



## Learning Brief Five – January 2009 Climate Change: Opportunities & Initiatives

### Introduction

The Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) exists to support information sharing and delivery of sustainable development across local authorities in Scotland. For more information on SSN, visit our website: <http://www.sustainable-scotland.net/>

### Who is this learning brief aimed at?

This Learning Brief is aimed principally at SSN members and their local authority colleagues. Parts of the Learning Brief may also be useful to anyone with an interest in climate change policy in Scotland.

### What is the purpose of this learning brief?

In January 2009, SSN organised a Quarterly Meeting which was intended to inform and support SSN members in their work in the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change in their local authority areas.

The meeting included a presentation from the Scottish Government's Climate Change Division which outlined key climate change policy developments due to take place at the national level in 2009. The meeting also included several presentations on the Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP) Project, which has been trialled at four Scottish Local Authorities.

This Learning Brief summarises key points that emerged from these presentations and from the group discussions that followed them.

## The Climate Change Policy Landscape in Scotland - 2009

Jenny Hamilton, Senior Climate Change Policy Adviser with the Scottish Government's Climate Change Division gave an update to delegates at the SSN January Quarterly on the current climate change policy landscape in Scotland, and how this would develop over the course of 2009.

These notes are intended to be used alongside Jenny Hamilton's PowerPoint slides, which are available to download on the SSN website here: <http://www.sustainable-scotland.net/page.asp?pg=18>

### The Climate Change (Scotland) Bill

The Climate Change (Scotland) Bill is central to the climate change policy landscape for 2009. The Bill will set out the strategic, long-term aims of the Government's plan to tackle climate change, and create the legislative framework that is needed to pursue these aims. Underneath the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill, there will sit a variety of strategies and plans, that will describe **how** the Government will achieve the long-term aims set out in the Bill.

The Climate Change (Scotland) Bill commits the Government to achieving an 80% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2050. Importantly, annual targets will also be set. These annual targets will be based on expert advice from the Committee on Climate Change, and will be set at least 12 years in advance. Although the Government has little influence in controlling emissions from aviation and shipping, emissions from these sectors will also be included. This will create an impetus to make more emissions savings in areas that the Government has greater control over.

### The UK Climate Change Act

The UK Climate Change Act received Royal Assent in November 2008. The UK Act is also seeking to achieve an 80% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2050. Whereas the Scottish Bill will have annual emissions reduction targets, the UK Act has five-yearly carbon budgets which allow for some flexibility for year-on-year variation.

The UK Climate Act also established the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), which will advise on emissions reduction targets and report on the progress made in achieving these targets. The CCC is able to advise the devolved administrations on their emissions targets, so that UK targets will be in alignment. In December, the CCC advised the UK Government on the first three carbon budgets, from 2008-2022. These budgets will be finally agreed in March 2009. In June 2009, the UK Government will publish a report that will set out **how** the Government will achieve these targets.

The UK Act does not dictate Scotland's response to tackling climate change. But, Scotland is a full partner in the UK Climate Change Act, and the Scottish Government has a good working partnership with Defra.

### The Challenge of Achieving 80%

Slide 7 of Jenny Hamilton's presentation illustrates the Scottish emissions profile in 2005, showing the size of each sector's contribution to overall Scottish emissions for that year. By 2050, emissions will have to be significantly curbed, as illustrated by the green square to the right. Although the public sector's emissions are small in comparison to some other sectors, it is clear that the influence of the public sector to reduce emissions is crucial to reductions being achieved.

### The Strategic Overview Discussion Paper

It is planned that the Strategic Overview Discussion Paper will be published around June 2009. This Paper will look at high-level policy options for achieving emissions reductions, and will focus on sectors that are key to achieving these reductions (electricity, heat, transport, housing, land use).

The Government is very much viewing the Strategic Overview as a **discussion** document, and is keen to engage, and get feedback from, key stakeholders on the policy options contained within it. The process of stakeholder engagement will take place during summer 2009, and local authority input is regarded as vital to this process.

