Royal Town Planning Institute

Climate Action Plan

713385

RSK

RSK GENERAL NOTES

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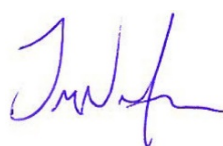**Date:**   21st August 2020

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1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Project Environment

Climate change is the alteration of enduring weather conditions, as a result of interactions between the Earth's atmosphere[1] and its various physical, chemical and biological processes[2]. The climate changes periodically; often due to variations in solar output and our planetary orbit, however, the present warming trend is, for the first time, the result of human activity[3]. Many human activities emit greenhouse gases (GHGs) which trap heat within the atmosphere, whilst other activities, such as deforestation, limit the capacity of natural systems to sequester these gases. The consequence of this is unprecedented warming leading to the rapid destabilisation of the prevailing climate; anthropogenic climate change.

The impacts of this are 'severe, pervasive and irreversible'[4]. They include significant threats to food and water resources, human health and security, as well as local and global ecosystems. It is for this reason that society must act to achieve substantial sustained reductions in emissions whilst adapting to the impacts of climate change. This requires strong and decisive leadership, to create dynamic action to achieve a just and timely transition towards a net-zero economy, in accordance with the emissions reduction ambitions of the UK and its devolved governments.

1.2   Project Summary

To support this transition, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) commissioned RSK Group (RSK) to undertake a Climate Impact Assessment (hereafter referred to as the 'Impact Assessment') and develop a Climate Action Plan (hereafter referred to as the 'Action Plan') to quantify and significantly reduce its emissions, as required by the RTPI Corporate Strategy 2020-2030[5].

This document constitutes the RTPI Action Plan and its purpose is to provide clear objectives for the reduction of GHG emissions, supported by a range of SMART costed actions to manage and, where possible, mitigate the climate impact of RTPI. To achieve this, the Action Plan employs the findings of the Impact Assessment (a quantitative assessment of RTPI's GHG emissions), including its supplementary components (interviews, benchmarking and hotspot assessment), to support the realisation of RTPI's corporate vision and mission through the appropriate alignment of climate action with business priorities (as per the RTPI Corporate Strategy 2020-2030) and best practice.

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[1]S, Jackson., Climate change. Britannica. Available from: https://www.britannica.com/science/climate-change. Last visited: 1st July 2020.

[2] International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme., Earth system definitions. International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme. Available from: http://www.igbp.net/globalchange/earthsystemdefinitions.4.d8b4c3c12bf3be638a80001040.html. Last visited: 1st July 2020.

[3] NASA., Climate change: how do we know?. NASA. Available from: https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/. Last visited: 1st July 2020.

[4] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change., 2014. Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report Summary for Policymakers. Intergovernmental Panel on climate Change. Available from: https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/AR5_SYR_FINAL_SPM.pdf. Last visited: 1st July 2020

[5] Royal Town Planning Institute., 2020. Corporate Strategy. Available from: https://www.rtpi.org.uk/about-the-rtpi/corporate-strategy/. Last visited: 31th July 2020.

1.3   Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

The RTPI came into being in 1914 and was granted Royal Charter in 1959. It is the UK's leading planning body for spatial, sustainable and inclusive planning and is the largest planning institute in Europe with over 25,000 members. The RTPI is:

- a membership organisation and Chartered Institute responsible for maintaining professional standards and accrediting world class planning training courses nationally and internationally;

- a charity whose charitable purpose is to advance the science and art of planning (including town, country and spatial planning) for the benefit of the public; and

- a learned society.

The RTPI is governed, under the provisions of its Royal Charter and Byelaws, through a Board of Trustees with a General Assembly, supported by various regional and specialism-based committees; all of whom seek to deliver the following in pursuit of their vision and mission (outlined below):

- The RTPI stands up for planning and promotes good planning policy and practice

- The RTPI represents, supports and promotes planners and the profession

- The RTPI educates, trains and maintains advanced professional standards

It is the vision of the RTPI 'to be the world's leading professional planning body. [Their] ambition is to promote healthy, socially inclusive, economically and environmentally sustainable places'[6].

It is the mission of the RTPI 'to advance the science and art of planning, working for the long-term common good and wellbeing of current and future generations'[7].

To achieve their vision and mission, the RTPI pursues four integrated and holistic priorities. These are:

1. Promoting the value of membership and professionalism (the RTPI will deliver a compelling member value proposition)

2. Supporting planning services (the RTPI will be the leading advocate for campaigning for well-resourced, effective planning functions)

3. Raising the profile of planning (the RTPI will invest in an ambitious communications and public affairs strategy and capability to better campaign and articulate the purpose and value of planning)

4. Promoting equality, diversity and inclusivity (the RTPI will champion a diverse and representative profession)

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[6] Royal Town Planning Institute., 2020. Corporate Strategy. Available from: https://www.rtpi.org.uk/about-the-rtpi/corporate-strategy/. Last visited: 31th July 2020.

[7] Royal Town Planning Institute., 2020. Corporate Strategy. Available from: https://www.rtpi.org.uk/about-the-rtpi/corporate-strategy/. Last visited: 31th July 2020.

Underpinning these 'four pillars' are the foundations of the RTPI through which climate action is, and will further be, embedded. The foundations of the RTPI are:

- Member services
- Nations and regions
- International strategy
- Research and policy
- Brand

- Diversifying sources of income
- Professional volunteering
- Governance
- The right home for the RTPI
- Business planning

This Climate Action Plan will contribute towards the embedding of climate action within the foundations of the RTPI, taking into consideration the four pillars, through the delivery of clear objectives and SMART actions to be implemented across the organisation, with the view to supporting the ambition of the RTPI to lead the way on climate action and best practice.

2 INTERNAL CONSULTATION

2.1 Summary

It is the intention of this Action Plan to deliver objectives and actions to reduce RTPI's emissions, in a manner which supports the on-going success of the organisation. For this reason, it is of critical importance that a comprehensive understanding of the organisation's present and proposed operations is achieved, so as to align the outcomes of this Action Plan with the vision and values of its stakeholders.

To accomplish this, RSK conducted scripted, semi-structured interviews with each of RTPI's Head of Service, as well as members of its Senior Executive Team as follows:

- S. Woodford Head of English Regions
- J. Rees Finance Director
- R. Hildreth Head of Communication and Marketing
- C. McLaren Director of Scotland and Ireland
- R. Willmott Director of Wales and Northern Ireland
- L. Mitchell Head of Human Resources and Office Services
- R. Patrick Commercial and Corporate Services Director
- M. Koch Head of Membership
- A. Ramdhan Head of Information Technology
- C. Pagdin Head of Planning Aid England
- A. Close Head of Careers and Professional Development
- R. Blyth Head of Policy, Practice and Research
- S. Bridge Chair of the Board
- V. Hills Chief Executive

This approach was chosen over alternative interview techniques so as to provide structure, whilst further allowing for the ability to adapt the process to achieve the necessary desired outcomes of this exercise. Such desired outcomes include:

- an in-depth understanding of present and proposed business operations;
- the identification of corporate culture and values;
- the development of positive communicative relationships; and
- the attainment of early stakeholder buy-in to proposed outcomes.

The interviews were undertaken on the weeks commencing the 16th and 22nd June 2020. For each interview, two members of RSK's team were present to lead questions and take notes as appropriate. With the exception of one telephone call, all meetings were undertaken using face-to-face video conferencing software (Microsoft Teams).

2.1.1 Consultation Questions

Prior to the interviews taking place, consultation questions were drafted and subsequently approved by RTPI's Project Team. The approved questions were:

Part One: Business Operations

1. What is the function of your division?
    a. What are the main activities?
    b. What is the scope of these activities?
        i. Geographical scope
        ii. Number of people involved in delivery
            a. Employees
            b. Volunteers (national and regional)
2. How has the function of your division changed since the lockdown?
3. How is this delivered? What activities has changed?
    a. Have these new activities been positive or negative?
    b. Why have they been positive or negative?
    c. Would you like to embrace these activities going forward?
4. What will be the function of your division going forward?
5. Why will the function change?
6. What does your division do well in terms of carbon efficiency and mitigation?
7. What does your division not do well in terms of carbon efficiency and mitigation?

