



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

# Sustainable Development

7 October 2021

Reference: SPCB (2021) Paper 62

## Executive summary

1. This paper invites the SPCB to sign off the Annual Sustainable Development Report for publication. The Session 6 plan for Sustainable Development is also shared for discussion. The SPCB is asked to approve:
  - Annual Sustainable Development Report for publication
  - The Climate Change and Sustainable Development Plan for Session 6
  - The Scottish Parliament has the ambition to be Net Zero by 2030, with a public announcement planned as part of COP26
  - The Carbon Management plan for session 6
  - Route maps for Scope 3, Circular Economy and Biodiversity

## Issues and Options

### Annual Report

1. The SPCB is asked to review the Annual Sustainable Development report. This years' report is the final report against our currently published targets.
2. We are pleased to confirm that the targets set in 2013 have been met, including the carbon reduction target of 56% against our 2005/2006 baseline. Of course, the restrictions put in place due to the pandemic resulted in an energy saving and we are cognisant that our actual outturn on 68% reduction in carbon is a false achievement. However, our tracking does demonstrate that we were on track to achieve 56% without the savings brought about by the pandemic restrictions.
3. The SPCB has made great achievements in reaching its target of reducing carbon. However, as this target comes to an end, the SPCB must now decide on future targets.

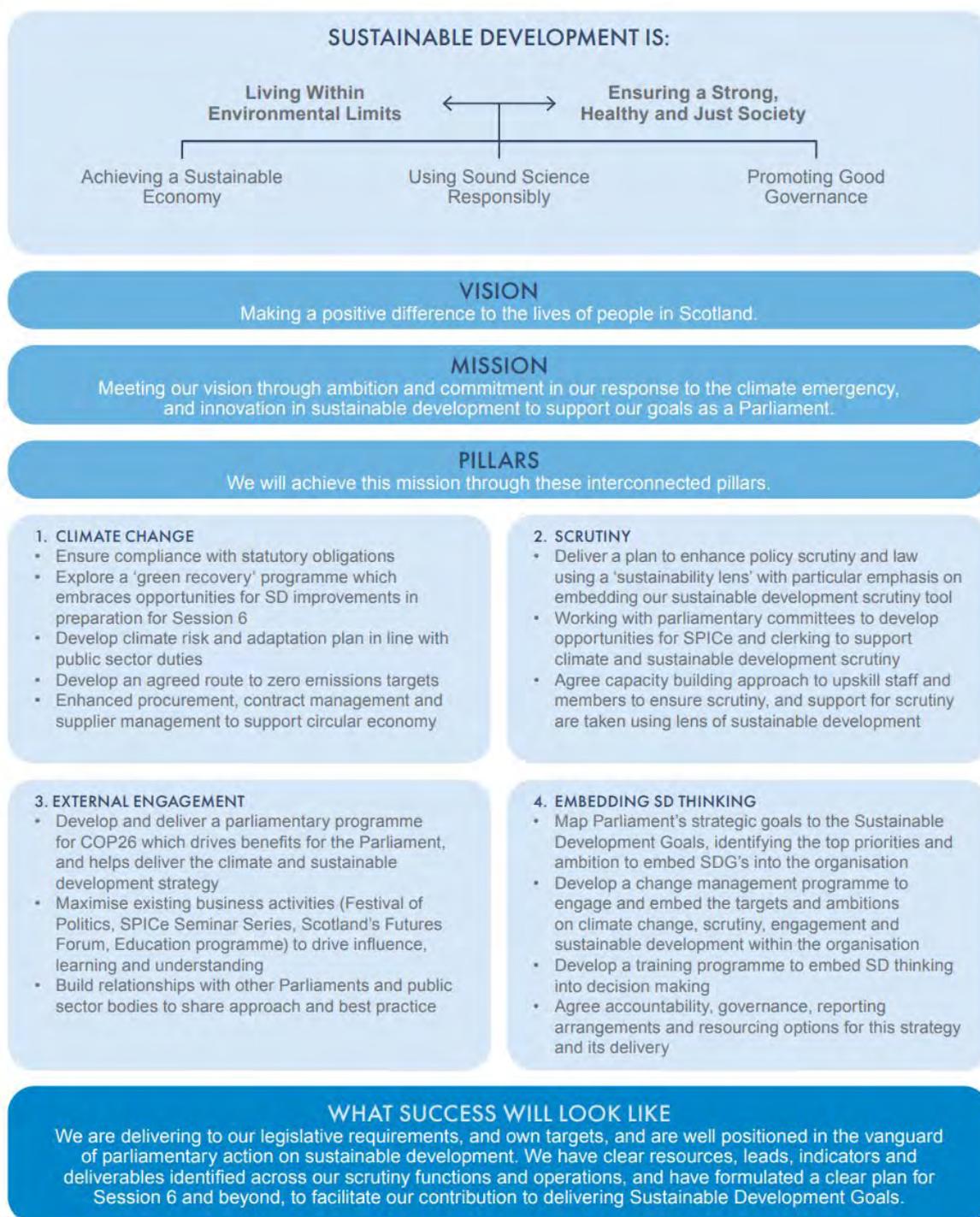
**SPCB Decision: The SPCB is asked to approve the Annual Sustainable Development report for publication**

