

Charter 14.2 Green Champions

Improvement Project Title: Carbon Reduction - Green Champions
Executive Sponsor (Chair of Outcome Improvement Group): Jillian Evans
Project Lead: Alison Leslie, Aberdeen City Council
Aim statement
Aim: Reduce Aberdeen’s carbon emissions by 30% by 2021
Link to Local Outcome Improvement Plan:
<i>“Our environment is integral to the quality of life in the city and is vital to encouraging the wellbeing of its citizens.”</i>
Stretch Outcome 14: Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 42.5% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate
14.1 Key Drivers: Reducing emissions across the city through delivery of Aberdeen’s Sustainable Energy Action Plan ‘Powering Aberdeen’.
This project charter is also relevant to a related LOIP Improvement Project Aim: Reduce the generation of waste in Aberdeen by 2021. There may be the opportunity for Green Champions to support and partner to help with this project as part of sustainability opportunities available to staff.
Business case
Many energy and climate initiatives are already taking place across all organisations. These are mostly focused on strategies, policies, plans and projects for the organisations operations and assets themselves. There tends to be less focus on engaging the wider staff/ community in this sphere. This project aims to plug that gap, by empowering others to design and deliver change outside of their usual scope of work.
A key improvement measure identified in the LOIP is for public sector workforce ambassadors to promote, encourage and engage low carbon living and working. The development of Champions is a change idea identified under an emission reduction driver diagram carried out by the Sustainable City Group in February 2020 (Appendix 1).
Green Champions are volunteer led staff schemes in an organisation, that can identify areas of improvement, drive change towards the sustainable and resource efficient behaviour and opportunities that can have the potential for long-term cost and carbon efficiencies. Champions can help to instigate change, provide education, and create a platform of a sustainable culture and practice through engagement, enthusiasm, passion, and motivation.
Though it should be noted, that Green Champions can contribute to the wider aim to reduce Aberdeen’s emissions through improved understanding to support behaviour change and the testing and implementation of measures to reduce emissions; these changes alone will not be sufficient to meet the city carbon reduction aim. The LOIP indicates an Aberdeen baseline of 1,867,497 kilotonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Kt

CO2e) and 1,532,256 (Kt CO2e) in 2014. Aberdeen City Council's emissions were 31,090.45 tonnes of CO2e in 2018/19.

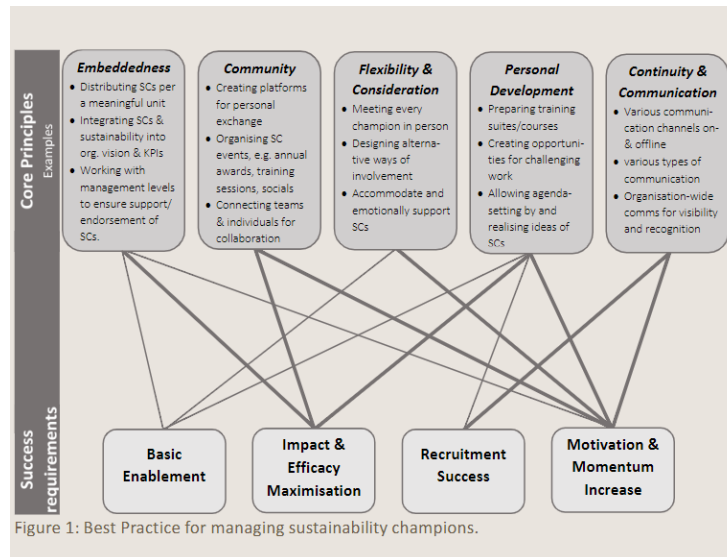
Supporting action to meet key drivers - Green Champions can form part of wider organisation planning on work to address climate change and sustainable topics, this includes:

