

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE****31 OCTOBER 2019****THE ROLE OF PUBLIC SECTOR BODIES IN TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE:
CONSULTATION RESPONSE****REPORT BY SENIOR PARTNERSHIP MANAGER**

This report seeks the Executive Committee approval of a proposed response to the Scottish Government consultation on 'The role of Public Sector Bodies in tackling climate change'

1 RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Executive Committee considers and approves the proposed response to the Scottish Government consultation on 'The role of Public Sector Bodies in tackling climate change', as shown in Appendix A.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Scottish Government published the consultation document ['The role of Public Sector Bodies in tackling climate change'](#) on 11 September 2019, asking for responses to be submitted by 4 December 2019.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 17 September 2019 the Partnership noted the requirement to report on its activities and policies in respect to climate change and noted officers will complete and submit the Public Sector Climate Change Reporting Template for 2018/19 to the Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) (Report RTP/19/39 refers).
- 2.3 At its meeting of 17 September 2019, the Partnership delegated authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response to the Scottish Government consultation.

3 DISCUSSION

- 3.1 On 14 May, the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform gave a statement to Parliament about Scotland's response to the global climate emergency, and committed to consult widely on what needs to happen across the country in order to end Scotland's contribution to global warming.
- 3.2 The Big Climate Conversation, of which this consultation paper is part, aims to:
- build an open, transparent and collaborative, whole-Scotland approach to reducing emissions;

- identify and share ideas about opportunities, what works, barriers to action and what we need to do differently; and
 - generate ideas for the update to the Climate Change Plan.
- 3.3 Outputs from the Big Climate Conversation, including this consultation, will help inform the Climate Change Plan update and will inform Scottish Government plans to bring forward secondary legislation that alter the details of the public sector climate change reporting duties.
- 3.4 Public Sector Bodies, including Regional Transport Partnerships, are legally required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support Scotland's adaptation to a changing climate and are also legally required to report annually on their greenhouse gas emissions and what they are doing to help adapt to a changing climate.
- 3.5 The Scottish Government is seeking views on the way that information and knowledge are shared between public sector bodies; whether public bodies should set targets for themselves to achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions; and on proposed changes to the mandatory reporting duties.
- 3.6 The first part of the consultation is about how information is provided and shared and how Public Sector Bodies collaborate with each other and the rest of Scotland (Questions 1 and 2). The second part of the consultation is about improving the reporting arrangements to simultaneously reduce the administrative burden on Public Sector Bodies and drive action (Questions 3 to 10).
- 3.7 In general Tactran welcomes the proposals in the first part of the consultation regarding how information is provided, share and collaborated. In the second part of the consultation Tactran generally welcomes the proposals, but considers that there should be a de minimis for direct emissions (i.e emissions from the organisation's own estate and operations). For indirect emissions i.e. wider influence, such as through developing and overseeing implementation of the Tactran Regional Transport Strategy, it is considered that sectorial national targets are and should continue to be set rather than individual organisations' targets, but that reporting on this should be included as a requirement, rather than an optional recommendation as the current reporting permits.
- 3.8 The Executive Committee is asked to consider and approve the proposed response as shown in Appendix A.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report has no direct resource implications.

5 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Equality Impact Assessment and no material issues have been identified.

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NOTE

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report:

Report to Partnership RTP/19/39, Public Sector Climate Change Duties Reporting 2018/19, 17 September 2019

'The role of Public Sector Bodies in tackling climate change', Scottish Government, September 2019

The role of Public Sector Bodies in tackling climate change

A Consultation

Questions

Q1. What additional training, information or guidance do you think Public Sector Bodies need to help them increase their action on climate change?

Tactran welcomes the proposal to introduce a climate solutions qualification through a training course for middle and senior managers. Those attending the course need to be able to influence the performance and culture of an organisation.

Training should be provided on both mitigation and adaptation and also by sector.

Q2. What are your views on the proposed structure for the High Ambition Climate Network of Chief Executives and Elected Members?

Tactran supports the High Ambition Climate Network of Chief Executives and Elected Members, but has concerns about how the outputs from this are disseminated through the public sector and also how this group would be used to encourage other organisations that may not have expertise and resources to achieve high ambitions. This cannot be just for those organisations that are fully on-board, equipped and resourced to have high ambitions, but also include those who may require a performance improvement, cultural change and a re-focus of organisational objectives in regard to climate change.