Part Two: Carbon Mitigation

1. In your opinion what are the greatest emissions sources within your division?
    a. Buildings (quantity /proportion/energy source)
    b. Travel (type/frequency)
    c. Events (frequency/location/type)
    d. Waste (type/quantity)
2. Where do you think significant emissions reductions can be achieved?
3. How do you think significant emissions reductions can be achieved?
    a. What are the quick wins?
    b. What are the long-term aspirations?
4. Where do you think emissions reductions may be difficult?
    a. E.g. events in hard to reach places
    b. E.g. shared buildings
5. Why do you think emissions reductions may be difficult?
    a. Technology
    b. Practice
    c. Society
    d. Mindset

Part Three: Business Priorities

1. In your own words, what would you say are RTPI's business priorities?
2. How does your division support achievement of these priorities?
3. What are the priorities of your division?
4. Do you foresee your priorities changing in the short-term future?
5. Do you foresee your priorities changing in the long-term future?

Interviews were allocated a period of up to one hour, during which time participants were asked the above questions. As questions were semi-structured, time was allowed for unstructured dialogue and conversation.

2.1.2 Consultation Findings

In undertaking each of the 14 interviews, it was found that there is a very strong appetite for, and willingness to, change with the view to reducing RTPI's carbon emissions. For this, it was acknowledged that leadership must come from the top and that employee buy-in to, and ownership of, proposed actions is essential for effective wide-spread implementation. To support this, it is agreed that both internal and external communication plays a critical role so as to promote action and discourage legacy ways of working and/or a fixed mindset.

Prior to the present global pandemic, office-based working was considered the norm with most people travelling into their respective offices on a daily basis. Internal and external meetings were largely undertaken face-to-face, and for this reason a lot of travel was regularly undertaken (both nationally and internationally). Events, training and other meetings such as volunteer meetings or external boards or panels (to which RTPI are invited) were also largely undertaken face-to-face and this would also require a lot of travel throughout the various UK regions. This is considered important, insofar as face-to-face meetings facilitate greater engagement and relationship building, as well as profile raising, particularly in areas outside of capital cities. This is to ensure that the RTPI is not a London-, Edinburgh-, and/or Cardiff-centric organisation. However, the venues used for events such as these, are often free or heavily subsidised. This dictates that the scope for choosing sustainable venues is somewhat limited, and the same can be said of catering where it is provided. With that being said, RTPI has been very pro-active in selecting venues which are often located near public transport hubs, particularly on central lines/well-connected networks. They have further made many attempts to reduce the carbon impact of the food which is supplied, where possible, through the provision of low-meat or vegetarian options.

Other areas of good practice include a proactive approach towards recycling; both in a general sense around the offices (which are considered relatively energy in-efficient) and with respect to technology. The latter stems from a focus upon efficiency gains and delivery of a digital transformation strategy. This will go a long way in supporting the transition towards low-carbon ways of working. It has already done-so insofar as paper-based processes are being less frequently used and attitudes towards waste reduction are very positive. This is evident with regard to the removal of plastic wrappers on magazines and the trialling of digital copies. With regard to the latter, the RTPI are highly receptive to the views and values of their members and there are several surveys presently taking place so as to inform RTPI activities and approaches going forward (many of which have a sustainability focus).

Since the implementation of lockdown measures by the UK government and devolved administrations, there has been a uniform shift towards homeworking. This has been well-received, with many expressing the desire to continue to work from home once restrictions have been lifted. The use of technology for virtual meetings and events during this time has also resulted in a shift in perceptions, with many voicing their desire to replace a significant proportion of face-to-face activities with virtual alternatives so as to reduce travel, as well as time and money. The value this brings with respect to delivering a better work-life balance was also well communicated during interviews.

With respect to future ways of working, once social restrictions have been lifted, there is little desire to return to old ways of working. Rather, there is wide-spread consensus that a flexible approach towards a working-pattern which is predominantly home-based with

much less travel is much more desirable. However, it should be noted that emphasis is placed on the value of social connection and interaction with members and non-members. For this, it is acknowledged that new and innovative ways of reaching and engaging members will be required so as to ensure inclusivity, diversity and equality of access for existing and prospective planners.

2.1.3 Application of findings

These interviews were extremely insightful and, together with the findings of the climate impact assessment and its associated analyses, including the stakeholder workshop, they provide a useful basis from which to develop clear objectives and specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound (SMART) actions to reduce the emissions of the RTPI in a fashion which is complimentary to their corporate ethos. These objectives and actions are provided in detail in **Sections 6** and **7**.

3   POLICY REVIEW

3.1   Background

To further provide for the refinement of objectives and actions for the reduction of RTPI's carbon emissions, an analysis of existing RTPI policy has been undertaken. This analysis contributes towards the honing of proposed draft actions discussed at the stakeholder workshop. A discussion of objectives and actions is provided in **Section 5**, with final objectives and action outlined, in their entirety, in **Section 6** and **7**.

The RTPI has three key policy and guidance documents. These concern their approach towards the reimbursement of expenses, towards procurement of good and services, and towards their investment and risk. The following sections provide an analysis of these documents with the view to identifying opportunities for carbon reduction by way of potential changes to such, in both principal and in practice. Each policy document does not have a specific reference number and for this reason, copies of the concerned policies are provided as a source of reference within **Appendices A to C.**

3.2   Expenses Policy[8]

The RTPI's expense policy document (**Appendix A**) contains a number of policy statements which set out clearly how the RTPI will reimburse expenses incurred by its employees, volunteers, members and trustees, as they exercise their duties on behalf of the organisation. As part of this, the expense policy statements covers the claiming of expenses with respect to travel, accommodation and subsistence. Upon review of the expense policy document, it is clear that the RTPI have made very good headway in taking into consideration the climate impact of their expenses policy statements. This is evident with respect to their policy statement for car transport, through which they actively discourage the use of private motor vehicles except where necessary.

With that being said, it is noted that cost remains the decisive factor when choosing between options such as transport; although it must be noted that other factors, including the time absorbed in travel and the stresses and strains of types of public transport, are also taken into account. Whilst it is important that cost should have a critical role in the decision-making process regarding the use of transport, it is similarly critical that the RTPI consider the sustainable use of such. Where there is little difference in cost between sustainable and non-sustainable modes of transport, and/or where there are significant other benefits, including the ability to work whilst travelling, opting for the sustainable transport choice should be greatly encouraged so as to reduce carbon emissions, particularly where improvements can be made with respect to employee comfort and productivity.

The additional cost of some travel may be offset by significant savings made through virtual attendance. Whilst virtual attendance is acknowledged within the expense policy, it is not identified as a preferable choice, particularly in such instances where relationship building and networking are not required. To emphasise the value of virtual attendance would make significant headway towards the reduction of emissions, whilst delivering co-benefits including employee satisfaction, productivity, health and wellbeing (potentially resulting in fewer work absences). With regard to these co-benefits, they may be

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[8] Royal Town Planning Institute., Expenses Policy. Royal Town Planning Institute.

achieved, to some degree, through greater work-life balance. Such balance may be achieved by a relaxed approach towards physical attendance, particularly where frequent travel has previously been the expectation. For this, internal top-down communication is of critical importance to encourage stakeholders to make sustainable choices. This is evident with respect to the RTPI's position on air transport wherein the 'RTPI does not encourage internal flights where alternative routes are available with a less damaging impact on the environment'. Whilst this is the formal position of the company, it is evidenced through the interviews with Heads of Service and the Senior Executive Team that this is not always the approach that is taken in practice. Therefore, instilling behavioural change and positive choices, through consistent messaging and expense approval practice, must be employed from leadership positions.

3.3   Guidelines on Procurement[9]

The RTPI's procurement guidelines and policies clearly set out the organisations approach towards the procurement of goods and services in order to empower 'officers' to secure long-term sustainable financial management. The aim of the RTPI's procurement guidelines and policies is to meet the highest standards of procurement best practice in order to minimise risks and obtain the best value for money for RTPI members. This involves acquiring goods and services at the right price, time and quality to meet business needs.

Specifically, the procurement guidelines and policies set out, inter alia, the roles and responsibilities of budget holders, the means by which to calculate total procurement values, the nature of contracts, and the means by which to create a product or service specification. The procurement guidelines and policies do not however, specify whether or not the climate impact of suppliers, or their environmental best practice, should be considered. As such, there exists an opportunity to promote emissions reduction and environmental protection throughout RTPI's supply chain where it does not exist already.

This may be achieved principally in two ways:

1. through product-based measures – this means choosing low-carbon products or services which do not require significant transportation to reach their end-destination (i.e. locally sourced materials from local suppliers).

2. through supplier-based measures – this means choosing suppliers which have achieved, or are in pursuit of, the significant reduction of their own Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.

