



To: **GREENER RENFREWSHIRE THEMATIC BOARD**

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Report by:
Craig Thorpe, Corporate Asset and Energy Manager,
Renfrewshire Council

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT IN RENFREWSHIRE HOUSE

1. Summary

- 1.1 Renfrewshire Council's Energy Asset Unit is continually striving to reduce costs, energy use and carbon emissions across the council, through its assets and staff.
- 1.2 To measure attitudes to energy usage, waste collection, recycling and travel-to-work, a survey was conducted in July 2015 with Renfrewshire House based Renfrewshire Council employees.
- 1.3 The survey was intended to provide baseline measurements of prevailing attitudes ahead of a promotional campaign to recruit Green Champions to help engage the wider staff group in energy efficient and other 'green' measures within the workplace.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Greener Renfrewshire Thematic Board notes the work being carried out by Renfrewshire Council's Energy Asset Unit and Waste Services to raise awareness of energy efficiency and waste management in Renfrewshire House.

3. Background

- 3.1 All Renfrewshire Council employees in Renfrewshire House were invited to participate in a survey, in July 2015 to measure attitudes to energy usage, waste collection, recycling and travel-to-work.



- 3.2 As part of the survey, staff were invited to volunteer to be a Green Champion, with the purpose of promoting energy efficiency measures, improving waste management and encouraging recycling amongst their colleagues. 16 staff members from Renfrewshire House volunteered to take up this role.
- 3.3 The survey received a very healthy response rate with almost 300 employees participating which compares favourably with similar staff surveys. The high response rate suggests that these are issues of significant interest to employees – some feel positively about current efforts, while others are critical, but there are certainly high levels of engagement.
- 3.4 It was noted in the results of the survey that the processes in place to recycle paper, cardboard, glass, cans and plastic are broadly categorised as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’. There is, however, a much lower awareness of how to recycle glass.
- 3.5 A significant percentage of respondents (29%) were unable to describe their levels of energy usage at work. This suggests it would be a useful engagement and educational exercise to highlight a typical individual’s energy usage within the workplace.
- 3.6 Almost 60% of respondents confirmed they travel to work alone, by car. This underlines the requirement to encourage staff to switch to greener methods of transport. This issue has been identified through the work being carried out by the Greener Transport sub-group.
- 3.7 Almost 80% of all respondents consider the cost of energy usage to be equally as important as the environmental implications.

4. Resources

- 4.1 The annual energy costs for Renfrewshire House in 2014/15 were £425,000 but more than half of the respondents assumed it would be less than this.
- 4.2 A total of 76 tonnes of waste were collected in Renfrewshire House in 2014 although more than half the respondents thought it would be less than this. 43% of this waste was recycled, although almost a quarter of respondents expected the recycling rate to be higher than this.



5. Prevention

- 5.1 A number of actions have been agreed following analysis of the survey results to address the issues raised and suggestions received.
- 5.2 Green Champions are to be recruited across Renfrewshire House for the purpose of increasing awareness of energy usage, waste management and recycling within the building. Examples of this are: identifying equipment which is left on unnecessarily (e.g. monitors); promoting the use of recycling bins; and providing a point of contact in every area of Renfrewshire House to provide advice and information on energy usage, waste management and recycling.
- 5.3 A Green Champions' Working Group is being established which will help share successes in increasing awareness of energy and waste issues within Renfrewshire House and help to reduce overall consumption and increase recycling.
- 5.4 A council-wide Carbon Awareness Campaign is being planned with strong visuals which will provide staff with instantly recognisable messages on how to reduce carbon emissions.
- 5.5 Options are being investigated to roll-out the Green Champion model and Carbon Awareness Campaign to other council venues, particularly schools.
- 5.6 The current Cycle to Work Scheme is being actively promoted to all Renfrewshire Council employees to encourage more employees to cycle to work, therefore, helping to reduce the high percentage of lone car journeys.

6. Community Involvement/Engagement

- 6.1 It is intended that the ongoing work in Renfrewshire House to raise awareness and change attitudes towards energy use and carbon emissions can be rolled out across all Renfrewshire Council employees and assets. Good practice will be shared with our Community Planning Partners with the aim of changing attitudes to energy usage, waste collection, recycling and travel-to-work throughout Renfrewshire.

Author: Craig Doogan, Energy Manager, Finance and Resources, Renfrewshire Council

E-mail: craig.doogan@renfrewshire.gov.uk