### Session 6 Sustainable Development Plan

4. The Sustainable Development and Climate Change Plan is underpinned by four interconnected pillars; Climate Change, Parliamentary Scrutiny, External Engagement and Embedding Sustainable Development thinking.

5. The high level approach and the four pillars are shared today with SPCB to gain agreement and seek comment.
6. The first two pillars represent the two halves of the organization. The Climate Change pillar is concerned with how the organization reduces its environmental impact from its operations. The second pillar looks at how the scrutiny function uses sustainable development thinking when scrutinizing policy and legislation. Legislatures are different from other public sector bodies in that they have a duty to look at both their operations and main business (scrutiny) in order to meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> sustainability duty under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.
7. Pillars 3 and 4 are necessary to the delivery of both pillars 1 and 2 and the overall mission itself. Pillar 3, (external engagement) looks out with the Parliament to seek best practice and collaboration with external organizations. Pillar 4 (embedding SD thinking) looks internally at how the whole organization can build sustainable development thinking into its decision making.

# Our Climate Change and Sustainable Development Plan

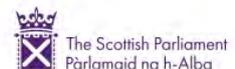


## SPCB Decision: The SPCB is asked to approve the Climate Change and Sustainable Development Plan

## Pillar 1 – Climate Change

8. A key component to the Climate Change pillar is meeting our statutory obligations on reducing green house gases and agreeing our approach to Net Zero.
9. The Scottish Government’s updated Climate Change Plan (2020) stated that public sector bodies have a strong leadership role to play in delivering the transition to Net Zero. It is expected that the public sector has higher ambition than simply opting for the 2045 target. This Climate Change Plan also states that: 50% of homes and non-domestic buildings in Scotland would be converted to a low or zero carbon heating system by 2030. This paper recommends that the Parliament should be at the forefront of climate action and aiming to be within that first 50%.

### Scottish Parliament Net Zero Timeline Pàrlamaid na h-Alba Loidhne-ama Neoni Lom



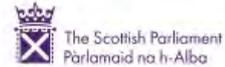
10. We could agree any date between now and 2045 for becoming Net Zero. 2030 is proposed because:

- a. It is the date being most commonly adopted.
- b. It is also the date that the Scottish Government has set for 50% of Scottish buildings to be heated using zero emissions energy systems.
- c. If we have an ambition to be in the first 50% to have zero emission heating, this means our strategic investments (and spend) need to be delivered by 2030.
- d. A single date allows for easier messaging both externally on our commitment but also as part of internal engagement campaigns.