Consideration of these measures, and the opportunity which exists to implement them, were taken into account and draft actions were developed which were discussed at the stakeholder workshop (**Section 5**). Final objectives and actions, including with respect to procurement (and data collection which may be achieved through associated activities) are outlined in **Section 6**.

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[9] Royal Town Planning Institute., 2019. Guidelines on Procurement at the RTPI. Royal Town Planning Institute.

3.4 Statement of Investment Principles and Long-term Investment Policy

The RTPI's main source of income is member subscriptions, representing circa 70% - 75% of the total turnover. Grants, sponsorship, conferences, events, investment and other income accounts for the remaining 25% - 30% of turnover. RTPI holds a portfolio of liquid reserves, which is a combination of working capital and investments to ensure long-term sustainability of the organisation. The RTPI's statement of investment principles and long-term investment policy sets out the values and approach which is taken towards investment. Principally, this concerns, inter alia, the organisations short-, medium- and long-term reserves policy and their approach to investment risk, as well as ethical and responsible investment and environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations.

With regard to the RTPI's approach to risk, it is established that the Trustees' overall attitude towards risk could realistically be described as 'Cautious to Balanced', as described below:

'*A Cautious to Balanced Investor is looking for an investment which, while giving some potential for real returns, aims to produce returns that are in excess of inflation (i.e. at a targeted rate of CPI+1%). A high level of security of their capital is priority. Whilst recognising that investment values will change; they would feel uncomfortable if their investments rose and fell in value very quickly*'[10].

With regard to their approach to ethical and responsible investment and ESG overlay, the RTPI recognise that their investments must be consistent with their objectives and the values of their organisation. For this reason, the RTPI selects investment managers who are skilled in not only generating good investment returns but are also committed to, and expert in, ethical investment whilst adopting an ESG criteria when constructing and managing their portfolios. ESG criteria are a set of three (environmental, social and governance) standards against which the sustainability of a company is measured. It is the expectation of the RTPI to invest in, and advance, businesses that specifically seek to provide solutions to sustainability issues, businesses that have strong corporate policies and/or outputs relating to the aforementioned criteria. In addition, the RTPI expect them to consider such factors as carbon footprint, resources use, waste reduction and gender equality. In addition, there is an expectation that each investment manager can demonstrate due regard to the Principles of Responsible Investment supported by the United Nations (www.unpri.org), and preferably be signatories to such.

The high regard for ESG overlay, which the RTPI holds with respect to its investment policy, dictates that only one action is proposed to be considered by RTPI; that is, to impose an outright ban on fossil fuel company investments.

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[10] Royal Town Planning Institute., 2020. Statement of Investment Principles and Long-term Investment Policy 2020. Royal Town Planning Institute.

4 CLIMATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 Summary

To support delivery of this Action Plan, an Impact Assessment was undertaken. The purpose of this assessment was to quantify the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions produced directly and indirectly as a result of the RTPI's activities. This was done in accordance with the reporting standards of the *'Greenhouse Gas Protocol – Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard'* (GHG Protocol, 2011) developed in partnership by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and the World Resource Institute (WRI).

Following data collection, assessment, and the application of assumptions, the results were as follows:

Table 1: RTPI 2019 GHG Emissions Summary

Metric	GHG Emissions (tCO$_2$e)
Total GHG emissions	175.6
GHG emissions per FTE (70.6)	2.5
GHG emissions per sqm floor area (702m^2)	0.3

Table 2: RTPI 2019 Emissions by Scope

Emissions Scope	GHG Emissions (tCO$_2$e)
Scope 1 – Direct emissions	3.9
Scope 2 – Indirect electricity emissions	30.8
Scope 3 – Other indirect emissions	140.9
Total	**175.6**

Regarding emissions sources, events are the RTPI's largest source (approximately 46%), followed by offices and commuting (23%), business travel (22%), bulk mailing (9%), and purchased services make up for less than 1% of RTPI's total emissions, as demonstrated in Figure 1.

When analysing these emissions sources further we can break-down the highest emissions arising within these sources. Travel to and from events accounts for 95% of events emissions. Electricity consumption accounts for 75% of offices and commuting emissions, whilst flights account for 52% of all business travel emissions. Finally, the production and distribution of the Planner magazine is responsible for 94% of bulk mailing emissions.

Figure 1: RTPI 2019 Emissions by Source
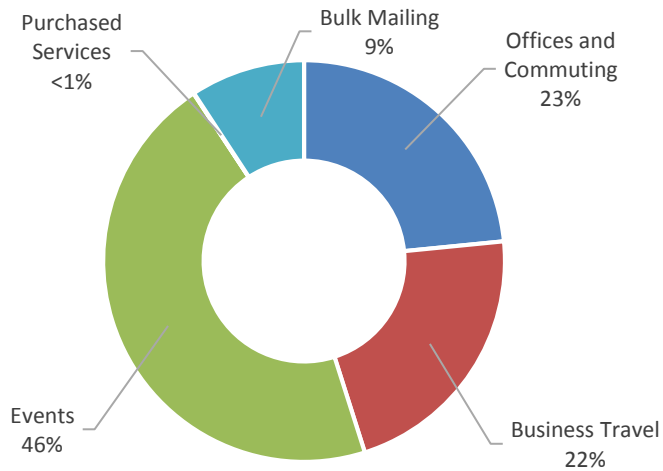
4.2   Hotspot Assessment

With regard to the key sources from which emissions originate, these are predominantly from travel relating to events (95% of events emissions and 43% of total emissions), followed by electricity consumption of offices (75% of offices and commuting emissions and 18% of total emissions), the majority of which are related to electricity usage in the London office. Business travel flights account for 52% of Business travel emissions and 11% of total emissions, the delivery of bulk mailings account for 9% of total emissions (94% of which arising from the monthly production and delivery of the Planner magazine), and emissions from rail journeys and hotel stays account for 4% of total emissions.

In light of this, the following recommendations were made for consideration in this Action Plan:

- Event travel emissions – decreasing the number of face-to-face events and replacing them with online events would reduce the amount of travel required by RTPI staff, volunteers and event attendees. Where physical event is required, the RTPI should continue to prioritise locations with easy access to public transport hubs.

- Office electricity consumption – switching the Botolph Lane office to a renewable energy electricity tariff would remove $29tCO_2e$ from the RTPI's carbon footprint. Liaising with the Edinburgh office to switch to a renewable energy electricity tariff would remove a further a $1.6tCO_2e$.

- Business travel (flights) – implementing a ban on flights within Great Britain would greatly reduce emissions which result from business travel. For example, a 600km round trip using domestic flights would emit $80kgCO_2e$, whereas the same trip using train travel would emit $24kgCO_2e$, a 70% reduction in emissions per trip.

- Bulk mailing – to reduce emissions associated with the delivery of the 'Planner' magazine, the RTPI could consider digitising its publication. This would reduce its GHG emissions by $15tCO_2e$ based on 2019 figures.

These recommendations have been considered in the development of actions included in Section 7.

4.3   Benchmarking

To determine the position of the RTPI with respect to the emissions of its peers, a benchmarking exercise was undertaken. For this, the results of the Impact Assessment were compared with ten other similarly sized and structured organisations. These were all predominantly office-based businesses, working in sectors such as travel booking and financial services. This was whittled down from the large catalogue of organisations whose carbon footprint has been determined by RSK. Many of these were not used in the benchmarking exercise however, owing to their size, structure and operations. For example, to compare the results of the RTPI's Impact Assessment with that of an alternatively-structured, small organisation would not well-represent the position of the RTPI as a leader of climate action. Likewise, to compare the results of the RTPI's Impact Assessment with a large manufacturing firm would be to overstate their position relative to other firms. Subsequently, the ten firms which were chosen, were used as a representative example of comparable organisations.

The results of the benchmarking exercise showed that the RTPI's carbon footprint compares very well in relation to these; being the median emitter of all 11 organisations (RTPI included). With that said, it should be noted that the RTPI's tCO$_2$e per FTE figure includes a lot of emissions sources which are not considered compulsory under the GHG Protocol. These include sources such as staff commuting, events and outbound delivery of packages etc. Therefore, it may be assumed that the RTPI fair better in terms of overall emissions than results suggest.

To improve benchmarking results in future years, it is encouraged that the results of the Impact Assessment are published annually to both internal and external audiences. This would provide for both transparency and accountability. It would further demonstrate the leadership of the RTPI by encouraging other similar organisations to be transparent and ambitious.