- Contributing to the LOIP stretch outcome 14, addressing climate change; and the key improvement measure of: *No. of public sector workforce ambassadors of low carbon living and working.*
- The development of a Green Champion scheme can support the public sector with putting in place activities to meet public bodies duties, under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. These require public sector organisations to reduce emissions, adapt to climate change, act sustainably and report annually on progress. Guidance on putting Public Bodies Climate Duties into practice states: "Public bodies should raise awareness internally and externally on climate change and work towards buy-in from staff at all levels of the organisation, supporting and enabling them in understanding the contribution they can make in addressing climate change."
- The introduction of the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, has set Scottish targets for Net Zero emissions by 2045 and this will require increased action to reduce carbon emissions in the public sector. Taking a community led approach to behavioural change not only empowers individuals but the social influence that can spread across teams, departments, partners across the city contributing towards Net Zero. (5.1 Just Transition commission Report Interim Report, 2020 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/transition-commission-interim-report/pages/10/>).
- The development of Green Champions aligns with:
 - UN Sustainable Development Goal on Climate Action - 13.3, improving education, awareness raising and human institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.
 - The Net Zero Vision for Aberdeen & Strategic Infrastructure Plan, and the transition in Aberdeen towards Scottish climate change targets.
 - Aberdeen City Council approved an Energy and Climate Route map in May 2020 outlining a commitment to set a year for net zero carbon emissions and to put in place measures to manage climate risks to Council assets and operations. Governance for this work includes an Awareness and Behaviour Change group. Actions include: Explore opportunities through person to person and/ or digital networks to share and take forward their climate solutions. Support to encourage others to follow our lead from every employee outwards to deliver change across the organisation and influence it across the City.

Informing the development of green champions

Aberdeen City Council hosted a 3-month placement project with an MSc student. The project carried out 13 interviews, to learn more about good practice for similar staff sustainability schemes already in place and operating elsewhere in the UK. In addition, it gathered 235 responses from a Council staff survey to learn more about sustainable behaviour, knowledge, and attitudes. The project results were designed around 5 core principles: Basic Enablement; Impact & Efficacy Maximisation; Recruitment Success; Motivation & Momentum increase that contribute towards long term successes.

With these identified principles and the results from interviews and surveys, the following



Recommendations were provided:

1. *Strategic Placement of SCs*
2. *Increasing organisational endorsement*
3. *Clear messages and communication*
4. *Designing for progress*
5. *Harnessing resources for development & training*
6. *Establishing internal collaboration*
7. *Drawing on the expertise of a wider network*

The recommended advice aligns with the plans of the Green Champion Scheme and highlights the importance of issues such as support, embedded sustainable endorsements at a management level, external networking, and evolution of Green Champions. Green Champions operate in a range of public and private organisations, as part of the implementation and of Green Champions, tapping into local experienced companies would be advantageous to the growth and delivery of the scheme. Networking and learning opportunities from similar schemes ie at Inverdee House (home to Nature Scot, SEPA and JNCC where they have a working scheme in place) can provide partnership and collaborative opportunities.

Measures: (How will we know if a change is an improvement?)

Key LOIP improvement measures that will be used to measure Green Champions:

Outcome Measures

- % reduction in Aberdeen’s carbon emissions
 - LOIP Baseline: (Aberdeen carbon emissions) - 1,867,497 kilotonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Kt CO2e)
2014 data - 1,532,256 (Kt CO2e)
Target:1,307,247.2 (Kt CO2e)
 - UK Government – Emissions of Carbon Dioxide Local Authority Areas Baseline (2005) – 1,875,100 (Kt CO2e)
2018 – 1,210,400 (Kt CO2e)
- % reduction of public sector organisation emissions
 - Aberdeen City Council measures [carbon emissions annually](#):
2015/16 - 46,371 tonnes of carbon dioxide (tCO2e)
2018/19 - 31,090.45 (tCO2e)
- % reduction in waste (proxy measure) – test change
- % reduction in energy use (proxy measure) – test change

