

Edinburgh Climate Commission Terms of Reference

1. Background and Context

As the effects of climate change become increasingly apparent in places across the world, governments at all levels are developing plans to reduce emissions. The Scottish Government Committee on Climate Change has set a national target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, in line with the IPCC recommendation that warming does not exceed 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

In addition to this national target, The City of Edinburgh Council has set its own ambition for the city to be net zero by 2030. This ambitious target recognises the challenges facing Edinburgh and aims to stimulate action towards improving the overall health, wellbeing and prosperity of the City and its citizens. In order to meet this target the City will have to address significant challenges, including the decarbonisation of key sectors such as energy, transport and construction.

It is clear from the scale of these challenges that delivery of net zero cannot be a local authority problem alone. With this in mind, the Edinburgh Climate Commission will provide independent active leadership and support for cross-sector collaboration and action on climate change. This Commission will leverage expertise from across the Edinburgh in order to engage and inspire the city into collective ownership and a shared commitment to becoming carbon neutral.

The Edinburgh Climate Commission is being established by the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI) which is part of the University of Edinburgh, in collaboration with the City of Edinburgh Council.

2. Vision

The Commission will support the City of Edinburgh in achieving the transformative change needed to ensure the necessary emissions reductions are realised, engaging citizens as well as the private and public sectors.

The Commission's work will support strategic aims for the city to:

- Develop a low carbon, circular economy
- Be resilient to climate change
- Increase local energy production
- Support fair and responsible business practices.
- Be clean, connected and healthy, promoting active travel and a socially inclusive transport network.
- Protect and improve its biodiversity and network of parks and greenspaces.
- Be a place where citizens live in fair and sustainable communities, and feel empowered to be at the heart of decision making.

- Promote resilient and empowered communities, reducing poverty and inequality in all its forms
- Promote awareness among citizens on climate change and encourage citizen civil society action.

3. Principles

The Commission will:

- Be independent in thought and action
- Embed a collaborative approach to problem-solving
- Be open to all best practice, initiatives or proposed solutions that are realistic and deliverable
- Share information and documentation openly, meeting in public where possible
- Look positively at innovative and radical proposals for change in keeping with a climate emergency
- Commit to positively promote, support and encourage city action on climate change especially within Commissioners own organisations
- Be respectful and inclusive

4. Scope

- To promote leadership in the city on climate change, encouraging and supporting stakeholders to take action, while encouraging planning for the long-term.
- To inform and advice on the development of a City Sustainability Strategy to deliver the Carbon Neutral city target by 2030
- To provide independent and expert advice on the most effective steps for meeting reduction targets in order to inform policies and actions of local stakeholders and decision-makers.
- To monitor and report on progress towards meeting the city's carbon targets and recommend actions to keep city on track.
- To help build and support the economic case for project development and investment in low carbon and climate resilient projects in the city, supporting collaboration and business case development and project implementation
- To embed best practice in public engagement on climate change and its impacts, in order to support robust decision making
- To support the exchange of ideas, research findings, info and best practice on carbon reduction and climate resilience
- To promote exchange of best practice with other cities.

5. Membership (Chair and Members)

a) Appointment of the Chair

The Role of the Chair has been defined as:

- To provide independent leadership of the Climate Commission and champion Climate Action and the views of the Commission to key partners, stakeholders and the media
- To chair meetings of the Commission.
- To ensure development and completion of the Commission's deliverables once agreed
- To take decisions about the work of the Commission between Commission meetings.
- To promote the work of the Commission: in this role the Chair will be supported by and responsible to all Members.
- To sign off all Commission publications

The identification of an appropriate independent chair is delegated to the Council Leader and will be informed by the City of Edinburgh Council's Sustainability and Climate Emergency All Party Oversight Group. The chair's identification and appointment will be undertaken with the support of the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation.

The Council Leader will act as Vice Chair to the Commission, with the Chief Executive of the Council attending as Chair of the CEC Sustainability Programme Board.

The Chair can serve a two year term that can be renewed for a maximum of a further two years. The Chair should give three months' notice before resigning the position, and support succession planning for a new Chair during the final six months in post. At the end of the Chair's term, the Commission will select a new Chair through an appropriate selection process.

b) Appointment of members of the Commission

The identification of Commission members will be delegated to the Chair of the Commission, who will be supported by the Vice Chair and the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation.

Membership of the Commission is open to individuals representing key organisations from public, private and civic sectors. The balance of membership should reflect the need for cross-city representation, from the private, public and third sectors, and community and youth groups. Members of the Commission do not represent their organisation, but are appointed as individuals.

Prior to appointment, members must ensure that:

- If relevant, their participation has been authorised at a senior level by their organisation
- They can demonstrate suitable expertise, knowledge, leadership and skills to contribute meaningfully to the Commission objectives
- They can commit required amount of time and be able to attend necessary meetings.
- Commit to positively promote, support and encourage city action on climate change especially within their own organisations and sector

Membership will be reviewed periodically based on attendance, contributions and ability to secure backing of organisation/sector. Members of the Commission will serve a two year term with the possibility of renewing membership for a further two years.

6. Governance

The Edinburgh Climate Commission will operate as an independent advisory body. The Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation will provide secretariat support, including liaising with committee members, setting the agenda for each meeting, providing content and input, administration support for minute taking and communications.

In order to ensure accountability and scrutiny of the work of the Commission and an opportunity to report the progress that is being made by all sectors and partners towards the city's carbon reduction target, Edinburgh Climate Commission will report progress on an annual basis to the City of Edinburgh Council and other city wide fora, as appropriate.