

Case Study // Round Table SDG 11: Financing the transition to sustainable cities and communities: challenges and opportunities

The case for integrating the SDGs at international, national and local level with reference to the Government Strategy for Scotland and the development plan for the City of Glasgow.

Glasgow City Council

Levels: national, subnational and local

Summary

This case study looks at the newly published Government programme for Scotland 2017-18 ('A Nation with Ambition') and within this the work of City Planning in Glasgow. The degree of alignment with SDGs is considered between these levels of Government and the role of a UNECE Charter Centre in assisting this understanding is considered.

Situation

In the United Kingdom, development planning and housing policy together with regulation of the land market and the housing market is the responsibility of national government. However, the UK is a state where the implementation of the statutory and policy frameworks for planning and housing are devolved to the national parliaments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Scotland, the Scottish Parliament legislates for planning and for housing, when necessary, judicial review of these systems takes place within the Scottish legal system. Points of law may be referred to the UK Supreme Court and, pending the outcome of the Brexit process, to the European Court of Justice.

The Scottish Parliament has enacted laws and prepares national (Scottish) policy that covers planning and housing. The spatial expression of these policies is contained within the [The National Planning Framework](#) and local authorities are required by law to prepare and approve a local development plan for their area. This must be accompanied by an Action Programme that expresses the delivery on the policies. [Glasgow City Development Plan](#) was adopted as the statutory planning document for the development in the City in March 2017. In December 2017, a new Bill was laid before Parliament ('The Planning (Scotland) Bill') that has the objective of furthering the ability of the planning system to deliver development change, to enable communities to be involved, and to promote the delivery of infrastructure. This work takes place within the Government's Programme for Scotland (currently A Nation with Ambition 2017-18) which acts as a national strategy for action.

In July 2015, the First Minister announced that the Scottish Government would adopt the SDGs, making Scotland one of the first nations to commit to the Goals. The Scottish Government's plans for implementing the SDGs in Scotland through the [National Performance Framework](#) and the [Scottish National Action Plan for Human Rights \(SNAP Plan\)](#). These commitments have been recognized by the UN.

The Scottish Government has mapped where action with the implementation of the SDGs will be prioritised in Scotland. This shows progress with outcomes for SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16 and 17. A link to download the Scottish Government paper is given at the end of this document.

Strategy

At present, there is no national nor local policy in Scotland expressly designed to implement the SDGs. However, in Scotland, in common with most advanced economies, has adopted most of not all of the aspirations of Agenda 2030 are already embraced by supra-national (i.e. European – EU), national, regional and local law and policy. The legislative system above, whilst not expressed specifically in terms of the SDG's, has some degree of alignment.

The principal issue concerns the extent of the degree of alignment in respect of the SDGs and those that are expressly under consideration at the Regional Forum in March 2018 namely:

- The financing of effective policies in pursuit (SDG 11.1)
- Policies and financial mechanisms in place to reduce the environmental footprint of cities including the improvement of air quality, waste management, sustainable transport and risk management associated with extreme weather events contingent on climate change – particularly storms and flooding (SDG 11.2, 11.5, 11.6)
- Strategies in pursuit of ICT including superfast fibre broadband (SDG 11.b), and
- integrated and participatory urban planning promote effective use of existing financial resources and PPPs to lever new sources of finance (11.3, 11.a).

In Scotland, the document that brings all of this together as a strategy and programme for action is the Scottish Government's annual programme, currently entitled [A Nation with Ambition 2017-18](#). This specifically sets out a range of actions and targets including the Scottish Government's commitment to meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals and incorporate them into the work of government at every level. The section of most relevance to this case study is:

Building a fairer Scotland

Upholding the rights and values of an open, inclusive, diverse and progressive country through protecting the most vulnerable in society and tackling poverty as part of a fairer society. Empowering communities to take decisions locally with control of budgets more in the hands of local communities. Housing and homelessness – good quality, warm and affordable housing is a target to ensure a fair society for this and future generations and construction of social housing at a faster rate than any other part of the UK. Scotland has achieved much over the last few years in terms of community engagement and decision-making in the hands of communities. Scotland is an open and tolerant society, committed to respecting, protecting and implementing human rights and demonstrating equality, dignity and respect for all. Scottish public services are built on a 'rights based approach' through the UK Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights

This aspiration includes a number of specific targets including:

- Investment of £3 billion to deliver 50,000 affordable homes through a significant publicly funded investment in housing stock
- Introduction new energy efficiency standards for the private rented housing
- Increased action to tackle homelessness, rough sleeping and drug use by setting a clear national objective to eradicate rough sleeping
- A comprehensive review of local decision-making
- Implementation of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, including Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement and guidance on engaging communities in decisions relating to land