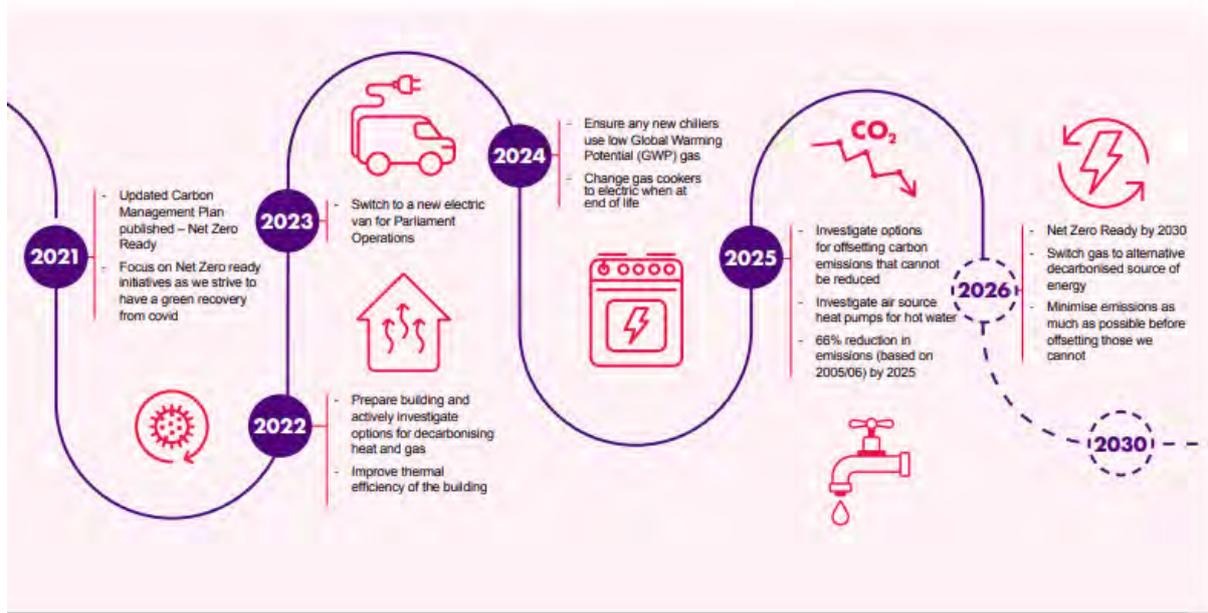
11. In recommending a date to the SPCB we have considered:

- Direction of travel and reputational risk
  - a. It is expected that the public sector has higher ambition than simply opting for the 2045 target
  - b. Public awareness, interest and campaigns for action around climate change have been increasing Urgency of mitigating climate change
  - c. COP26 is a good opportunity to demonstrate that SPCB is fulfilling its values and ambitions on climate change and sustainable development. It is important that our targets, spending and strategies align.
  - d. As a Parliament where the legislation to reach Net Zero targets has been created there is a responsibility to show leadership and ambition in reaching the targets set.
- Climate Change
  - a. The moral imperative for action and the impact of delayed action on future generations, and intra-generational equalities across Scotland and the world, provides an argument for setting an ambitious target.
- Legal requirements
  - a. The Scottish Government has not given any legal necessity for the SPCB to set Net Zero targets prior to 2045, however public bodies should show leadership and set targets consistent with the global urgency to mitigate climate change.
- Carbon reductions possible
  - a. Perhaps the most compelling argument for setting a net-zero target, is simply when it is achievable. Our teams assess it is challenging but possible to make the infrastructure and behavioural changes needed by 2030
- Speed of change;
  - a. The biggest concern in setting a 2030 date is the amount of change required by the organisation over a 9-year period compared to 24 years. Behavioural changes in the way we work will be required, which may not be easy to achieve.

## Net Zero Route Map Glan neoni Mapa Slighe na h-Àrainneachd



The milestones on our journey to becoming Net Zero ready. This includes our work on reducing our direct onsite emissions.  
Na clachan-mìle air ar turas gu bhith deiseil Net Zero. Tha seo a' toirt a-steach ar n-obair air na sgaoidhean dìreach air an làrach againn a lughdachadh.



**SPCB Decision: The SPCB is asked to approve that the Parliament has an ambition to be Net Zero by 2030.**

### Session 6 Carbon Management Plan

12. As Net Zero is beyond the current session, our session 6 ambition is to reduce our emissions by 66% and to be Net Zero Ready. This means reducing GHG emissions as much as possible and preparing the building for low carbon heating, we will also benefit from emissions reductions from the decarbonization of the electricity grid.

13. A heating masterplan is currently being undertaken to better understand our options for moving away from gas use which will be a large part of our Net Zero Ready strategy. This plan will give a clearer understanding of the preparations required within the building as well as future costs.

