

To: Climate Change Sub-Committee

On: 16 February 2021

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Climate Change Action Fund

1. Summary

- 1.1 In the budget approved by full Council on 9 March 2020, £1m of funding was allocated to the support the organisation in progressing its response to the climate emergency through a Climate Change Action Fund.
- 1.2 Officers have developed a number of funding proposals which could be supported through the fund. Given the role of the Climate Change Sub-Committee in terms of overseeing the Council's response to the climate emergency, a special meeting has been convened of the sub-committee to allow for more detailed engagement and discussion on these proposals.
- 1.3 The proposals that have been developed will assist the organisation in working innovatively to reduce and offset carbon emissions in Renfrewshire, changing behaviours and supporting engagement with local people, businesses and communities, as well as accelerating existing programmes of change around for example a "green" fleet. A critical focus will be undertaking tests of change within specific services, which will ensure the Council is well positioned to lever in external investment to support the implementation of initiatives at scale.
- 1.4 It is anticipated that a final suite of funding proposals will be submitted for the Leadership Board on 24 April 2021.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Climate Change Sub-Committee:

- Note the funding proposals detailed at Appendix 1 of this report, with £0.698m to be allocated from the Climate Change Action Fund to support those initiatives outlined.

3. Background

- 3.1 In the budget approved by full Council on 9 March 2020, £1 million was allocated to establish a Climate Change Action Fund which would support the next steps outlined in the report “Climate Change Emergency” approved by Council on 27 February 2020. This report set out the initial findings and recommendations of the Climate Change Emergency Working Group, which had been convened following the Council’s declaration of a climate emergency in June 2019.
- 3.2 The Climate Change Action Fund is intended to fund innovative projects and initiatives being developed by Council services in response to the climate emergency, providing initial funding to pilot new ideas and approaches, to support engagement and partnership working across Renfrewshire, or to accelerate the pace of change already being delivered through existing initiatives. This process is vital to the Council being able to lever in the external funding that will be required to support climate change initiatives at the scale and pace required.
- 3.3 Officers had commenced initial work to develop a suite of funding proposals for consideration by elected members, however this work had to be paused due to the ongoing pandemic in early 2020. This resumed in Autumn 2020, and it is now possible to bring forward an initial tranche of funding proposals for consideration by the Leadership Board in February 2021.
- 3.4 The proposals will support the organisation in responding to some of the key priority actions agreed by the Council in February 2020:
- Adapting existing practices to reduce carbon emissions eg housing, transport, waste, energy;
 - Working to offset carbon emissions from its activities;
 - Engaging with businesses, communities and citizens;
 - Supporting required changes to culture and behaviours; and
 - Innovating and develop expertise to maximise external investment opportunities.
- 3.5 Appendix 1 provides a summary of each proposal for further discussion by members of the Climate Change Sub-Committee. Following the special meeting, final proposals will be presented to the Leadership Board on 24 February 2021.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – This paper outlines proposals to allocate £0.698m of the total £1m funding allocated by the Council in March 2020 to support the response to the climate emergency.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – this report highlights proposals to develop citizen and partnership forums to support engagement and collaboration with local businesses, partners and communities on the climate change agenda.
4. **Legal** - none
5. **Property/Assets** - none
6. **Information Technology** - none
7. **Equality and Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health and Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** – none
10. **Risk** – none
11. **Privacy Impact** – none
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – none
13. **Climate Risk** – this report provides a summary of work being undertaken by the Council to respond to the climate emergency.

List of Background Papers

None

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Climate Change Action Fund – Funding Proposals

£1.000 million to establish a Climate Change Fund that will be available to support the next steps outlined in the report “Climate Change Emergency” approved by Council on 27 February 2020.

Name / Description	Funding required	Briefly outline anticipated outcomes (ie how will this allocation of funding used support the organisation in achieving net zero carbon emissions in Renfrewshire) from this funding and the indicative timescales for delivery.
Housing led Regeneration and Renewal Programme – Zero Energy Buildings (RenZEB)	£75,000	<p>Renfrewshire Council will develop a collaborative and an innovative partnership with a research organisation to design and deliver a social housing new build development within the context of the Council approved Regeneration and Renewal Programme.</p> <p>The project will bring together resources from academia and industry to develop best practice and design principles, around a sustainable social housing model that can be delivered as a “standard” at scale over the coming decade for all social housing within the area.</p> <p>The project aims to address the principles that should be assessed, and adopted, within the Councils new build developments, to meet our climate change commitments, through delivering homes that are Zero Carbon, operationally sustainable for our tenants and the environment and mitigate fuel poverty.</p> <p>The commission will be broken down into three key themes. These are 1) Energy & Heat 2) Construction & Materials and 3) Health & Environment and will identify the optimum energy efficiency, construction type and materials, practice and processes for a “RenZEB” standard, delivering on climate change commitments in a manner that highlights the cost and practical implications of delivering this standard at scale.</p> <p>The first phase of this project will present the Council with an appraisal of the options that the Council have around these themes. This will then be developed and agreed as part of a competitive tender process that the Council will procure.</p>