It is hoped that the high-level Strategic Overview Discussion Paper will be a stepping stone to delivering full, fleshed-out policy documents on **how** emissions reductions will be achieved. It is planned that a report on the policies to deliver Scottish targets will be in place by 2010.

### Inputs to Delivering the Strategic Overview Discussion Paper

Slide 9 of Jenny Hamilton's presentation focused on the reports and organisations that are being drawn on to create the Strategic Overview. Central to this process is the 'Building a Low-Carbon Economy – The UK's Contribution to Tackling Climate Change' report published by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) in December 2008 and the 'Mitigating Against Climate Change in Scotland' report published by AEA in November 2008. The challenge for those

drawing up the Strategic Overview is to apply available information and figures to the Scottish context.

### **The Carbon Assessment Project**

The aim of the Scottish Government's Carbon Assessment Project (CAP) is to understand the carbon impact of government spend, and to embed carbon-impact assessment in government decision making. It is intended that the carbon-impact of government spend will be assessed both at the high-level (total government spend) and at individual policy-level. It is intended that this information will then be used to further drive down emissions.

The CAP is still very much in its infancy. PricewaterhouseCoopers has been tasked by the Scottish Government to drive the project forward. To date, a literature review has been carried out and an experts workshop held to gather opinion on the best ways forward. It is hoped that pilots relating to the project will be carried out in March/April 2009, but the Carbon Assessment Project is very much seen as an ongoing project that will continually be reassessed and developed.

Representatives from local government are involved in the CAP High-Level Steering Group, and the Government is keen to work closely with local authorities in the shaping of the CAP.

### **Emissions Trading**

Slide 11 of Jenny Hamilton's presentation focused on how emissions trading fits in to the climate change policy landscape in Scotland.

Scotland's largest emitters currently trade emissions under the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS). The Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) targets Scotland's next-largest emitters, and about two-thirds of Scottish local authorities will be involved in the CRC. The CRC will begin in April 2010.

A consultation on legislation relating to the CRC will launch in March 2009. An Information Day for those impacted by the CRC will be held around March/April. The Scottish Government will also be issuing registration packs to those impacted by the CRC in July 2009.

### **Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation Framework**

The Scottish climate is already changing, and building resilience to the impacts of climate change, such as flooding, is vital.

To this end, the Scottish Government is in the process of developing Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation Framework. The Framework seeks to increase Scotland's resilience (both human and economic resilience) to the impacts of climate change, and it is intended that the Framework will be built into decision-making in Scotland at all levels.

The Scottish Government sees local authorities as having a **vital** role to play in the adapting Scotland to its changing climate, and in the development of the Adaptation Framework.

### **Latest Developments on the European & International Climate Change Scene**

Slide 13 of Jenny Hamilton's presentation relates to the latest developments on climate change policy at the European and international levels.

At the European level, a Climate & Energy Package was agreed by the European Union in December 2009 (see slide 13 for a top-line overview). A Climate Change Adaptation white paper is also currently being developed at the European level, and should be published in 2009.

At the international level, the key event in 2009 is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference, which will take place in December in Copenhagen. The

Conference should agree a replacement deal to the international agreement on climate change reached at Kyoto in 2005.

The Scottish Government does input into the UN processes, and especially in devolved administrations groups and meetings.

### **How the Scottish Government is Communicating Climate Change**

Slide 14 of the presentation highlights how the Government is communicating the challenges of climate change to the public and to the business community. The two central public-facing initiatives are the Go Greener campaign ([www.infoscotland.com/gogreener/](http://www.infoscotland.com/gogreener/)) and the Climate Challenge Fund ([www.infoscotland.com/gogreener/61.html](http://www.infoscotland.com/gogreener/61.html)).

In terms of communicating to business, a Climate Change Business Development Group has been established, which is led by members of the business community.

As regards communicating the implications of adapting to climate change, a communication campaign on adaptation is also currently being developed. A toolkit, that local authorities and business can use to communicate the importance of adaptation is also being progressed.

