

Edinburgh Climate Commission Minutes: 25th February 2021

Due to the ongoing social distancing regulations, the meeting was held over Zoom.

Attendees

- Dr Sam Gardner
- Bridie Ashrowan
- Teresa Bray
- Clare Foster
- Alex Hilliam
- Andrew Kerr
- Diarmaid Lawlor
- Adam McVey
- Daisy Narayanan
- Andrea Nicholas
- Kaisie Rayner
- Professor Dave Reay

Welcome: Dr Sam Gardner

Apologies from Sophie Eastwood and Calum Murray.

Reflecting that it had been one year since the Commission started work, Dr Gardner gave thanks to everyone for their time and work, especially considering how challenging the past year had been.

The meeting focussed on updates from existing work and hearing ideas for the next Commission workplan. Polly Billington from UK100 also gave a talk.

Climate Compact Update: Clare Foster

The Climate Compact work had used the Commission's 'Forward, Faster, Together' report and ethos as a base for the Compact. The Compact is focussed on promoting and celebrating ambitious climate action in Edinburgh.

The first signatories or 'Climate Champions' have been very enthusiastic and keen to start working together.

There was a 'kick off' meeting in January to discuss challenges and ambitions with the Champions. Meetings will now be held quarterly, with the Champions also being asked to help with resourcing meetings to ensure the project is sustainable into the future.

There will continue to be signatories added to the Compact: Scottish Power and Shepherd and Wedderburn are latest organisations to join.

Alix Davies explained process for organisations getting in touch and applying to be a signatory/Climate Champion. The Compact team have been working carefully on the application and monitoring process to ensure the Compact does not enable greenwashing and can track progress effectively. [A new section of the Commission's website has been set up for this.](#)

Polly Billington, UK100

UK100 was formalised in 2016, was first a cross party network. It is now a national network of ambitious local governments, working on how to make their climate commitments a reality. They have over 100 members and sub networks/groups (e.g. rural authority network).

The aim is allow members to learn from each other while aggregating voices to lobby for a more enabling environment for climate action at the local level. (Forthcoming report on this issue, focussed on England).

There seems to be a disconnect at the national level when it comes to the role of local governments in national Net Zero pledges.

There were questions from Commissioners on partnerships between local authorities and land users (Regional Land Use Partnerships pilots are coming up), the challenge of decarbonising heating and transport and engaging Scottish Government on this issue, and on unlocking private finance for projects. There was also a question on deliberative processes (some Commissioners have been involved with the Climate Assembly) and their value in creating appetite for change.

Thanks to Polly Billington for an insightful and informative talk and Q&A.

Council's Sustainability Strategy Update – Alex Hilliam/Paula McLeay

The last part of the Commission 2020 workplan focusses on contributions to the Council's Sustainability Strategy, with Alex Hilliam coordinating input.

There are upcoming workshops on different aspects of the strategy for input from different city partners.

There are questions that need to be resolved before going to public consultation. The Strategy needs to establish partnerships and coordinate responses across local to national scales.

The timeline for the Commission feeding into the Strategy was shared and Commissioners allocated themselves to their areas of interest and expertise.

Commissioners who had already attended the first Strategy workshops gave feedback.

The Year Ahead: Suggestions

During the last part of the meeting, Commissioners presented their ideas for the next year's workplan. Ideas included working with young people, promoting green education and skills for the Net Zero transition, developing methodologies for low or zero carbon housing, and working with the Poverty Commission and City Deal.

Closing Remarks

Dr Sam Gardner thanked everyone for their time and for the presentations. The secretariat would be in touch about the Strategy workshops and 2021 workplan.