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		<p>It is anticipated that a number of new build variations, (up to four), will be identified within the three key themes. This will allow the Council to fully understand the options and assess their performance and viability, both within the construction and operational phases.</p> <p>The second and third phases will provide support to Council officers in the procurement process, with phase four providing a case study on the completed project and recommendations for what should be included within a RenZEB standard that is commercially viable and practically deliverable.</p>
Enhancement of Electric Vehicle Programme	£258,000	<p>As the organisation moves through its vehicle replacement programme, all opportunities and external funding sources are being utilised to develop the electric fleet.</p> <p>In the next phase of its approach, Environment and Infrastructure are seeking to introduce electric to different categories of the fleet, i.e. light commercials. It is proposed that several panel vans or transit sized vehicles will be purchased which will allow the service to consider options for introducing these across the rest of the fleet, with the opportunity to unlock further external funding and to inform the future vehicle replacement programme at potentially a faster pace.</p> <p>This is the single largest vehicle category within Renfrewshire Council's fleet and if electrified would significantly reduce our carbon emissions while delivering frontline services.</p>
Feasibility study – photovoltaic project	£30,000	<p>The Energy Management Unit (EMU) has identified an opportunity to deliver largescale renewable electricity from Photovoltaic Panels (PV). The proposed site is Moss Road in Linwood, this was previously used as a land fill site. Service is requesting that a budget of circa £30,000 is approved to allow a feasibility study to be carried out.</p>
Climate Change Response – Programme Governance	£125,000	<p>In order to support the co-ordination and implementation of the Council's response, a climate change lead officer post will be recruited on 2 year fixed term basis, with the initial focus of the role being to support the drafting of the climate change adaptation plan, the climate change sub-committee and to take forward proposed partnership and citizen engagement forums on climate change issues. There will also be a clear</p>

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		<p>link to the Council's existing focus on economic and social renewal as this relates to the climate change agenda.</p> <p>Funding would also be used to cover bespoke training and development for professional staff to develop knowledge and understanding of new green technologies and innovation.</p>
Community Food Growing Proposal	£50,000	<p>It is proposed that a large scale community food growing initiative within the Johnstone area is piloted within Johnstone.</p> <p>As well as bringing land back into purposeful use, the main aim of the project would be to maximise the availability of locally available and fresh food to people experiencing financial insecurity and/or health and wellbeing issues. It is anticipated that this project will be progressed in partnership with local community groups and organisations, with clear links being established to community justice services, community projects and organisations and local school and care services to maximise community involvement and benefit.</p> <p>The funding would support initial project costs, with a view to these unlocking external funding to support the development of the project at scale.</p>
The Renfrewshire Active Travel Network Feasibility level funding to identify and deliver interventions and new links	<p>£75,000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £25,000 to support overall analysis of network gaps relative to economic opportunities - £50,000 for follow-on specific 	<p>Investment in Renfrewshire's Active Travel Network is a priority of the approved Economic Recovery Plan (Dec 2020). From an economic perspective there are gaps in the strategic network and to and from that strategic network, that would better connect communities to places of work and study, town centres, and other economic destinations. Developing the network and its local connections would be a significant driver in offering attractive alternatives to the use of private cars particularly for short journeys and make progress towards delivering 20-minute neighbourhood living across Renfrewshire.</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reducing carbon emissions from travel - healthier lifestyles - more sustainable local economies and services

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	feasibility development of interventions	
Town Centres climate resilience programme	£75,000 - £25,000 to support overall analysis of measures and opportunities - £50,000 for follow-on specific feasibility development of interventions	<p>A certain degree of climate impact is built into established climate agreements meaning that a certain level of climate warming is expected, leading to greater variability in climate including heat events and wetter periods of the year. Streets and public spaces in town and local centres will have a role to play in providing shelter and would benefit economically by offering good environments for people. Work is required to develop a local response to these issues aimed at delivering programmes of beneficial interventions in centres with property owners, residents and users.</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more climate resilient communities - supporting local centres from further economic impact - providing enhanced and local places as attractive alternatives to those further afield (e.g. climate controlled indoor centres) – and therefore reducing the need to travel
Peatland restoration	£10,000	<p>The degradation and erosion of upland and blanket peat bogs is contributing to the loss of carbon sinks. There are significant peatland resources in the ownership of the council albeit under tenancy to farmers on Glennifer Braes and Muirshiel, and there are lowland peat bogs within the extended Drumsagard site at Bishopton. The feasibility of a programme of peat moss restoration, as part of the NatureScot programme - Peatland ACTION, should be tested to inform further discussions with owners, tenants and conservation experts.</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - carbon storage - enhanced biodiversity - enhance water/flood retention in upland catchment areas <p>£10,000 is required to support an initial feasibility study, so as to be well positioned to bid for external funding from a national programme, Peatland ACTION, which has £250m to invest over the next 10 years.</p>