



## **ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT & SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **ADAPTATION SCOTLAND - "SCOTLAND ADAPTS: A NEW CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR A CLIMATE READY PUBLIC SECTOR"**

#### **REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to advise the panel of Adaptation Scotland's new policy guidance document, "Scotland Adapts: A Capability Framework for a Climate Ready Public Sector".

##### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the panel notes and considers the following recommendations which are intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval

1. any comments from the panel should be forwarded to the Council Executive; and
2. the adaptation framework should be considered in the progression of West Lothian's Adaptation Action Plan.

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• focusing on our customers' needs;</li><li>• being honest, open and accountable;</li><li>• making best use of our resources; and</li><li>• working in partnership.</li></ul>
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	<p>The council's Climate Change Strategy (2015) and related Carbon Management Strategy (2015) are both under review.</p> <p>Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and its related annual public bodies climate change reporting duties and the Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme.</p> <p>There are no equality, health or risk assessment issues.</p>
<b>III Implications for scheme of delegation</b>	None.
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance indicators</b>	None.
<b>V Relevance to Single</b>	Outcome 8 - We make the most efficient and

	<b>Outcome Agreement</b>	effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment.
<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Covered by existing budgets and staffing.
<b>VII</b>	<b>Consultations at PDSP</b>	None.
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Other consultations</b>	None.

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D1 Background**

“Adaptation Scotland” is a programme funded by the Scottish Government and delivered by SNIFFER (Scotland Northern Ireland Foundation for Educational Research), a charity based in Edinburgh. The public sector has a central role to play in enabling Scotland to adapt to the impacts of climate change. “*Scotland Adapts: A Capability Framework for a Climate Ready Public Sector*”, has practical tasks and guidance that will help organisations adapt effectively.

Adapting to climate change is not a standalone challenge – the actions taken to adapt should deliver many benefits for society including addressing inequalities, supporting sustainable economic growth and nurturing a healthy natural environment. The Framework challenges organisations to consider how adaptation can be properly integrated and support progress against wider societal outcomes.

Scotland’s climate is already changing. There is a long-term trend of warming temperatures, shifting rainfall patterns and rising sea level. Highly variable weather – hot, cold, wet and dry – has proved hugely challenging in recent years.

The consequences of climate change have been felt across society and environment: from damage to infrastructure, to disruption of vital services, and a shift in growing seasons. With the rate of change set to intensify over the coming decades, there is a need to plan adaptation now.

At the heart of Scotland’s approach to adaptation is collaboration and partnership working. This new guidance for the public sector draws upon the collective knowledge and experience of practitioners from local authorities, health boards, infrastructure providers, agencies and university estates.

Successful adaptation is not simply a case of improving understanding through analysing climate data and risk models. Effective leadership, governance arrangements, inclusive planning approaches and working beyond organisation and sectoral silos, are of equal importance for successful adaptation.

### **D2 Scotland’s changing climate**

Scotland’s 10 warmest years on record have all been since 1997. The average temperature in the last decade (2009-2018) was 0.67°C warmer than the 1961-1990 average. The warmest year on record was 2014.

In the past few decades there has been an increase in rainfall over Scotland. The annual average rainfall in the last decade (2009-2018) was 15% wetter than the 1961-1990 average, with winters 25% wetter. The wettest year on record was 2011.

### **D3 What does climate change mean for Scotland?**

Climate change will have profound impacts for all areas of life in Scotland. The public sector has a responsibility to understand potential impacts and respond. 15 Key Consequences for Scotland were highlighted in the “*Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme*” (2014) which are:

1. The health of our natural environment;
2. The productivity of our agriculture and forests;
3. The occurrence of pests and diseases;
4. The quality of our soils;
5. The security of our food supply;
6. The availability and quality of water;
7. The increased risk of flooding;
8. The change at our coast;
9. The health of our marine environment;
10. The resilience of our business;
11. The health and wellbeing of our people;
12. Our cultural heritage and identity;
13. The security and efficiency of our energy supply;
14. The performance of our buildings; and
15. Infrastructure – Network connectivity and interdependencies.

### **D4 Adaptation: the response to climate change**

The response to the challenges of a changing climate is ‘adaptation’ defined as “*the adjustment in economic, social or natural systems in response to actual or expected climate change, to limit harmful consequences and exploit beneficial opportunities*”.

