

### Ministerial Statement: Scotland's plan to tackle climate change and reduce emissions, Thursday 1 March, 2pm

## 1. Key Points

- The draft Climate Change Plan failed to deliver Policies which will meet the Scottish Government's aim of achieving a modal shift away from private car use.
- The transport Policies set out ignore the multiple co-benefits of public transport and active travel, including public health, air quality, equalities, congestion, and sustainable economic growth.
- The transport Policies were based on flawed and unrealistic assumptions regarding traffic growth.
- The final Climate Change Plan needs to give greater priority to walking, cycling and public transport to deliver wider benefits whilst reducing carbon emissions.

## 2. Introduction

As a result of decades of inaction, carbon emissions from transport have barely fallen since 1990. Indeed, transport is now the largest source of carbon emissions in Scotland, accounting for 28% of national emissions. The draft Climate Change Plan (hereafter CCP) set out a number of Policies and Proposals to reduce carbon emissions from transport. However, Transform Scotland has serious concerns that the actions set out in the draft CCP fail in multiple areas and rely too heavily on the use of private cars. This briefing sets out our primary concerns.

## 3. Transport in the draft Climate Change Plan focused nearly exclusively on private car use

As stated by the Rural Economy & Connectivity (REC) Committee in their report to the Scottish Government, the draft CCP failed to set out Policies to deliver a modal shift to sustainable modes of transport. Reducing the number of journeys made by car is a National Indicator of the Scottish Government -- one upon which it is currently failing to make progress. Too many of the Policies and Proposals in the draft CCP are based on the assumption that current modal trends will remain the same in the future. It is highly inconsistent to base many of the Policies in the CCP on electrifying private cars, as this will do nothing to achieve the Government's National Indicator to achieve a modal shift to active travel and public transport. The REC Committee specifically called on the Scottish Government to set out Policies in the CCP to increase bus use, and to specify how the Government's target of 10% of journeys to be by bike by 2020 will be met.

## 4. The draft CCP ignores the multiple co-benefits offered by sustainable transport

As well as reducing carbon emissions, active travel (i.e. walking and cycling) and public transport deliver multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. Increasing rates of walking and cycling has huge potential to improve physical and mental health, as well as reducing congestion and air pollution. Likewise, buses play a key role in alleviating congestion and air pollution, particularly in urban areas. Buses are also a major contributor to sustainable economic growth, with three large bus companies being based in Scotland -- one of which is a world leader in the manufacturing and production of low-carbon buses (ADL). Furthermore, walking, cycling and public transport are disproportionately used by people on lower incomes, offering a vital means of accessing services and employment. However, the CCP fails to acknowledge these multiple wider benefits delivered through public transport and active travel, and instead focuses nearly exclusively on private cars.

## 5. Transport 'Policies' were based on flawed and unrealistic assumptions regarding traffic growth

It is clear that the outputs from the TIMES model have been reached through flawed and unrealistic assumptions regarding traffic levels. Almost all of the Policies and Proposals for reducing carbon emissions from transport appear to have been based on Transport Scotland's forecast of a 27% increase in private car use by 2035. Given that vehicle use increased by less than 5% between 2004 and 2014, this forecast is vastly inconsistent with current traffic trends. It appears that the outputs from the TIMES model are nearly all centred around private cars, with almost no attention given to Policies to achieve a modal shift away from private car use. The clear failure of the inputs used for the TIMES model raises serious questions regarding both the forecasting used by Transport Scotland, and the process undertaken by the Scottish Government to set out the Policies and Proposals for transport in the CCP. We were pleased to see the REC Committee also raise concerns regarding the assumptions made when calculating traffic growth forecasts in the draft CCP.

## 6. Conclusion and recommendations

The draft CCP failed to set out Policies and Proposals which deliver wider benefits for Scotland, with nearly all actions focused on private car use. It appears that this is the result of serious misjudgements made in traffic forecasting models, with a failure to consult external stakeholders regarding these forecasts. Whilst the draft CCP sets out reasonable carbon reduction targets for transport, it was a missed opportunity to deliver wider benefits through active travel and public transport, such as reduced congestion, improved air quality, improved public health, and equalities. We echo the Parliament's REC Committee in recommending that the Government amend the final CCP to include Policies which:

- **Focus on traffic demand reduction.**
- **Achieve a modal shift away from private car use to walking, cycling and public transport.**
- **Incentivise bus use and reverse the decline in bus patronage.**
- **Achieve the Government's target for 10% of journeys to be by bike by 2020.**

**Scotland's alliance for sustainable transport**

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We campaign for walking, cycling and public transport to be the easiest and most affordable options for everyone. Our diverse membership brings together public, private and third sector organisations from across Scotland. We are a registered Scottish charity (SC041516).