5 STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

5.1 Summary

Upon assessment and analysis of the RTPI's carbon footprint, a stakeholder workshop was delivered on Thursday 23rd July 2020. The purpose of this workshop was threefold:

1. To discuss the findings of the Climate Impact Assessment, including the hotspot assessment. It was an opportunity for stakeholders to question and provide comment on the assessment and its findings.

2. To engage stakeholders in the development of the Climate Action Plan. It was an opportunity to discuss the objectives and actions preliminarily identified and how these tie in to the RTPI Corporate Strategy 2020-2030.

3. To inform stakeholders of the review of the existing communications strategy and to discuss the reputational objectives which the RTPI seek to advance with respect to climate change.

The stakeholder workshop was delivered by four members of RSK's Project Team as two sessions over the course of three hours. The outcomes of the workshop are summarised below; they have been used to inform the further development of objectives and actions with respect to this Action Plan, as set out in **Section 6** and **7**.

5.1.1 Session One - Presentation of Findings

The first session was opened by RSK's Project Manager who introduced the Project Team who developed the Impact Assessment and would lead the presentation and discussion of such. The Project Manager provided a short summary of RSK, and its role and responsibilities in the delivery of this project (the Impact Assessment, Action Plan and Communications Plan and Summary), before passing the presentation over to her colleagues.

RSK's Project Team delivered the remainder of the presentation which included a detailed descript of the methodology used to determine the RTPI's carbon footprint. This included a detailed description of the means by which an emissions boundary was set and the data collection tool was developed. It also included a description of the quality assurance exercise which was undertaken with respect to the data collected.

Following this, the initial findings of the Impact Assessment were provided by the Project Team who broke down these findings into homeworking emissions, office and commuting emissions, bulk mailing, business travel and event emissions; which represent the RTPI's largest proportion of emissions. Subsequently, a description of those areas in which "quick-win" emissions reductions can be achieved was provided.

To this end, actions for improved data collection were strategically detailed, as well as other actions including switching to green tariffs and actions to reduce travel. Medium- and long-term actions were also detailed within this aspect of the presentation; including reference to building efficiency measures and a move from paper-based working and bulk mailing.

Where emissions cannot be reduced (residual emissions), through the actions proposed within this document, offsetting was described as a way of taking accountability for them. With regard to this, the process of acquiring offsets was describe and an indicative cost

for such was provided. The presentation came to an end with a brief description of the likely impacts of Covid-19 upon future emission assessment results.

Following the presentation, attendees to the workshop were invited to discuss what they had heard. As such, a number of questions were asked including some pertaining to the inclusion of volunteer travel within the category of business travel. Questions were also asked with regard to the categorisation of events (specifically whether regional events included those in Scotland, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Wales) and other questions concerned the difference between travel classes (e.g. economy and premium economy).

In addition to this, further discussion with attendees to the workshop concerned the need to update expense claim procedures and standardise approaches towards event surveys and other forms. They also concerned the cost of offsetting and the need to appropriately align offset investments with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in areas outside of the UK.

5.1.2 Session Two - Development of Objectives and Actions

RSK's Project Team commenced the session with further information pertaining to questions which had been raised in the first session (difference in emissions between travel classes and event emissions breakdown by function). Principally these were data-specific questions which required a review of the data to provide a specific response. On the back of this, RSK's Project Team also provided further detail of the types of offsetting projects which would be available to the RTPI should they so choose to pursue this route. This was brought about as a result of the significant interest in this topic.

Following this initial question and answer section of the session, the second presentation commenced with a summary of the interviews which had taken place and a review of their key findings. The presentation also covered the process of policy analysis and its findings.

Upon description of this, the objectives which were preliminarily identified were provided to workshop attendees along with an explanation as to how these had been defined. Some of these (two of four) were presented in a manner which was incomplete as they required further analysis of the data collected in the Impact Assessment.

This was complemented by a high-level description of some of the preliminary actions which had been identified. This included the use of offices as central hubs, the expansion of virtual access facilities and the digitalisation of paper-based practices/products. Following this, the presentation returned to the subject of offsetting so as to acknowledge it as a recommended action as opposed to an objective. This point was discussed at length with stakeholders keen to emphasise its importance and the subsequent need to commit to a date by which net-zero can be achieved.

Other questions and comments which were raised principally concerned the approach which would be taken towards the conversion of offices to central hubs and the implementation of an RTPI pledge system for employees and volunteers. Other questions concerned residual emission, and the achievement of net-negative emissions, as well as issues pertaining to procurement; principally with respect to the nature of food and how this is sourced.

5.1.3 Session Two - Development of Communication Strategy

Following questions regarding the Action Plan, a short presentation was delivered with reference to the Communications Plan and Summary documents which will be developed to support the dissemination of information pertaining to the Impact Assessment and Action Plan. This presentation principally concerned the audience which the Communications Plan would target, and the means by which such an audience may be best engaged. The presentation further concerned the key messages which the RTPI would seek to convey, including highlighting that the RTPI has been engaged in addressing climate change for over ten years and that the Impact Assessment and Action Plan represents the next step in their efforts to 'walk the talk' as a leader on climate action.

6 DEVELOPMENT OF OBJECTIVES

6.1 Summary

Following the stakeholder workshop, the objectives and actions proposed within this document were finalised with reference to the findings of the workshop and those of the Impact Assessment, including the hotspot assessment and benchmarking exercise. These are supported by a range of SMART, costed actions to reduce the emissions of the RTPI.

6.2 RTPI Vision

The vision of the RTPI is 'to be the world's leading professional planning body. [Their] ambition is to promote healthy, socially inclusive, economically and environmentally sustainable places'[11].

6.3 RTPI Mission

The RTPI will achieve its vision through delivery of its mission which is 'to advance the science and art of planning, working for the long-term common good and wellbeing of current and future generations[12].

6.4 RTPI Aim

In light of the stakeholder workshop, it was clear from participants that in addition to the objectives which are set out in Section 6.5, an aim is required to outline the overarching goal of the RTPI to move towards a position of net-zero. For this reason, the following informed aim has been developed:

The RTPI will aim to achieve a position of net-zero by 2025.

6.5 Prioritise Objectives

In support of the delivery of its aim, and in contributing towards its mission and the ultimate realisation of its vision, the RTPI commits to the significant reduction of its Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. In support of this, the following prioritised objectives have been identified:

1. To reduce scope one and two emissions by 80% by 2025

2. To reduce scope three emissions by 45% (per full time employee) by 2030

3. To improve the quantity and quality of emissions data necessary for accurate and robust assessment of RTPI's GHG emissions by 2025.

4. To promote and inspire climate action amongst members of the wider planning community.

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[11] RTPI Corporate Strategy 2020-2030
[12] RTPI Corporate Strategy 2020-2030

7 DEVELOPMENT OF ACTIONS

7.1 Summary

To achieve these objectives, the following SMART actions have been developed. These have been divided into two categories; actions which foster internal change and actions which foster external change. With respect to each category, action have been prioritised so as to bring about the most significant emissions reductions in the shortest amount of time.

7.2 SMART Actions

7.2.1 Actions which foster internal change

7.2.1.1 Action One: Enhance the quality of emissions data collected.

Description: Enhance the quality of emissions data collected by:

1. Capturing information about travel to events in order to determine the following with respect to each attendee:

   a. The distance they have travelled to the event

   b. The mode of transport they have used (split into categories e.g. small- or large- car etc.)

2. Gathering waste-related data for the Edinburgh and Cardiff offices and enhancing the same data for the London office.

3. Improving expense-related data so as to include at least the following:

   a. The distance they have travelled for business

   b. The mode of transport they have used (split into categories e.g. small or large car etc.)

   c. The class of the mode chosen (e.g. economy or premium economy etc.)

4. Developing a method of accurately logging homeworking (to reduce the need for estimates).

5. Improving bulk mailing data with reference to the distance of travel (with reference to town, county or region as opposed to individual addresses).

Timescale: two to three years.

Cost: managerial time (ongoing).

Estimated emissions reduction: none however, accurate data will provide for accurate determination of emissions.

7.2.1.2 Action Two: Offset all flight emissions from 2021.

Description: Offset all flight emissions (both national and international) from 2021.

Timescale: from 2021 onwards.

Cost: Approx.. £5.50 - 17.50 per tCO_2e plus GHG assessment (approx.. £3,500)

Estimated emissions reduction: none

7.2.1.3 Action Three: Offset emissions.

Description: Offset all Scope 1, 2 and 3 GHGs which the RTPI is responsible for.