Good adaptation can deliver both short-term benefits and progress towards long term outcomes. Adaptation takes place at all scales. From small incremental measures, like adjusting working practices for severe weather, to large-scale investments, like a new flood protection scheme.

Progressing adaptation measures can achieve a range of benefits, including:

- positive vision for the future;
- improve efficiency;
- use knowledge effectively;
- create a ‘Learning Organisation’;
- partnership and collaboration; and
- a flexible approach.

### **D5 Public sector influence**

The public sector plays a crucial role in delivering action to enable Scotland to adapt to the impacts of climate change through:

- building resilience;
- strategic planning;
- community engagement; and
- procurement.

There are good examples of adaptation being delivered in Scotland including new homes, schools and infrastructure being built to be resilient and adaptable to current and future climate; organisations completing climate change risk assessments for services, assets and locations.

There are also many cases where adaptation is being taken forward within organisations, but is not necessarily called “adaptation”. This could include flood risk management, biodiversity action planning or urban greening programmes.

## **D6 Adaptation Capability Framework (See Appendix 1)**

The Adaptation Capability Framework is designed to enable action. It aims to promote a holistic approach to adaptation. Based on local and international experience, a ‘capability-maturity’ approach draws upon the characteristics of well-adapting organisations. These are clustered into four “adaptation capabilities” for organisations,

- 1. Organisational culture and resources;**
- 2. Understanding the challenge;**
- 3. Planning and implementation; and**
- 4. Working together;**

which can be developed by completing recommended tasks, progressing through four maturity stages: 1. Starting, 2. Intermediate, 3. Advanced, and 4. Mature.

The Framework includes recommended tasks for each capability, and at each maturity stage. By completing these tasks, an organisation will be developing capabilities and delivering adaptation, which in West Lothian will be advanced through the Adaptation Action Plan (see Section D7 below).

### **1. Capability: Organisational culture and resources – key aspects include:**

- Resources;
- Governance;
- Leadership; and
- Reflection & flexibility.

### **2. Capability: Understanding the challenge - key aspects include:**

- Knowledge;
- Evidence; and
- Research & innovation.

### **3. Capability: Planning and implementation - key aspects include:**

- Strategic approach;
- Appraisal & prioritisation; and
- Take action.

### **4. Capability: Working together - key aspects include:**

- Networks;
- Partnership;
- Engagement; and
- Joint action.

## **D7 West Lothian Council Adaptation Action Plan**

The council adopted a Carbon Management Plan along with a Climate Change Strategy (CCS) in 2015. One of the actions from the CCS was to prepare an Adaptation Action Plan. SNIFFER was engaged as consultants in 2018 to undertake interviews with Heads of Service and run a workshop with Service Managers.

This had identified seven themes and over 75 adaptation actions across all services. This will be subject to a separate, detailed report to the Environment PDSP.

Additional work had also been undertaken to update both the Carbon Management Plan and Climate Change Strategy as they are due for review in 2020, alongside the preparation of a Local Climate Impact Profile and consideration of the UK Climate Change Projections data released in November 2018 and its impact on West Lothian.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

The impacts of climate change are becoming ever clearer, both in Scotland, the UK and around the world. Potentially more ambitious carbon emission reduction targets mean the council will still have to respond to climate change and its impacts and need to accelerate action on adaptation; approach challenges differently; and make decisions that take account of climate change.

Adapting to climate change will help make West Lothian and Scotland a better place to live now and for future generations. Being more climate-ready will protect jobs, enhance the economy and safeguard the unique natural environment and cultural heritage. Public sector organisations, such as the council have a key role to play in creating a more climate ready Scotland.

The council, guided by the public sector adaptation capability framework along with the adoption of the West Lothian Adaptation Action Plan will help ensure that Scotland remains a vibrant, thriving and sustainable place to live for generations to come.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

- Scotland Adapts: A Capability Framework for a Climate Ready Public Sector'.  
<https://www.adaptationscotland.org.uk/how-adapt/your-sector/public-sector>

Appendices/Attachments – One:

Adaptation Scotland Public Sector capability framework diagram.

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## APPENDIX 1: ADAPTATION CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK

