

Edinburgh Climate Commission Quarterly Meeting 12 January 2022 - Minutes

The meeting was conducted over MS Teams due to the current restrictions of Covid-19

Attendees:

Dr Sam Gardner (Chair)
Cllr Adam McVey
Alex Hilliam
Bridie Ashrowan
Calum Murray
Clare Foster
Professor Dave Reay
Diarmaid Lawlor
Irene Beautyman
Teresa Bray

Welcome – Dr Sam Gardner

Apologies from Sophie Eastwood, Kaisie Rayner, Andrea Nicholas, and Andrew Kerr.

It was announced that Sophie Eastwood is stepping back as a member of the Climate Commission.

Update: Skills Work Stream – Diarmaid Lawlor

The work responds to the need to identify the skills required to deliver 2030 Climate Strategy, including identifying new and emerging roles and those existing roles affected in transition to net zero. It was highlighted that while other cities look at climate skills mainly for specific sectors, Edinburgh aims to align across the city. There is huge interest in skills and investment with lots of work being done by different organisations. Synergies and joining programs were possible is being explored including links to education providers, community groups and small businesses.

Edinburgh college and other partners are keen to support the action plan. Ongoing engagement with regional partners regarding skills transitions for small businesses. NZPSB Standard (Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard) is currently focused on new builds, but will address retrofit in a second step which requires a series of specific skills.

For this year, the focus will be confirming priorities (construction, small businesses), agree timeframes for delivery, and impacts.

Climate Compact Update – Clare Foster

After the launch in December 2020, the focus in 2021 was raising awareness and build up membership, which is currently at 17. Various presentations on the Compact have been delivered at events, including a chamber of commerce event and a presentation to the Scottish Cities Alliance. SME were encouraged to join, which was supported by additional specific information on the website. Other cities in Scotland are interested in replicating the concept.

Quarterly meetings are being held, hosted by Compact members presenting their organisation's actions. Additionally, members were keen to work together to go beyond which has led to specific project groups emerging. Three meetings were held since October 2021, with Compact members collaborating on progressing with different projects, e.g. a heat project in Sighthill, 20-minute neighbourhoods, and procurement. Having different disciplines around the table and bringing together knowledge to address different challenges is very powerful and makes the changes more tangible. There will be monthly meetings going forward with actions and outputs and setting a very ambitious future program.

The input of commission members into the different Compact projects would be very welcome.

It was raised that a Community Climate Forum has been formed in collaboration with Our Future Edinburgh which will focus on community ambitions and is keen to learn from the Compact.

PCAN Update – Jamie Brogan

The Place-based climate action network (PCAN) established Climate Commissions in Leeds, Edinburgh, and Belfast. PCAN explores local climate action, has published City Roadmaps, and has set up expert platforms (e.g. on finance and adaptation).

The aims for the coming two years are:

- Create place-based climate finance platforms to connect climate projects with investment
- Undertake independent evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of Climate Commissions
- Establish an outcomes framework for Commission Programmes to support and guide commissions
- Expanding the PCAN network

Delivering the Edinburgh 2030 Climate Strategy – Presentation and discussion – Paula McLeay

The strategy document covers all actions to get to net zero by 2030. Additionally, an executive summary was created to highlight key priorities, which are:

- Net Zero, Climate Resilient Development and Growth
- Net Zero Energy Generation and Energy Efficient Buildings
- Net Zero Emission Transport
- Net Zero Circular Economy
- Listening to Citizens and Empowering Communities
- Investing in Change



The aim is to have a city-wide pipeline of projects through the development of a green investment plan and the Council is working with the Scottish Government and city partners on this. Next steps are to bring the right people together across all sectors, put governance groups in place to support delivery and deliver strategy commitments with a focus on the seven priority areas.

The Commission's way to support the delivery of the 2030 Climate Strategy should be to keep supporting the net zero messaging and provide skills, expertise and advice. But also to engage with the Scottish Government in their role as independent experts, to discuss what needs to be in place for cities to deliver net zero.

Discussion focussed on links to National Planning Framework 4 and the need for ongoing engagement on planning issues. Also noted is the need to work with Scottish Government as it decides on details impacting local authority net zero decisions (such as technical details and principles) to create confidence to act.

Draft 2022 Climate Commission Workplan

The draft 2022 Climate Commission Workplan was discussed, which states the following priorities:

- To secure cross-party support for faster climate action ahead of the local election
- To engage with the Scottish Government to help deliver local net zero goals
- To ensure that the commitments of the "build back faster" report are met
- To address challenges in the construction sector, specifically regulations for new builds
- To collaborate with the Poverty Commission to ensure a just transition
- To engage with citizens, businesses and organisations within Edinburgh to communicate, lead and inspire the opportunities and vision of a Net Zero Edinburgh.
- Add in compact workstream

Emphasis should be on how to put the limited resources of the commission members and secretariat to best effect. The question of timing is raised, especially in view of the upcoming council elections and engagement with the Scottish Government and its legislative and policy programs. Commissioners also discussed options and approaches for specific workstreams.

It was agreed that issues discussed will be incorporated into a revised version of the work plan and circulated to commissioners.

Thank you and close

Members were thanked for their time and encouraged to stay in touch between meetings and to keep up the good progress with the topics discussed.