Timescale: from 2025 onwards.

Cost: Approx. £5.50 – 17.50 per tCO_2e plus GHG assessment (approx.. £3,500)

Estimated emissions reduction: none

7.2.1.4 Action Four: Switch to green energy tariff.

Description: Switch to a green energy tariff at RTPI's London office.

Timescale: upon conclusion of present contract with existing energy provider (2022).

Cost: managerial time (2-3 hours) plus potential additional cost of energy per kWh / cost-savings

Estimated emissions reduction: 31.7tCO_2e (based on 2019 baseline).

7.2.1.5 Action Five: Engage the Edinburgh office landlords and tenants.

Description: Engage the Edinburgh office landlords and tenants to reduce the GHG emissions of each office and shared spaces. This includes engaging with them to switch to a green energy tariff, reduce gas consumption, implement water, energy and waste efficiency measures and provide suitable recycling and active transport facilities. It may also include the pursuit of collaborative campaigns in shared spaces to support behavioural change.

Timescale: two to three years.

Cost: managerial time (ongoing) with some potential marginal capital and maintenance costs.

Estimated emissions reduction: 1.7tCO_2e (based on 2019 baseline)

7.2.1.6 Action Six: Encourage uptake of virtual meetings, events and training

Description: Encourage uptake of virtual meetings, events and training by providing virtual access to all of these (including Board meetings and volunteer committee meetings etc.).

To facilitate this, internal communication may be required to advance the message that use of virtual platforms is preferred to face-to-face meetings requiring travel, except where there is a need for extensive engagement, the development of relationships or the promotion of the RTPI.

Moreover, policy is required to encourage:

- Volunteer training to be delivered virtually, except where training takes place over the course of a full day, or multiple days, and networking is required e.g. annual assessor training.

- As successfully demonstrated in 2020, General Assembly meetings can be delivered virtually twice a year (two of three meetings). Virtual attendance to be made available during the face-to-face meeting too, as highlighted above.

- Committee and Board meetings to be delivered virtually 60% of the time. Virtual attendance to be made available during the face-to-face meetings too, as highlighted above.

- Where CPD events are run virtually, these may be made available to all regions, where appropriate, so as to maximise the attendance and the variety of topics and speakers provided. This will require enhanced coordination between regions but is likely to enhance the quality of RTPI services whilst providing further opportunity for inclusivity, diversity and equality. With this in mind, it is recommended that virtual events/webinars are recorded, submitted and made available on the RTPI website and other platforms for optimal exposure to non-members where appropriate and commercially sensible. Exceptions to this action may include training and events which take place over the course of a full day or multiple days.

- University Partnership Board meetings to be delivered virtually 50% of the time. Virtual attendance should be made available during face-to-face meetings, as highlighted above.

- Recruitment interviews, including apprenticeship interviews, and inductions, including volunteer inductions, to take place virtually where possible. The RTPI's approach towards climate action should be outlined within all induction material.

In the case of all meetings, events and training sessions, consistent policy should be applied wherein the primary choice should be for these to take place virtually.

Timescale: less than six months.

Cost: managerial costs relating to communications (with overall cost savings).

Estimated emissions reduction: 39.3tCO$_2$e (based on 2019 baseline)

7.2.1.7 Action Seven: Implement a flexible hours working policy.

Description: Implement a working policy which provides a flexible approach towards working hours (within reason). This will reduce time spent commuting, particularly in rush-hour traffic. This has co-benefits including improved employee health and well-being brought about by a lesser exposure to pollution and improved work-life balance.

Timescale: immediate.

Cost: none.

Estimated emissions reduction: <0.1tCO$_2$e (based on 2019 baseline)

7.2.1.8 Action Eight: Transform offices into working hubs.

Description: Transform offices into working hubs through the application of a flexible approach towards working location. This involves encouraging home-working where possible and applying a 'hot-desk' approach towards most, if not all, desks. This will present opportunities to reduce and/or transform office space (to Healthy Building Standards as desired). In the London office, space may be made available for events to be hosted in-house and for increased storage (removing the need for off-site storage). Space may further be adapted so as to provide silent spaces and spaces for collaborative working. This will cater to the dynamic needs of employees, volunteers and members, and will optimise the space for use as an additional 'touch-point' with such. Any collaborative spaces should have a digital focus suitable for virtual meetings, events and training. This action should be picked up in conjunction with any actions to address the Corporate Strategy foundation for 'the right home for the RTPI'.

Timescale: two to three years.

Cost: managerial costs for office rearrangement and possible (limited) technology costs for enhanced virtual access

Estimated emissions reduction: Approx. 21tCO$_2$e (based on 2019 baseline and assuming 50% reduction in office and commuting emissions and the elimination of extra storage requirements; also assuming 50% of London-based events are held in-house).

7.2.1.9 Action Nine: Undertake an energy audit.

Description: Undertake an energy audit of the London office to identify opportunities for efficiency gains. Opportunities may include improved office temperature control and reduced screen and printer idle time, they might also include the implementation of energy efficient lighting, upgraded insulation, and energy efficient windows etc. This action is complementary to Action Four: Switch to a green energy tariff.

Timescale: less than six months.

Cost Approximately £2,500 - £3,500

Estimated emissions reduction: Approx. 3tCO$_2$e (assuming 8% energy savings based on 2019 baseline) if efficiency gains are realised.

7.2.1.10 Action Ten: Adapt expenses policy.

Description: Adapt expenses policy with respect to travel to account for the following.
- The car travel expenses policy presently states that 'if a claim for more than 100 miles is submitted, members or staff will be required to give an indication of why driving was the most suitable option'. Reduce the number of miles to 50 so as to further discourage long-distance car travel and encourage public transport/active travel/virtual attendance uptake.
- When taxis are chosen as an appropriate mode of transport, 'where there are several people travelling together which makes it the most cost-effective option', black cabs should be avoided where possible (except where electric) and a pre-booked taxi should be used instead.
- The RTPI's policy with regard to air transport expenses states that it 'does not encourage internal flights where alternative routes are available with a less damaging impact on the environment'; however, the application of this policy is not stringent. Therefore, adapt this policy so as to require senior management sign-off of all flights within Great Britain, and do not permit any air travel for journeys which are less than 300 miles. Exception to this rule must be requested from senior management. To support this, allow first class rail tickets (booked at least two weeks in advance) to be purchased for journeys over 300 miles.
- The RTPI's policy with regard to reimbursement of 20p per mile for use of a bicycle on official business; this is something of which many RTPI staff and volunteers may not be aware. Therefore, it would be beneficial to promote this and to reference where possible the carbon-intensity hierarchy of travel.

Timescale: less than six months.

Cost: managerial time to update policy with limited time required for internal communication

Estimated emissions reduction: unknown (data unavailable).

7.2.1.11 Action Eleven: Implement active travel facilities.

Description: Undertake a cycle-ready survey of the London office to determine the need for improved cycle facilities and the means by which cycling may be optimised within the

organisation. Where necessary, implement active travel facilities including, but not limited to, bike racks or stands, shower and locker facilities. For the Edinburgh office, the landlords and tenants should be engaged to this end.

Timescale: two to three years.

Cost: Approx. £500 for the survey with additional costs for implementation of facilities.

Estimated emissions reduction: <0.2tCO$_2$e (based on 2019 baseline)

7.2.1.12 Action Twelve: Implement the Cycle-to-Work Scheme.

Description: Implement the Cycle-to-Work Scheme for those wishing to continue to use the office as their main place of work and/or those who travel frequently for work. This should include use of the Government's Bikeability training course through local cycle dealers to equip employees with the skills and knowledge for safe cycling. This may further be accompanied by supplementary guidance which should communicate the carbon-intensity travel hierarchy; the availability of this should coincide with the implementation of active travel facilities if possible. It should be further accompanied by information pertaining to the policy which the RTPI has regarding reimbursement of active travel.

Timescale: less than six months.

Cost: managerial time to arrange scheme and training as required.

Estimated emissions reduction: <0.2tCO$_2$e (based on 2019 baseline)

7.2.1.13 Action Thirteen: Adapt The Planner to be delivered as an electronic document

Description: Stop printing paper copies of The Planner magazine and replace them with electronic copies to be sent to all members. The environmental advantages of this move should be communicated on the RTPI website and social media as appropriate.