Processes Measures

- No. of staff carbon reduction initiatives
- No. of people taking part in environment and sustainability educational activities (wider engagement)
- Outcome of initiatives e.g. reduction in paper use
- No. of public sector workforce ambassadors of low carbon living and working (No. Green Champions signed up)
 - Baseline 2020= 0 participants
 - Target 2021 = 13
 - Target >2022 = 26
- Communication measures (analytics and engagement, including no.s accessing online mechanism for information sharing)

Notes: There are a number of factors that can influence carbon emissions, e.g. a cold winter will increase energy demand and emissions. There are also other initiatives that will contribute to a reduction in emissions. It can be challenging to disaggregate the outcomes of these and therefore directly attribute reductions to specific interventions. As such, the success of Green Champion schemes may not be fully reflected in overall emissions data alone. Therefore, some proxy measures will be used, e.g. reduction in waste, energy use, etc which can provide an indication of contribution from Green Champions interventions to the overall emission reduction aim.

Change ideas

Creating 'green champions' to help deliver grass roots change focused on emissions reduction.

A visible staff Green Champions network will be created and developed to encourage a more sustainable culture in line with the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, contribute to the Council Energy and Climate Route map and Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019. The Green Champions concept will be informed by learning from similar schemes elsewhere, monitored using outcome and process measures; with successful change ideas incorporated into a wider roll out of the network. Green Champions would lead the following change ideas:

Plan, test, implement and develop a low/no budget, easy to implement programme of staff carbon reduction initiatives, led by the volunteer Green Champions network.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Switch off campaign e.g. lights buildings/ computers/ monitors rather than stand by.
- Green Champion paper "lite" or plastic free challenge – encourage staff uptake.
- Seek buy in/endorsement of management level support to ensure initiatives are enabled throughout the organisation.
- Measure the change, promote the "wins" and roll out/ mainstream successful carbon reduction measures.

Through Green Champions develop a staff led awareness programme to support behaviour change, build staff understanding on carbon reduction and taking action on climate change. Test staff led methods, information and messages to empower wider staff to contribute to actions.

- Establish an engagement plan for and implement Green Champion communication activities to assist staff understanding of carbon reduction projects and processes

already taking place. As well as encourage staff uptake e.g. encourage reuse and recycling, linking to national initiatives i.e. Recycle Week.

- Identify the support, training and resources available and disseminate information to staff, through Green Champions.

Establish/ test an online mechanism to enable information sharing, collaboration and building peer to peer understanding of any Green Champions energy saving ideas and good practice.

- Relationship and team building - instil a Green Champions network of support.
- Build on collaborative and networking opportunities.
- Ensure key support in management roles to provide opportunities for Green Champions to make suggestions and “go with it”.
- Highlight areas where Green Champions are effective.

The focus is not limited to climate change as the Green Champion network can provide opportunities to encompass all aspects of activities to improve our environment whether it is in a workplace, community group, at home.

Potential Barriers:

- Lack of successful engagement with the employees / potential champions
- Job roles that cannot implement change
- Lack of senior management support to unlock the changes championed
- Inconsistent support from Champions to help develop and implement initiatives
- Relying on same actions, expecting same results in different departments
- Timing of implementation of Green Champions and their initiatives to ensure support and participation towards change
- Unrealistic goal setting and balance of staff priorities, resources and workloads can reduce effectiveness of Green Champion roles
- Not being able to extract / quantify data / results
- Poor succession planning

Project Team:

- Alison Leslie, Senior Sustainability Officer
- Kat Ramsay, Sustainability Trainee
- The Awareness and Behaviour Change Subgroup of the wider Council Energy and Climate Plan Group, including People and Organisation and Education.
- Sue Lawrence, Nature Scot
- Kris Hultman, Waste and Recycling
- Debjani Sarkar, NHSG Sustainability Team
- Mai Muhammad, Energy Management
- Stephan Jindra, Frazer Ramsay, AUSA Sustainability Coordinator/University of Aberdeen.
- Tara Murray Sustainability and Climate Change Officer, Aberdeenshire Council
- Private Sector representative contacted (tbc)