### **How the Scottish Government is Working With Local Authorities on Climate Change**

The Scottish Government is involved in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) process, and also in Scotland's Climate Change Declaration. A Public Sector Leadership Group has been established to improve the environmental performance across the public sector, and is a platform for the public sector to show leadership on climate change. The Scottish Government is also involved in the COSLA Climate Change Task Group and Officer Support Group.

The Scottish Government is keen to align its work on climate change with that of the local authorities, in reducing emissions, in preparing for climate change and in communicating the challenge of climate change to others.

### **Timeline for Climate Change Policy Landscape – 2009**

Slide 16 summarises the key work areas of the Scottish Government Climate Change Division in 2009. It gives a **general indication only** of the timescales of the various work-streams.

### **Group Discussion**

Following the presentation from Jenny Hamilton, there was a group discussion with Quarterly delegates.

Issues and points raised included:-

- The absence of a climate change 'duty' on local authorities. Some delegates felt that the voluntary approach does not make climate change a priority within local authorities, and that it would be easier to get co-ordinated action across local authorities if there was a duty. It was felt by some delegates that the lack of proscription meant that it was difficult to get sufficient representation of climate change issues in a local authority SOA
- Scottish Government representatives replied that the Government has no immediate plans to institute a climate change duty on local authorities, and are currently satisfied to work within the SOA context. The Government would, however, pay attention to the evidence gathered on this issue via the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee, which will take evidence on the Scottish Climate Change Bill in early 2009 and will hear the views of relevant organisations on the need for a duty. It was suggested that concerns about the SOA process should in the first instance be raised with the COSLA Climate Change Task Group

- That the Scottish Government estimates the cost of reducing emissions by 80% by 2050 should amount to between 1-2% of GDP

### Useful Links:

For further information on the **Climate Change (Scotland) Bill** visit:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/ScottishBill>

For further information on the **Scottish Bill's relationship to the UK Climate Change Act**, visit: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/ScottishBill/Proposals-Timescales>

For further information on the **Carbon Assessment Project** visit:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/transport-sector>

For further information on the **Carbon Reduction Commitment**, visit:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/EmissionsTrading/CRC/Q/editmode/on/forceupdate/on>

For further information on **Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation Framework** visit:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/adaptation/AdaptaitonFramework>

## Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP) Project – From Pilot Projects to Mainstreaming

Presentations on the LCLIP project were given by Alan Speedie, consultant and author of the LCLIP Guidance Note for Local Authorities, Ailsa Villegas, Sustainable Development Officer at Highland Council, and Vanessa Kind, Programme Manager at SNIFFER. The following summarises the key points that emerged from these presentations.

Readers of this Learning Brief may also wish to consult the presenters' PowerPoint slides, which are available to download on the SSN website here: <http://www.sustainable-scotland.net/page.asp?pg=18>

### What is an LCLIP?

A Local Climate Impacts Profile is intended to help local authorities progress their work on adapting to the impacts of climate change. An LCLIP will identify severe weather events that affected a local authority area over a given period of time, and outline the impacts those weather events had on the area.

The intention of an LCLIP is to a) increase the resilience of a local authority to the impacts of climate change and b) reduce a local authority's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

An LCLIP is seen as a 'starter for ten' for councils engaging with climate change adaptation, and can be completed with modest resources. It is hoped that an LCLIP will be a 'springboard', providing a manageable start to a larger process of adapting to climate change within a local authority. It is also hoped that an LCLIP will make climate change adaptation 'real', and will assist with the engagement of Members and other Officers in the challenges surrounding climate change adaptation by demonstrating that there are real adaptation issues to be addressed within a council area.

### **The Organisations Behind the LCLIP Project**

The LCLIP project is a joint collaboration between the Scottish Climate Change Impacts Partnership (SCCIP) and the Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research (SNIFFER). It is supported by the UK Climate Impacts Partnership (UKCIP), who have already undertaken similar work in this area in England. The LCLIP project is managed by Vanessa Kind, Programme Manager at SNIFFER.