It is admirable to have good practice, but there needs to be an understanding of the issues that all public sector organisations will encounter in reaching the climate change targets. It is therefore important that the composition of the High Ambition Climate Network of Chief Executives and Elected Members has a range of organisation representatives across the public sector spectrum. We would propose that Regional Transport Partnerships are represented.

Tactran also welcomes the proposal for a National Forum on Climate Change that brings together Government, Public Sector Bodies, the private sector, third sector organisations and the wider public.

Q3. Do you agree that Public Sector Bodies should be required to set targets for when they will achieve zero direct emissions, and for reduced indirect emissions?

Yes/No

Please explain your answer.

Yes – direct, with national target taken as the longest time to achieve zero direct emissions i.e. 2045. There should also be a de minimis set (suggest 50 tCO₂e). For example staff travel, while aiming to reduce travel, there will on occasion be the need to travel and if this need is met by train or bus and without these being carbon neutral the organisation will not be able to meet the zero target.

No – indirect, ambitious targets should be set nationally by sector, with all organisations working toward these targets. There is strength in all organisations working towards the same national targets that piecemeal local targets may not achieve. For example, in Transport there are already a number of ambitious targets set either in legislation or through the Programme for Government:

- By 2050 Scottish Towns, cities and communities will be free from damaging emissions of petrol and diesel fuelled vehicles
- Mission Zero for Transport - ensure that transport plays a key role in delivering net zero emissions by 2045
- Phase out new petrol and diesel cars by 2032
- Phase out the need for all new petrol and diesel vehicles in Scotland's public sector fleet by 2030
- Phase out the need for all petrol and diesel cars from the public sector fleet by 2025
- Every one of Scotland's city centres will be vehicle emission-free by 2030 (consult)
- Decarbonise flights within Scotland by 2040
- Decarbonise Scotland's passenger rail services by 2035
- Implement LEZs in Scotland's 4 main cities by 2020 and AQMA by 2023

These are better met when all public sector organisations are working towards the same targets.

Another issue, if each organisation was to set their individual targets for zero emission, there may be some confusion as to which organisation has responsibility for meeting these. Again using Transport as an example, National, Regional and Local Government each has its own responsibilities covering the same geographic area.

Q4. Do you agree that Public Sector Bodies should report annually on how they use their resources to contribute to reducing emissions?

Yes

Please explain your answer.

Tactran currently reports annually on how resources are used and agrees this should include how resources contribute to reducing emissions. However, this should not require significant resources to measure outcomes.

Q5. Do you agree that the details of what Public Sector Bodies are required to report on should be set out in statutory guidance instead of on the face of secondary legislation (otherwise known as an Order)?

Yes

Please explain your answer.

It provides greater flexibility.

Q6. Do you agree to the proposed changes to the list of Public Sector Bodies that are required to annually report their emissions?

No

Please explain your answer.

UK Government Public Sector Bodies operating in Scotland, such as HMRC and DWP, should be included to ensure all Public Sector Bodies are contributing to achieving zero emissions.

Q7. Do you agree with our proposals for amending the reporting requirements as set out above?

No

If you answered no, please specify which aspect of the proposal you disagree with.

Tactran agrees with the aim of simplifying the reporting and agrees with the proposals generally, but has a few comments, as follows:

Part 1 - It is considered 1g should be kept to provide a summary of the Body's function.

Part 3 – For small organisations, such as Tactran with 7 employees, the value in reporting direct emissions is low, compared with the influence it can have on indirect emissions through development and implementation of our Regional Transport Strategy. Tactran considers that there should be a de minimus set for direct emissions (suggest 50 tCO₂e) and welcomes the proposal to include reporting on indirect emissions, which have previously been reported in an optional section titled 'Recommended – Wider Influence' and information included in this section should now be included in Part 3.

Q8. Is there anything else you think should be added to the reporting duties, or anything else you think should be removed?

See response to Question 7

Q9. Do you agree that Public Sector Bodies should each make their own report on emissions reductions publicly available?

Yes

Please explain your answer.

Reports are currently publically available on the SSN website. There should continue to be one website that contains all reports to allow easy access to more than one report at a time. In addition each organisation should make its report publically available through its own procedures.

Q10. Please use this space to make any further comments on the role of the public sector in tackling climate change.

There should be an analysis of the impact of all annual reports submitted to measure the combined effect of all Public Sector Bodies working together.