Outline Project Plan		
Project Stage	Actions	Timescale
Getting Started (Project Score 1-3)	<p>What initial activities are required to get started?</p> <p><u>Completed</u> Background research on Green Champions/Work with MSc student around Green Champions. Form the Council Energy and Climate Awareness and Behaviour Change Group</p> <p><u>Planned</u> Phase 1: Establish a “Green Pioneers” test group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit/invite Pioneers to develop and plan Green Champions roles. • Training and information workshops. • Establish roles and responsibilities, set objectives, identify resources, training, and communication opportunities. • Create marketing and communication plan. • Test and trial initial carbon reduction initiatives. • Follow up/ learning opportunities. <p>Phase 2- Recruit and establish Green Champions network across the wider organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction Meeting. • Training and information workshops. • Run initiatives/ actions set by the Champions, monitor, and develop (initiatives set by the Champions). • Follow up communications/ obtain feedback. • Learning and self-reflection, progress, monitoring and measuring/ lesson learned. • Share successes and promote. • Look at collaboration opportunities, networking, and wider scale projects. 	<p>When do you expect to complete this stage?</p> <p>May-September 2020 July 2020</p> <p>November 2020/ January 2021</p> <p>2021</p>

<p>Designing and Testing Changes (Project Score 4-7)</p>	<p>What activities are required to start testing changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a “Green Pioneers” test group – test/ trial small-scale projects. • Pioneers feedback session. • When there is sufficient testing recruit a volunteer Green Champions Network. • Develop a peer to peer support network for Green Champions, open/ transparent communications. • Produce information/ resources for Green Champions to support designing, testing, and refining ideas, concepts, and initiatives. • Research/ link with external or partner organisations with similar programmes. 	<p>When do you expect to complete this stage? November 2020/ – January 2021</p> <p>2021</p> <p>2021-2022</p>
<p>Implementing and sustaining changes that demonstrate improvement (Project Score 7-10)</p>	<p>What actions would be required to implement and sustain the changes that have resulted in improvement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression development to be explored and new initiatives, partnerships, and evolving relationships to be encouraged. Learning/ networking with other ambassador schemes/ similar initiatives. • Allow flexibility in input - so workloads are not overburdened. • Establish learning, development, and training opportunities for Champions. Build on knowledge/ experience gained through Green Champions roles e.g. e-learns, discussion groups, networking etc. • Champions to self-assess initiatives, monitor progress, and evaluate their outcomes. • Monitor impact of Green Champions, where possible collect any data gathered by champions, provide feedback to management. • Share lessons learned and promote successes. 	<p>When do you expect to complete this stage?</p> <p>2020</p> <p>2021</p>
<p>Spreading Changes (Project Score 9-10)</p>	<p>What actions are required to reach the full scale of the project?</p> <p>Taking on board feedback from the Green Pioneers (Phase 1) to establish and develop Green Champions (Phase 2). Succession building of Green Champions throughout the organisation (phase 3), increasing numbers of champions enlisted, increase the scale of activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued feedback from champions. • Expand the network across the organisation ensure representation in key strategic areas. 	<p>When do you expect to complete this stage? 2021</p> <p>2020-2022</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration/ partnership working - sharing ideas and creating opportunities. • Promote Green Champions campaigns/ successes. • Highlight/ emphasise partnership and collaborative efforts. • Use range of communication channels. • Review lessons learned. <p>Test the effectiveness of scaling up staff led initiatives across Aberdeen. The ambitions of Green Champions are not limited to the council as an organisation but to grow across partners and external organisations across the city. Therefore, (phase 4) seeks to expand the network/ learning; increase champions across partners and roll out to partner and external organisations.</p>	<p>>2022-2023</p>
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Appendix 1 - Driver Diagram - Emission Reduction

26 February 2020