### **The LCLIP Pilot Project**

To date the LCLIP project is nearing the closing stages of the initial pilot phase. The LCLIP pilot project began in March 2008 and involved four Scottish local authorities: the City of Edinburgh Council, the Highland Council, Perth and Kinross Council and South Lanarkshire Council. Each council was expected to complete their LCLIP by October 2008, but most of the pilot councils have yet to fully complete their project.

### **The LCLIP Guidance Note for Local Authorities**

An LCLIP guidance document has been drawn up, based on lessons that emerged from the pilot councils' experience. The guidance is available to download here:

[http://www.sccip.org.uk/Upload/Documents/15\\_LCLIPsguidancereportfinal.pdf](http://www.sccip.org.uk/Upload/Documents/15_LCLIPsguidancereportfinal.pdf)

This guidance document will be used by local authorities involved in the next phase of the LCLIP project. It includes case studies highlighting good practice, and also provides advice on:

- getting started on an LCLIP
- conducting the research necessary for an LCLIP (using information sources both 'in-house' and outwith the local authority)
- analysing the research findings (examining the impacts of severe weather events on a local authority area, and how the council dealt with those impacts)
- the costs and resources of 'next steps' (using the LCLIP to see how councils could improve their response to extreme weather events)

### **Key Learning Points that Emerged from the LCLIP Pilot Project**

- The purpose of an LCLIP needs to be clear from the start.
- It is important to understand that the LCLIP is NOT a weather record – its focus is rather on the impacts of severe weather events and the individual council's responses to severe weather events
- Pilot councils found that there were many useful in-house resources to help develop an LCLIP. However, it was noted that these resources may be 'well hidden'.
- Local authorities are reminded that they can source help and assistance from UKCIP, who have undertaken similar work with English local authorities; their experiences can be built on when undertaking an LCLIP.
- Some of the pilot LCLIPs were undertaken by temporary members of staff. It is therefore important to ensure that data collected during the project has been properly saved, and is easily retrievable.

### **Undertaking an LCLIP – the Experience of Highland Council**

The Highland Council was one of four local authorities involved in the LCLIP pilot project. At the SSN January Quarterly Ailsa Villegas, Sustainable Development Officer at Highland Council provided a series of insights into the experience of undertaking an LCLIP, and reported on the next steps the council were undertaking after the LCLIP's completion.

Highland Council hired a temporary member of staff to undertake the LCLIP research. The post-holder was hired from the local employment agency, and a job specification was drawn up to

ensure suitable candidates were selected. The temporary member of staff was hired for a total of five weeks.

The researcher defined the time parameters of the project. In this case it was decided to investigate severe weather events in the Highland Council area between 2001 and the present day.

The researcher began by undertaking a 'media trawl' to identify severe weather events that had taken place in the Highland Council area. The internet was a central resource, and a list of 'key words' were drawn up, in order to perform methodical searches on the internet. Local newspapers were also used, but it was found that national newspapers (e.g. The Scotsman and The Herald) often had better quality information. The BBC news website was also found to be very useful.

When the media trawl was complete, a spreadsheet of severe weather events – and information about the impacts of the weather events - was drawn up. The spreadsheet was designed to be interactive, with web-links to relevant information sources. This information then formed the basis for a series of interviews that were conducted with council staff. The interviews were undertaken in a bid to ascertain further information as to the impact of the severe weather events on the council area, and to find out how the council had responded to these severe weather events.

On a practical level, the researcher often found that a lack of 'buy-in' to the project by council staff meant that it was sometimes difficult to 'get hold' of a staff member to conduct an interview. However, on the whole, interviews with staff members were found to be an invaluable part of the research process. Many staff had worked with the council for a long time, and had an intimate knowledge of their area of work. Their knowledge built on the information gained during the media trawl. Indeed, Ailsa Villegas suggested that councils undertaking an LCLIP may wish to conduct some interviews with council staff prior to undertaking the media trawl.

The research findings were also catalogued by type of weather event (e.g. high wind, icing, dense fog, heavy snow) and by the impact of the event (e.g. flooding, landslide, air travel impairment). This information was presented alongside the interactive spreadsheet.

Once the research was complete, Highland Council then ran a series of workshops, to disseminate the information to a wider audience, to engage others, and to stimulate debate.