Timescale: up to two years

Cost: none (cost savings)

Estimated emissions reduction: Approx. 16.56tCO$_2$e

7.2.1.14 Action Fourteen: Deliver an opt-in approach towards billing and bulk mailing.

Description: For all billing and bulk mailing members will automatically receive digital copies of communication with the option to opt-in to paper-based copies, should they so wish. This approach should also be applied to certifications and member packs if possible. Where opportunity to opt-in exists on the relevant webpage, it should be accompanied by a paragraph concerning the reasons for not doing so i.e. contributing towards the mitigation of climate change.

Timescale: up to two years

Cost: limited managerial time associated with engagement and communication (with cost savings).

Estimated emissions reduction: 0.8tCO$_2$e (assuming 80% move to digital, based on 2019 baseline)

7.2.1.15 Action Fifteen: Promote and deliver climate-focused learning

Description: Include climate change threats, and opportunities for action, with respect to planning, into the core CPD framework.

Timescale: up to two years.

Cost managerial time associated with learning resource development

Estimated emissions reduction: N/A

7.2.1.16 Action Sixteen: Relinquish parking space.

Description: Relinquish Edinburgh parking space to encourage use of public transport and active travel.

Timescale: less than six months.

Cost: none.

Estimated emissions reduction: <0.1tCO$_2$e (based on 2019 baseline)

7.2.1.17 *Action Seventeen: Review and reform RTPI Plus benefits*

Description: Review and reform RTPI Plus benefits in view of the drive to lead positive climate action e.g. remove holiday discounts to discourage air travel. In some instances, opportunity exists to align benefits with key UN Sustainable Development Goals such as Goal 7 (Targets 7.2 and 7.3).

Timescale: upon completion of contract with present suppliers.

Cost: managerial time associated with organising new partnerships

Estimated emissions reduction: N/A

7.2.1.18 Action Eighteen: Avoid single use materials where possible

Description: Avoid purchase of single-use materials where possible. Any single-use material presently in-office should be used and appropriately recycled.

Timescale: less than six months.

Cost: none.

Estimated emissions reduction: N/A

7.2.1.19 Action Nineteen: Reduce event give-aways.

Description: Give-aways should only be used for student-focused events, if at all. In all cases, student-focused or otherwise, exhibitions should include an activity with resources which are reusable. The focus here will be to engage and inspire minds and open dialogue. As alternatives to giveaways, offset incentives may be provided as rewards for challenges. Name badges should be made from recycled material (e.g. plastic or paper) and reused wherever possible.

Timescale: less than six months.

Cost: less than £500

Estimated emissions reduction: <0.1tCO$_2$e (based on 2019 baseline)

Note: it is recommended that appropriate persons are appointed to monitor the implementation of internal actions and their progress. This will ensure that a system of accountability is put in place to optimise the success of proposed actions.

7.2.2 Actions which foster external change

7.2.2.1   Action One: Develop and apply a venue and catering criteria.

Description: When selecting paid venues, emphasis should not be put upon the use of such as a result of tradition; rather, a catering and venue criteria should be developed which will consider no less than the venues approach towards energy, water and waste, accessibility, catering (locally sourced and seasonal as preferable; vegetarian and vegan options available for all courses) and resource use (e.g. no single use materials). Venues which demonstrate good practice with respect to these should be given preference over those which do not. Therefore, it is advised that engagement with existing venues (venues commonly used in the past) is undertaken so as to give them opportunity to adapt to the criteria as much as possible.

Timescale: Ongoing.

Cost: managerial time associated with criteria development and implementation.

7.2.2.2   Action Two: Promote supplier implementation of climate action.

Description: Promote supplier implementation of climate action with respect to the following:

- Develop and provide a supplier self-assessment form to all procurement communication to enable suppliers to communicate their own climate action (opportunity here to encourage such by weighting this as part of type three competitive tenders and above).

- Include, within all requests for quotation, a description of the means by which the emissions of the concerned project should be limited e.g. limited or no face-to-face meetings including inception meetings and workshops etc.

- Include, in all requests for quotation, a call to consider additional means by which the emissions of the concerned project may be limited. This will allow suppliers to put forward their own supplementary ideas for such, in addition to the above.

- Procure, where possible, products which are locally sourced and/or made from recycled/repurposed material. Avoid purchase of single-use material where possible, as stated in Action Sixteen (Internal Actions).

Timescale: ongoing.

Cost: managerial time for stock text development and engagement with suppliers.

7.2.2.3   Action Three: Establish a climate action network[13].

Description: Establish a volunteer climate action network for the purpose of promoting, and engaging, climate action among members. This informal network will raise awareness

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[13] Future option, to be discussed by the Board, to elect to engage and expand the RTPI's community of members by committing to offsetting (1 tCO_2e per 1,000 members) on their behalf. This would be in addition to RTPI's own emissions and would result in net-negative emissions. As part

of climate issues and will provide a platform through which to discuss their climate action pledges, challenges, opportunities and best practice with respect to such. It will further provide:

- An additional opportunity for member and non-member engagement
- A platform for sharing knowledge and experience
- An opportunity to further position the RTPI as a leader of climate action

Timescale: less than six months.

Cost: managerial time associated with developing online platform and communications

7.2.2.4 Action Four: Implement a Climate Action Pledge System.

Description: Implement a climate action pledge system to provide employees, volunteers and members with the opportunity to pledge to act to reduce their personal and professional emissions. These might include SMART pledge statements such as:

1. I will use active transport to travel to work one day a week; or
2. I will reduce my home energy use by 10%.

Each year, a tailored self-assessment survey should be provided to those who have pledged to determine results (a separate survey should be sent to employees and volunteers so as to distinguish the difference for data collection purposes). Once the survey is complete, a follow-up email should be sent to the pledger which includes a link to a badge which may be shared on social media (e.g. LinkedIn) to demonstrate the pledger's personal commitment to reducing their emissions. This will have multiple benefits such as:

- It will reward commitment to climate action
- It will enhance emissions data collection
- It will promote membership of the RTPI
- It will encourage RTPI volunteer activity
- It will reinforce the RTPI's position as a leader on climate action
- It will provide additional resources to support reporting of climate action

The information which is received in relation to pledges should comprise a mix of quantitative and qualitative data which may be used as part of ongoing emissions assessments (for employees) and additional reporting.

Timescale: two to three years.

Cost: ongoing managerial time associated with pledge statement development, platform development and communications.

7.2.2.5 Action Five: Adapt approach towards attendance of external events.

Description: Adapt approach towards attendance of external events to account for the following:

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of this activity, members should have the opportunity to vote on the type of offset in which their proportion of overall offsets will invest. This would be undertaken at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and would contribute towards greater attendance at, and engagement with, the AGM.

- Apply a two-three-person limit to RTPI attendees (staff and volunteers) to university visits regarding ongoing accreditation and annual talks as part of the RTPI's quality assurance role through the 2021 Education Policy review.

- Where possible, attendance at other external meetings should be virtual. Where face-to-face attendance is required, an appropriate limit to the number of RTPI staff and volunteers should be agreed.

Timescale: ongoing.

Cost: none (cost savings)

Estimated emissions reduction: 1.8tCO$_2$e (based on 2019 baseline)

7.2.2.6 Action Six: Report the RTPI's carbon footprint annually.

Description: Report the RTPI's carbon footprint annually, both internally and externally. This will ensure that the RTPI is transparent and accountable with respect to its emissions, and that the climate ambition of the organisation is maintained as a priority.

Timescale: ongoing.

Cost: Approx. £3,500 plus managerial time for project management and communications

Note: it is recommended that appropriate persons are appointed to monitor the implementation of external actions and their progress. This will ensure that a system of accountability is put in place to optimise the success of proposed actions.

7.3 Terms of Success

7.3.1 RTPI Climate Action Plan

This Action Plan has delivered an in-depth understanding of the ways in which the RTPI may significantly reduce their GHG emissions. In doing this, it has further defines what success looks like in terms of said reductions. In particular, success is defined as:

- The achievement of net-zero emissions by 2025, providing that one or both of the following have been achieved:
  - o Scope one and two emissions have been reduced by 80% by 2025; and/or
  - o Scope three emissions have been reduced by 22.5% (per full time employee) in the same period.

Success may also be defined as the reduction of scope three emissions by 45% by 2030, by the improvement of data quantity and quality necessary for accurate and robust assessment of RTPI's GHG emissions, and by the promotion of climate action amongst members of the wider planning community.

7.3.1.1 RTPI Corporate Strategy

In addition to the above terms of success, success is also defined within the RTPI's corporate Strategy. This Action Plan has been delivered complementary to the RTPI's Corporate Strategy 2020-2030 insofar as it provides a holistic response towards climate change by proposing action across all four pillars of the Strategy. Moreover, The actions proposed address and embrace best practice and innovation.