14. The full detail of our Carbon reduction strategy for session 6 is detailed in our Carbon Management Plan – Annex X

**SPCB Decision: The SPCB is asked to approve the Carbon Management Plan**

## Scope 3

15. Our Carbon Management Plan and Net Zero targets are currently based on Scope 1 direct emissions from gas and fuel, Scope 2 indirect emissions from electricity, and Scope 3 emissions from waste, recycling, water and business travel. However, Scope 3 should cover all indirect emissions occurring within an organizations value chain and we have legal duties to set targets for our indirect emissions.
16. Over Session 6 we will undertake a full Scope 3 assessment looking at those within current targets, those which we have details of and those which we are able to expand and include. Once the full assessment has been undertaken we will create a prioritisation strategy to reduce our Scope 3 emissions.
17. One key area we are planning to expand our measurement and management of over session 6 is Scope 3 emissions from purchased goods and services. We are working closely with Procurement to gain a clearer understanding of measurements that can be undertaken and goals that can be set to reduce emissions and use our influence in a positive way in our supply chain on our shared journey to Net Zero.
18. Once the Scope 3 Inventory and assessment has been completed, work will begin to identify the areas that can be prioritized for a reduction. It is envisaged that the Scope 3 emissions included in our Net Zero Target will be the first to be actioned on, however there may be other scope 3 emissions which are appropriate to fast track to Net Zero.

### Scope 3 Emissions Route Map

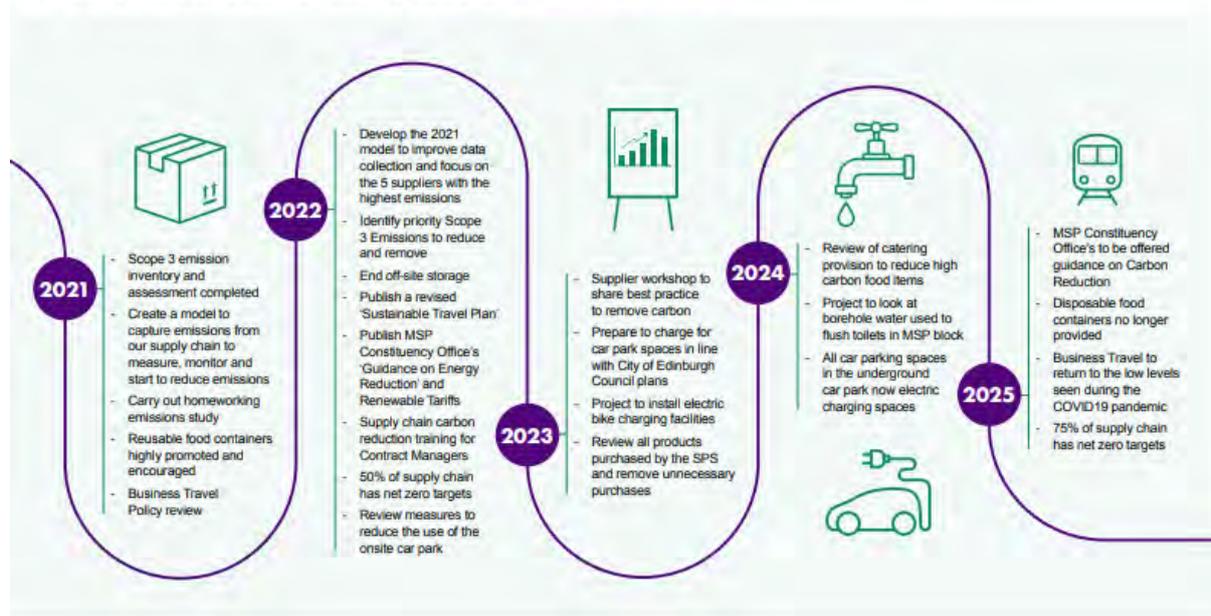
#### Farsaingeachd 3 sgaoididhean Mapo Slighe na h-Àrainneachd



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Scope 3 emissions are indirect emissions occurring within an organisations value chain, we currently monitor Scope 3 from our waste, recycling, water, business travel, commuting, working from home and energy use at MSPs local offices. Here are the steps we are taking to expand, measure, monitor and reduce our Scope 3 emissions from the Scottish Parliament.