The sustainable development team began by running a series of workshops for each of the council service departments (Planning, Education etc.). These workshops included:

- Highlighting some of the severe weather events that had taken place in the council area
- Discussing the impact of the severe weather events on the council
- Discussing future trends, and the threats and opportunities these pose to the council
- Discussing what needs to change
- Asking each service to write up a report to submit to the Climate Change Working Group, illustrating how that service could improve their responses to severe weather events

The sustainable development team also ran a series of community workshops, which were similar to the service workshops, though condensed. Feedback from the community workshops was then brought back into the council arena.

The sustainable development team are also continuing to work with other partners in developing Highland Council's adaptation strategy. Highland Council is working with the University of the Highlands & Islands, who are involved in the Clim-ATIC programme, and funding is being sought to hold workshops with UHI to facilitate knowledge sharing. It is the intention of the Highland Council to map stakeholder progress on adaptation and to create a stakeholder working group. All of this will feed into the Climate Change Strategy for Highland Council.

Ailsa Villegas felt there were real benefits to undertaking an LCLIP. She viewed the LCLIP as a first step on the road towards engaging with adaptation, and felt that she wouldn't have got the support on furthering Highland Council's adaptation planning without the LCLIP.

## LCLIP Phase 2 – How to Take Part

The national LCLIP project is now entering its second phase, and councils are being asked to express their interest now, should they wish to undertake an LCLIP.

Phase 2 Councils will be able to make use of the Guidance Note on LCLIPs. They will also be offered more 'hands on' support from SCCIP, which will take the form of three workshops to help the development of the LCLIP.

It is hoped that LCLIP data will be used to gather a picture of climate change impacts across Scotland. To this end, it is intended that an interactive map of Scotland will be created on the SNIFFER website. All the LCLIP data will also be compiled into a national report.

Those councils that wish to express their interest in undertaking an LCLIP should contact Vanessa Kind, Programme Manager at SNIFFER: [vanessa@sniffer.org.uk](mailto:vanessa@sniffer.org.uk) .

## Group Discussion

Following the presentations, representatives of the LCLIP pilot councils (James Garry, City of Edinburgh Council and Lorna Jarvie, South Lanarkshire Council) joined Ailsa Villegas, Alan Speedie and Vanessa Kind to answer questions from other councils who were considering undertaking an LCLIP in their own area.

Issues and points raised included:-

- The LCLIP started the journey of climate change adaptation in a local authority, and led to more scrutiny of weather events in services, but was not a document to “go to court with”
- The costs of the project differed across the LCLIP pilot councils, as resources had been allocated and spent differently. Some of the pilot councils had hired temporary staff to undertake the research and collation of information, while others had undertaken the work within existing staff resources.
- Some of the pilot councils had placed appeals for weather information in the local press, but these had not been very successful
- It was stressed that LCLIPs were very much about local impacts of extreme weather events, rather than weather data itself. Indeed, local weather impacts could be missed if research focused on national weather data.
- The LCLIP process had raised questions about essential maintenance – cutbacks in maintenance can lead to higher impacts from relatively mild weather events.
- Engagement with other departments had been variable between the pilot councils. Planning department/Planning colleagues were identified as essential collaborators in adaptation activities. They had been targeted by all pilot councils, with varying success.

The initial LCLIPs pilot councils were happy to share their experience with other councils who were considering taking part in next phase of the programme.

### Useful Links:

Scottish Climate Change Impacts Partnership website: <http://www.sccip.org.uk/>

SCCIP webpage on the Scottish LCLIP Pilot project, which also contains a link to the UK CIP work on LCLIPs: <http://www.sccip.org.uk/Projects/Default.aspx?pid=39>

UK Climate Change Impacts Partnership website: <http://www.ukcip.org.uk/>

SNIFFER website: <http://www.sniffer.org.uk/>

For further information on the Highland Council LCLIP project, and to download their Media Trawl summary, visit:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/sustainabledevelopment/climatechange/04-local-climate-impact-profile.htm>