Results and impact

Please elaborate on the specific results. Preferably, summarise the results in bullet point

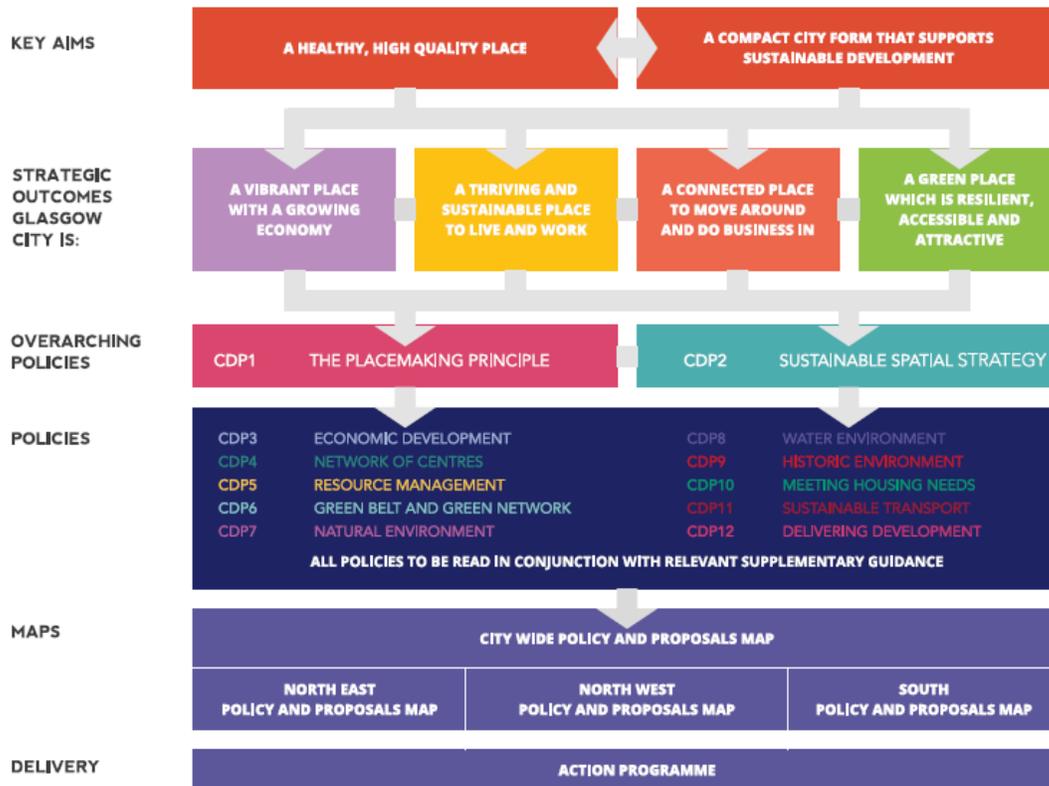
- The statutory plan for Glasgow contains a policy framework that can be successfully mapped to the SDGs (see diagram below)
- It is also the spatial expression for the delivery of, amongst other development priorities, the statutory [Glasgow Housing Strategy](#) which is in turn the framework for the [Strategic Housing Investment Plan](#).
- The City Development Plan and Housing Strategy are based on a ‘Housing Needs and Demands’ Assessment that covers all types of housing. This helps to identify what sort of development will need to be delivered.
- The existence of a UNECE Charter Centre as established at the Glasgow Urban Laboratory is a helpful mechanism to assist in monitoring and documenting the degree of alignment between the SDG goals, national strategy and local action at the city level.

Challenges and lessons learned

- Private sector delivery on housing has slowed ([Residential land supply monitor](#))
- The greater proportion of housing is delivered through strategic programming of Housing, where public finance instruments can stimulate action.
- Previously developed land has physical constraints that require significant understanding to minimise development funding deficits and delays in constructions, and establish how to target funding (e.g. Glasgow City Deal for Infrastructure delivery)
- Climate Change adaptation, especially in respect of managing flooding and drainage has become integral to the physical development of the significant parts of the City. ([Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Plan](#)) This requires understanding of natural and ecosystem services to derive greater benefits. Nature based solutions and the development of natural capital accounting tools will be of importance in the future.
- Connectivity, both digital and physical movement between places, will shape future city forms and uses.

Potential for replication

- A solution designed for one jurisdiction and legal system may not be appropriate for different contexts. It is important to concentrate on principles.
- The principal lesson learned from the case of Scotland and Glasgow is one of alignment: alignment of principles at national and local level to help ensure a degree of consensus.
- The existence of a UNECE Charter Centre can assist government at national and local levels in examining alignment of SDG goals with national policy and local action.



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