Scottish Housing Regulator is responsible for monitoring and reporting on landlords’ performance in achieving the outcomes and standards in the Charter. Every social landlord submits an Annual Return on the Charter which details performance against a range of key performance indicators. The Scottish Housing Regulator publishes reports about each landlord’s performance against the Charter and a national report on the Charter.

5. The 2010 Act (s33) requires Scottish Ministers to review the Charter from time to time. The Scottish Government undertook a consultation on the charter outcomes in the summer of 2016. In addition, the Scottish Government held 12 events to seek the views of tenants and landlords across Scotland. An analysis of consultation responses reported that,

   “…views on the current Charter were generally positive with the majority of respondents largely in favour of keeping the current outcomes and standards unchanged.”

6. The Scottish Government laid the revised Charter with the Parliament on 19 January 2017 and a copy can be found at the link below:
Local Government and Communities Committee consideration and procedure

7. Whilst not a Scottish Statutory Instrument, the Act requires that the Charter is submitted to the Scottish Parliament for consideration and approval through the affirmative procedure. It is therefore for the Local Government and Communities Committee to recommend to the Parliament whether the draft Charter should be approved.

8. The Minister for Local Government and Housing has, by motion S5M-03695 (set out in the agenda) proposed that the Committee should recommend the approval of the Charter. The Minister will attend in order to speak to and move the motion. Ahead of the formal debate (as part of an earlier agenda item), there will be an opportunity for members to ask questions of the Minister and his officials on the Charter.

9. At the end of the debate, the Committee must decide whether or not to agree the motion, and then report to Parliament accordingly. Such a report need only be a short statement of the Committee’s recommendations.

Next Steps

10. At its meeting on 1 February, the Committee will take oral evidence from a range of stakeholders to inform its questioning of the Minister for Local Government and Housing, following the stakeholder session.

11. The Scottish Housing Regulator and Scottish Federation of Housing Associations have provided written submissions for this meeting and these are attached at Annex A to this paper.
Written Submission from the Scottish Housing Regulator

I have attached four papers for written submission. The papers are the three national reports on the Scottish Social Housing Charter we have published and also our recent report on performance against the Charter during the last three years that we produced in November 2016 to help the Scottish Government in its review of the Charter. All the reports are available on our website at the following links:

- 1st National Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- 2nd National Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- 3rd National Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Report on Performance Against the Scottish Social Housing Charter 2013 - 2016

Roisin Harris
Corporate Governance Manager
Written Submission from the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations

1. Who are we

1.1. The Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) leads, represents and supports Scotland’s housing associations and cooperatives. We want to see a thriving housing association and co-operative sector providing sustainable and affordable homes.

2. SFHA Response to Charter Review

2.1. The SFHA welcomes this opportunity to provide evidence to the Local Government and Communities Committee regarding the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

2.2. In our response to the Scottish Government consultation regarding the Scottish Social Housing Charter review, SFHA highlighted that it did not support substantial changes to the Scottish Social Housing Charter at this time. Since the Charter’s inception, each RSL in Scotland has to date submitted just three Annual Returns on the Charter (ARC) to the Scottish Housing Regulator – meaning that only now are we beginning to see the possibility of meaningful benchmarking and comparisons year on year based on this data. A good example of such analysis is demonstrated by the Scottish Housing Regulator’s report\(^1\) in November 2016 looking at landlords’ performance against the Charter from 2013-2016, which showed 91% overall tenant satisfaction in RSLs for 2015/16 and strong overall performance over the three year period.

2.3. The SFHA therefore supports the suggested approach detailed in the Minister for Local Government and Housing’s letter to the Committee of 11 January 2017 – which indicates only minor amendments to the wording of the Charter. In the SFHA’s view, radically altering the charter so early into its existence would not be giving it adequate time to yield demonstrable results.

2.4. The Charter enables tenants to compare the performance of registered social landlords (RSLs) and serves as a useful tool for landlords to benchmark and identify potential areas for improvement. The Charter provides a useful focus for tenant participation and scrutiny within RSLs, and annual reporting by landlords to tenants on their performance against the Charter outcomes has been well received.

2.5. In our consultation response, SFHA suggested some specific minor amendments. We are pleased to note that some of these have been incorporated in

\(^1\) Scottish Housing Regulator (Nov 2016) Landlords’ Performance Against the Scottish Social Housing Charter 2013-2016 available [here](#)
the final draft – particularly adding in reference to the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) under Outcome 4 (Quality of Housing) and acknowledging partnership working with other organisations under Outcome 11 (Tenancy Sustainment).

2.6 Upon conclusion of the Charter review, the Scottish Housing Regulator will review its indicators and technical guidance\(^2\) for measuring and reporting on Charter performance. SFHA will gather member views in order to feed into this process.

\(^2\) Scottish Housing Regulator (Apr 2016) Social Housing Charter Revised Technical Guidance available [here](#)