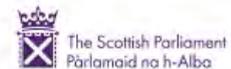
Farsaingeachd 3 Thathas a 'seòrsachadh sgaoididhean mar an fheadhainn a thig bho sholaraidhe, bho bhith a' faighinn cuidhteas sguadail agus bho luchd-obrach a 'siubhal gu obair. Seo na ceumannan a tha sinn a 'gabhail gus tomhas, sgrùdadh agus lughdachadh sgaoididhean neo-dhìreach bho Phàrlamaid na h-Alba. [Updated Gaelic text to follow](#)



## Circular Economy

19. Transitioning to a circular economy is about much more than waste management, it is also about sustainable consumption and tackling 'consumption emissions'. While Scotland's statutory emissions reduction targets are based on emissions from sources located here in Scotland, in order to tackle the climate emergency, we must also tackle our wider carbon footprint associated with the goods and services we import. Consumption of products and materials accounts for an estimated 74% of Scotland's carbon footprint.
20. Waste management policy in Scotland generally seeks to divert waste away from landfill and further up the 'waste hierarchy', set out in law in the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Under the waste hierarchy, waste prevention through efficient use and reuse of resources, recycling and recovery of value should be prioritised in that order, with landfill, incineration or other disposal a last resort.
21. The SPCB has a statutory sustainable procurement duty under [the Procurement Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#), which requires that before a contracting authority buys anything, it must think about how it can improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of the area in which it operates, with a particular focus on reducing inequality. Delivering on this statutory duty is a key aspect of transitioning to a more circular economy.

### Circular Economy and Waste Route Map Cuart-litir is sgudal Mapo Slighe na h-Arainneachd



The journey we are taking to move towards Circular Economy thinking and removing waste from our operations.  
An turas a tha sinn a' gabhail gus gluasad a dh'ionnsaigh Eaconamaidh Cearcallach a 'smaoineachadh agus a' toirt air falbh sgudal bhon obair againn.



## **Biodiversity**

22. Our work on Biodiversity is currently captured in our Biodiversity Statement. This is currently under review and a new version will be published in 2022. The new version will include more on how we will engage with the public and visitors to our site, for instance the aim to implement additional external interpretation/ information signage aimed at visitors to the landscape areas on the variety of flora and fauna around Parliament, how we maximise the Community Benefits requirement in the Landscape contract in partnership with our contractor, and how we can maximise the value from biological resources in our supply chain and minimise negative ecological impacts in our supply chains through sustainable procurement practices (see above section on Circular Economy).
23. We plan to have an audit carried out in order to confirm current plant life, and whether there have been any changes compared to the original planting, possibly with the help of Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.
24. Enric Miralles originally conceived the landscape as being planted with indigenous Scottish wildflowers, trees, and shrubs. He specified the use of wild grasses and trees already found in the area as well as trees representing those found across Scotland, tying in with and connecting to the aesthetic of the adjacent Salisbury crags, and representing the wider Scottish land. Whilst this vision remains largely true, active management is required to retain such an appearance, as well as to maintain and further develop biodiversity. It is to be expected that with any such intensively used environment, there have been and will continue to be adaptations to usage and operational requirements. Adopting a holistic approach i.e. the landscape and habitat seen as a series of interconnected systems, requires more contextual governance. Consideration and implementation of immediate, medium, and long-term objectives is therefore recommended.

## Biodiversity Route Map Bith-iomadachd Mapa Slighe na h-Àrainneachd

How we enhance and support the biodiversity on our site, how we can minimise our impact on biodiversity globally, and how we improve our community's knowledge of the local wildlife.  
Mar a leasaicheas sinn agus a bheir sinn taic do bhith-iomadachd air an làrach againn, mar as urrainn dhuinn a 'bhuaidh air bith-iomadachd air feadh na cruinne a lughdachadh, agus mar a leasaicheas sinn eòlas ar coimhear snachd air fiadh-bheatha na sgìre.



**SPCB Decision:** The SPCB is invited to give feedback on the scope 3, circular economy and biodiversity route maps

## Governance

25. TBC.

## Resource implications

26. The costs for the Climate Change and Sustainable Development Plan are part of the medium and long term planning process with SRB.

## Publication Scheme

27. This paper can be published.

## Next steps

28. Delivery plans for the 3 other pillars of the Climate Change and Sustainable Development plan will be brought to SPCB at a future date.

## Decision

29. The SPCB is asked to approve:

- Annual Sustainable Development Report for publication
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**Resilience and Sustainability Group**

October 2021