8   SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

8.1   Summary

This Climate Action Plan has been delivered on behalf of the RTPI. It encompasses an overarching aim and clear objectives to reduce the GHG emissions of the Institute. These are supported by SMART, costed actions which are tailored to the values and vision of the Institute. They have been developed using the findings of the Climate Impact Assessment (2019 baseline year), the organisational benchmark assessment, semi-structured interviews and analyses of RTPI's policies.

8.2   Next Steps

The next step in this commission is the development of an internal communications plan and an external communications summary document as outlined below. The RTPI should seek to use these documents to demonstrate their commitment to the aim and objectives set out within this Action Plan. Once this has been achieved, the RTPI should seek to implement those actions which are of greatest priority first so as to achieve significant emissions reductions as efficiently and effectively as possible. Moreover, the RTPI should endeavour to calculate and communicate their emissions on an annual basis going forward, this will enable them to keep track of the impact of their efforts to reduce emissions. It will also ensure that they remain transparent and accountable and that they demonstrate their position as a leader on climate action.

With regard to this Action Plan, it will be presented to the RTPI Board of Trustees on 16th September 2020 for endorsement in advance of any internal or external communication. It is recommended that the actions which are proposed in this document are implemented in an efficient and effective manner; taking advantage of the measures which have been put in place to address the global pandemic to instil positive behavioural change in support of proposed actions. It is further recommended that the Action Plan is revisited and reviewed on a five-yearly basis until such point as no further emissions reductions can be achieved, either because no emissions are produced or because unavoidable (residual) emissions are offset using appropriately selected offset measures.

With regard to the Impact Assessment, this should be delivered annually so as to track progress and provide evidence to support green claims in external marketing initiatives. It is also recommended that the results are published both internally and externally. This will provide transparency and accountability; it will also demonstrate leadership and will encourage other similar organisations to do the same. This will provide further value to the RTPI insofar as it will improve any future benchmarking against similar organisations.

8.2.1   Internal Communications Plan

An internal announcement launching the Climate Action Plan will be sent out to all staff. This announcement will clearly explain the objectives of the Action Plan, why the RTPI is aiming to achieve net zero emissions by 2025 and how it plans to get there. The announcement will emphasize that the success of the Action Plan requires the support of all employees. Following the initial launch of the Action Plan, a phased internal

communications campaign will bring the Action Plan to the attention of employees on a regular basis.

The campaign will provide updates on overall progress and give visibility to a specific action or group of actions. This approach will ensure that the messages conveyed are easily digestible and not overwhelming, while ensuring that the Action Plan does not fade from people's minds following the initial announcement. The timeline will reflect the anticipated progress of the Action Plan with early updates focusing on the "quick wins" with the medium- to long-term actions being addressed further down the line.

The specific action or actions in focus will be given high visibility across internal communications, with a succinct fact sheet clearly explaining what behaviours are expected of staff and providing links to all the information needed for staff to take ownership of the actions. This may include encouraging the uptake of virtual meetings, events and training by promoting the use of virtual platforms as a preferred alternative to face-to-face meetings requiring travel or promoting active travel by raising awareness for the 20p/mile reimbursement policy for cycling.

Staff will also be encouraged to submit their initiatives, experiences and challenges with regards to the specific actions in focus and best practices will be recognized and promoted with climate actions of the month awards.

8.2.2 External Communications Summary

An external announcement launching the Climate Action Plan will be published on the RTPI website and promoted through social media. The announcement will include the Action Plan summary document to communicate the purpose of the Action Plan and explain its relationship with the Corporate strategy.

Following the initial launch of the Action Plan, the RTPI will publish its carbon footprint on an annual basis to ensure that the Institute is transparent and accountable, and that climate action ambition is maintained as a priority. A short annual report will provide a breakdown of the Institute's carbon footprint, describe key progress and actions taken in the previous year, recognize any challenges or areas for improvement, and provide readers with key learnings they can use to improve their own climate impact. Communications on progress, challenges and key learnings will also be released throughout the year via the RTPI website and social media to disseminate key messages to target audiences.

To optimise outreach and foster skills development within the planning sector amongst students, recent graduates and potential future members, an annual spring/summer recording of a planning and sustainability related topic could be provided (with subtitles) to all universities, accredited or otherwise. This will contribute towards the promotion of RTPI as a leader of climate ambition.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: RTPI Expenses Policy

ROYAL TOWN PLANNING INSTITUTE

<u>Expenses Policy</u>

<u>Principles</u>

RTPI appreciates the time and talent spent on its activities by volunteers, members of the Institute, staff and trustees. In supporting the activities, expenses will be incurred which the Institute is pleased to reimburse.

As RTPI is a registered charity, it has to be able to provide full and transparent evidence that the expenses reimbursed are reasonable and incurred in carrying out Institute activities on a cost-effective basis. Travel related expenses form a very significant part of RTPI's annual expenditure and the Institute will make every effort to manage this responsibly. This policy applies equally to all staff and members, who are expected to familiarise themselves with its detail and encouraged to demonstrate financial discipline in planning for travel.

In order to make sure that all claims being made are justified, substantiated and auditable, the following guidelines are published to give a clear indication of the types of expenses that might be reimbursed and a framework against which any claims can be assessed.

The allowances or rates included are those operative at October 2012. These will be subject to review from time to time.

1. <u>Reasonable Expenses</u>

    Expenses should be incurred with a view to value for money and with regard to the time absorbed in travelling and the stresses and strains of types of public transport. Normally the lowest cost mode of transport should be used and tickets purchased in advance, where this will produce savings. Where tickets have been purchased in advance and the meeting is subsequently cancelled, the cost will be reimbursed if the ticket is non-refundable.

<u>Car Transport</u>

2. The RTPI does not encourage travel by car but recognises that there are circumstances where the use of a car is necessary, for instance in rural areas with limited public transport, during unsocial hours, or where personal safety might be an issue. If a claim for more than 100 miles is submitted, members or staff will be required to give an indication of why driving was the most suitable driving option. The RTPI will reimburse mileage claims at up to 40p per mile. A lower rate of 20p per mile will be used for members and volunteers using their company provided car (where a number of fixed costs are not borne by the traveller). Reduced rates of up to 25p will be paid if the mileage exceeds 10,000 miles in a tax year.

3. It is the traveller's responsibility to ensure that they are insured to drive on RTPI business. Most policies cover the policy holder for their personal business use but not necessarily that of their spouse or other insured users.

4. RTPI will not reimburse parking penalties, speeding fines or losses arising from accidents even if they arise whilst using a private car on RTPI business

5. Wherever possible staff and members should consider car-sharing arrangements.

Rail Transport

6. Standard class fares will be reimbursed and staff and members are encouraged to take advantage of low fare options wherever possible.. Reimbursement of upgrades to first class will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances and by prior agreement with the appropriate budget holder However, other than for the President on RTPI business (for which see separate guidance note on expenses for the President) there is no entitlement to first class travel, except for the provisions of paragraph 7 below.

7. First class travel on sleeper trains will be reimbursed where required to ensure exclusive use of a cabin.

8. Trustees, staff, members and other volunteers entitled to purchase a senior or other discount railcard should take advantage of the reduction of fares, where possible. The same provision will be applied to the use of an Oyster card where this is used solely for RTPI business.

9. The Institute has an account with the Train line which provides for online pre-booking of tickets at the most favourable rates. Various members of staff are authorised to make bookings – details available from Line Managers or from Finance.

10. Whenever possible, meetings should be arranged to enable most attendees to travel "off peak". In all cases the cheapest fares should be obtained, which will usually require booking in advance and may have restrictions on times of travel, etc. Consideration should always be given to the viability of virtual attendance at meetings.

Oyster cards

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to make use of Oyster cards for travel around London where possible, and should submit claims on a journey basis, supported by receipts or Oyster statements (available online). Oyster top-ups will NOT be reimbursed, as they do not represent travel expenditure and cannot be validated as a business expense.

Bicycle Transport

The Institute will reimburse mileage claims for use of a bicycle on official business at 20p per mile. The Institute accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage resulting from the use of a bicycle.

Air Transport

11. While air travel may appear to represent cheaper and time efficient alternative, , it carries with it significant negative environmental impacts and, for this reason, RTPI does not encourage internal flights where alternative routes are available with a less damaging impact on the environment.

