

Report asks for better public-private collaboration in Scotland's transport decarbonisation

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A new report from Addleshaw Goddard and the Fraser of Allander Institute says government decision-makers must prioritise collaboration with the private sector to cut fossil fuels and decarbonise transport networks if Scotland is to meet net-zero targets.

'Road to Net Zero: On Track?' has been released ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow. It considers views from Scotland's business leaders, outlines the state of play in the national transport network – and the action needed to meet challenging decarbonisation goals.

Addleshaw Goddard say the transport sector is Scotland's biggest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions, producing almost 36 per cent of all emissions generated in 2018. It adds that despite efforts from business leaders in the sector to reduce emissions, many have argued the same ambitions aren't prioritised by government, and collaboration between the public and private sector remains fragmented.

Getting the private and public sectors to work together while also co-ordinating energy infrastructure

investment with wider transport transformation strategies continues to be a challenge, according to the report, which expands on results from the FAI's Scottish Business Monitor.

Paul Hirst, head of transport at Addleshaw Goddard, said: "The decarbonisation of our transport network is arguably the most important element of Scotland's road to net-zero. But it's also the most challenging.

"New and innovative projects to reduce the sector's emissions are coming forward every day, and complex issues are being resolved with the support of ambitious business leaders and the public sector. Yet, while speaking to companies across the country, collaboration between public and private sector organisation could be improved still.

"The appointment of Michael Matheson as Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport earlier this year was a welcome move by the sector and Matheson's role is already shaping how industry leaders translate crucial plans into action. With COP26 just around the corner, now is the time for the Scottish Government to take this one step further."

Despite these hurdles, Addleshaw Goddard says, there are many carbon reduction projects underway that are helping to shape Scotland's transport network and infrastructure – including a hub for green hydrogen production, new rail freight sidings that eliminate road vehicles from moving containers from ship to train, and a bespoke riverside marine berth capable of accommodating the world's largest offshore wind installation vessels.

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