

# Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

## 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Tuesday 21 June 2022

### Evidence session on the role of local government and its cross-sectoral partners in financing and delivering a net-zero Scotland

#### Note by the clerk

#### Introduction

1. In November 2021, the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee launched an inquiry into [the role of local government and its cross-sectoral partners in financing and delivering a net-zero Scotland](#).
2. This inquiry aims to seek out the main barriers at a local level to Scotland reaching its target of being net zero in emissions by 2045. It will consider what practical steps councils are taking to break them down, in partnership with business, the voluntary sector, and local communities. It is also considering—
  - what role the Scottish Government and its agencies can play in both supporting and, where necessary, challenging local government to work well with its partners to deliver net zero
  - how local government can play its part in ensuring a “just transition” to net zero, i.e. one that is economically and socially fair.
3. The Committee launched this inquiry with an open [Call for Views](#), posing 12 questions. It has taken evidence at seven Committee meetings so far—
  - On 11 January, the Committee heard from representatives of five different local authorities with different net zero policies and priorities. [The Official Report for this meeting is here](#).
  - On 18 January, the Committee heard from the Sustainable Scotland Network, and community groups on the local route to net zero. [The Official Report is here](#).
  - On 25 January, the Committee heard from representatives of the business and private investment sectors. [The Official Report is here](#).
  - On 22 March, the Committee heard from a panel on the role of the planning system in helping reaching net zero and a panel on skills and vocational training. [The Official Report is here](#).

- On 29 March, the Committee heard more evidence on the theme of vocational skills and workforce readiness. [The Official Report is here.](#)
- On 3 May, the Committee heard from a panel of transport experts on the role of local authorities in helping to decarbonise transport. [The Official Report is here.](#)
- On 17 May, the Committee heard from an expert panel discussing the decarbonisation of heat in buildings. [The Official Report is here.](#)
- On 24 May, the Committee discussed local government's role in sustaining and promoting renewables with industry and local government representatives. [The Official report is here.](#)
- On 31 May, the Committee heard from the "Green City" of Freiburg, to learn what steps it had taken to make itself a world leader amongst local authorities in its approach to sustainable low-carbon living. [The Official Report is here.](#)
- On 14 June the Committee discussed how housebuilding could contribute better to net zero goals. [The Official Report will be posted here when published.](#)

## Key themes at 21 June meeting

4. On 21 June, the Committee will take evidence from two panels of experts: on co-financing and on the natural environment.
5. Topics the discussion on co-financing is likely to touch upon include how local authorities can secure private investment in projects to deliver the transition to net zero.
6. On the natural environment, the Committee will explore how councils use nature-based solutions to meet climate change and biodiversity targets, including consideration of best practice. The resources and skills required to do this, as well as partnerships and financing projects is also of interest to the Committee.
7. The following witnesses sent submissions in response to the call for views:
  - [Association of British Insurers](#)
  - [Comhairle nan Eilean Siar](#)
  - [City of Edinburgh Council](#)
  - [Scottish Water](#)
  - [NatureScot](#)

## Next steps

8. The Committee will continue to hold evidence sessions after summer recess, in early autumn. It is also currently undertaking a programme of fact-finding visits, with Stirling, Aberdeen and Orkney having been visited so far, and more visits planned for September. It expects to report to the Parliament this autumn, with recommendations addressed to the Scottish Government.