12. Where air travel is necessary, economy class fares will be reimbursed.

13. 'Necessary' air travel within the UK can be justified for example where this will enable the traveller to travel and complete the business in a day; where public transport combinations will result in unrealistic delay or length of travelling time; where otherwise overnight accommodation would be required; where a series of meetings can only be achieved by reducing travel time accordingly; or where the cost saving is significant over using other modes.

Taxis

14. Taxi fares will not normally be reimbursed unless justified in such terms as: personal safety, carrying heavy equipment or luggage, no suitable alternative public transport. Taxi fares will also be permitted where time is of an essence and travel by taxi is the fastest mode of transport available or where there are several people travelling together which makes this the most cost effective option.

Shared Costs

15. Reimbursable expenses should be wholly, necessarily and exclusively incurred on Institute business. It is however recognised that some members might travel to London for meetings at the RTPI and at other organisations. In such cases, RTPI will reimburse an equitable apportionment of any expenses. If expenses are incurred solely on third party business, for example if an employee or member is fulfilling a speaking engagement, then the expenses must be claimed directly from the sponsoring organisation.

16. It is essential that the person travelling does not benefit from the expenses incurred for tax reasons and under charity law. If a person is travelling from a location other than their home/place of work, the Institute will normally reimburse the lower of the expenses actually incurred or those that would have been claimed if travelling from home/place of work.

Overnight

17. The Institute will normally reimburse costs of overnight accommodation where this will reduce a total expense claim or reflects optimal use of time for the trustee, staff, member or other volunteer concerned; for example, if attending meetings with a late finish and early start on consecutive days. In addition, overnight accommodation may be allowable in exceptional circumstances, by prior agreement, for example where public transport is not available late in the evening for your journey home cannot be completed by 22.00 pm. The need for overnight accommodation should be agreed by the appropriate budget holder before any bookings are made.

18. En-suite rooms in a standard hotel will be reimbursed. For guidance purposes, a "standard" hotel would be 3 star or an equivalent rating or cost. Extras (e.g. meals) will not normally be paid and these would, in any event, be recovered through a standard expenses claim.

Subsistence

19. The Institute does not pay standard subsistence allowances. Reasonable costs will be reimbursed where travelling disrupts access to normal subsistence arrangements, e.g. :-

- Breakfast on a train where travel has started before 7.00 AM

- A light meal at lunch time if food is not provided at the meeting

- Food in the evening if the business requires travelling after 19:00 PM or a cheaper fare has been obtained by travelling later.

- A cup of tea/coffee or similar drink will be reimbursed if the journey is over 2 hours.

- No subsistence claims can be reimbursed without a receipt.

- Subsistence will not be reimbursed where staff or members are attending a meeting or event where lunch or refreshments have been provided as a matter of course.

- Alcoholic beverage expenses will not be reimbursed as subsistence. On occasion, expenses for alcoholic drinks may necessarily be incurred by members or officers representing the Institute, (eg as President) which are required to offer hospitality. This is covered by the provisions of paragraphs 23 and 24 below.

Procedure for Claiming Reimbursement of Expenses Incurred

20. Expense claims should be submitted using the excel template available on the staff intranet or on request from Finance.RTPI@rtpi.org.uk

Each claimant is responsible for the timely reconciliation of his/her expenses claim and for providing full documentation to support each claim. HMRC requires that any expense documentation should provide a clear explanation of the business purpose. This must include confirmation of the purpose of any meeting/ expense including relevant names and organisation, and the date and location.

The claim should be completed and sent to the member of staff responsible for approving the expenses. This will normally be the secretary of the meeting or the relevant budget holder for staff expenses. If an employee or member has any doubts about the validity of a particular claim they should seek clarification or approval before incurring any costs.

All expenses should be submitted within one month of being incurred. Expenses not submitted within three months will not normally be reimbursed. In exceptional circumstances, a written statement explaining why the expenses have been submitted late should be included.

 Electronic receipts/scans of receipts are accepted .

VAT receipts should be attached wherever possible to enable the Institute to claim back VAT where appropriate. Credit card vouchers are not acceptable, as they carry no VAT record, and do not identify the nature of the expenditure.

Expenses will normally be reimbursed within two weeks of claiming. However this period will increase if expenses for more than one meeting have to be approved by different Officers.

Where expenses have not been received within three weeks please contact the Finance Department.

21. Insurance cover while travelling on RTPI business

Employees and members travelling on RTPI business are covered by the Personal Accident/Travel policy, reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Details of the cover and the procedure for making claims can be obtained by the Finance department at 41 Botolph Lane.

Employees and volunteers using their private vehicles for business use are **NOT** covered by this policy, and should ensure that their private motor insurance policy includes "occasional business use".

Corporate credit cards

22. Holders of corporate credit cards must complete a form for expenditure charged on the card and arrange for this to be authorised by their Line Manager and passed to Finance. Claim forms must be returned to Finance by the end of the month in which the statement is received.

Expenditure incurred must be in accordance with this expenses policy, and users must observe the terms of the credit card agreement provided to each cardholder.

Any use of a corporate credit card either not reported to Finance or in excess of this expenses policy will be treated as private expenditure, recoverable from the cardholder. Persistent private usage in this manner may result in the corporate credit card facility being withdrawn.

<u>Hospitality</u>

23. From time to time the Chief Executive or other senior staff or members will be expected to provide hospitality for contacts whilst representing the RTPI. Any such member of staff or member must obtain prior authority from the relevant budget holder before committing to the expense.

<u>Expenses for the President</u>

24. Members of the Presidential team may on occasions incur expenses which are not be covered by the generality of the arrangements outlined in the Institute's Expenses Policy. These are most likely to arise in the areas of hospitality, administrative support and travel arrangements. While this Expenses Policy is expected to apply to all members of the Presidential team in respect of most activity, advice about possible variations to the policy is contained in separate guidance notes for the President.

<u>Review</u>

25. All expense claims are subject to review. Any invalid claim will be treated seriously and disciplinary action may be taken.

<u>Appeals</u>

26. If expenses are not approved the claimant may appeal to the Chief Executive (if the Chief Executive is the approving officer, an appeal may be made to the Honorary Treasurer) whose decision is final.

Date of next review:

The Expense Policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

Appendix 1 – from 2010 expense policy

Additional Guidance for Expenses claims for the President

The Institute's Expenses Policy is expected to apply to all members of the Presidential team in respect of most activity. Further guidance is set out below in respect of the three areas of hospitality, administrative support and travel arrangements where some enhancement to the Policy may be agreed by exception.

Members will expect to exercise self-discipline in considering any proposals to vary the normal arrangements to ensure that these fall within the guidance of the Charity Commissioners and are consistent with the test of what is reasonable both in the context of the claim and the wider interests and resources of the Institute. The following guidance is considered to apply to the vast majority of circumstances. If there are genuinely exceptional circumstances that arise then these should be treated separately and not determine the general approach that the RTPI adopts.

1. Hospitality:

It is recognized that there will be occasions when the President (or his/her alternative) may be expected to offer hospitality to external colleagues or international guests. Some provision for this will be covered in the annual Presidential Team budget and the basis on which claims may be made is covered in the Expenses Policy which also offers guidance on alcohol expenses.

2. Administrative support for the Presidential Team

The Institute has arranged to resource diary management, booking of travel, briefings in advance of Presidential visits, and some correspondence in respect of Presidential engagements. It is not expected, therefore, that there should be any reimbursement of local secretarial and administrative support.

3. Travel

Reimbursement of travel expenses for the Presidential Team will generally be made in line with the RTPI Expenses Policy and business/first class travel will be reimbursed only in exceptional circumstances and with the prior authorization of the Honorary Treasurer.

When assessing whether travel may be upgraded, the following guidance may be helpful:

- *In general business/first class tickets are unlikely to be appropriate for travel within the UK but business class travel could be acceptable in respect of lengthy overseas air travel where the President is expected to undertake a speaking engagement immediately on arrival and it is not possible to schedule a day's rest beforehand. Where long-haul flights are necessary, consideration should be given to whether it may be more cost efficient to pay for the additional overnight accommodation rather than upgrade a flight.*

- *Similarly, authorization for upgraded hotel accommodation, beyond the guidance set out in the standard Expenses Policy, would only be given in exceptional circumstances. This might include a situation where an individual representing the Institute is part of a delegation, all members of which are required to stay in a particular hotel.*

- *The use of taxis is covered by the standard Expense Policy which offers guidance on the circumstances in which use of taxis would be appropriate.*