

To: Leadership Board

On: 24 February 2021

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Climate Change Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 As agreed by Leadership Board on 16 September 2020, work has been undertaken to establish a Climate Change sub-committee of the Leadership Board. The remit of the sub-committee requires that members provide oversight and scrutiny of the Council's activities on climate change, and specifically its progress in terms of meeting the target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030.
- 1.2 The Climate Change sub-committee has now met on several occasions since its initial meeting in October 2020. This paper provides an update on its recent activity, including discussions on the planned development of citizen and partner engagement forums to support local work to respond to the climate emergency.
- 1.3 The report also sets out at Appendix 1, a number of climate change funding proposals which were considered by the Climate Change sub-committee at a special meeting on 16 February 2021. It is proposed that these are funded through the £1m Climate Change Action funding allocated within the Council budget agreed in March 2020. The projects and initiatives outlined will assist the organisation in promoting innovation in working 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 "greener" 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. In addition, some of the proposals will also provide vital capacity and expertise to support the organisation in delivering on its climate ambitions, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 1.4 Finally, section 6 of this paper outlines several proposed amendments to existing governance arrangements for the climate change sub-committee, with specific recommendations in relation to the proposed schedule of meetings and the sub-committee's terms of reference.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Leadership Board:
- Note the update in terms of activities being progressed by the Climate Change sub-committee;
 - Agree 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;
 - Agree the revised schedule of meetings for the Climate Change sub-committee as set out in Section 6 of this report and;
 - Agree the amendment to the existing terms of reference of the Climate Change sub-committee, which would ensure relevant matters considered by the sub-committee could be remitted to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board for approval within the remit of that board.

3. Background

- 3.1 On 16 September 2020, members of the Leadership Board agreed that a sub-committee of the board would be established to maintain oversight of the progress being made by the Council in achieving its target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030. It was agreed that a key role for the sub-committee would be to consider and contribute to the development of a climate change adaptation plan for Renfrewshire. A terms of reference and membership arrangements for the sub-committee were agreed by the Leadership Board at that time, with the terms of reference noting that any matters requiring formal decision would be referred by the sub-committee to the Leadership Board.
- 3.2 On 26 November 2020, Council approved proposals to extend the membership of the Climate Change sub-committee by two further members – one from the administration group and one from an opposition group. It was agreed by Council that the two places would be taken by Cllr Lisa-Marie Hughes and Cllr Eileen McCartin.
- 3.3 The Climate Change sub-committee is supported by officers across the Council, with the Head of Policy and Commissioning providing the strategic officer lead within the Council in relation to the climate emergency.

4. Update on Work Programme

- 4.1 The Climate Change sub-committee continues to oversee work being undertaken by officers to respond to the climate emergency, with a key focus on the development of a climate change adaptation plan for Renfrewshire

during spring 2021. At its meeting on 9 December 2020, members of the sub-committee considered:

- An update on progress provided by services on the implementation of the initial climate change action plan agreed by Council in February 2020; and
- Proposals to develop a climate change citizens forum or assembly and a partnership forum, to drive local collaboration and engagement around the climate change agenda.

4.2 A presentation was also provided by Bridget Lambert, Strategic and Commercial Procurement Manager on the sector-leading work that is being progressed locally to deliver on the sustainable procurement duty which is incumbent on all public sector organisations.

4.3 It is anticipated that the partnership and citizen engagement forums discussed by the sub-committee will continue to be progressed, with the aim of these being developed during Spring 2021. The ongoing restrictions in place nationally and at a local level may impact those timescales, however officers will continue to progress proposals in order to ensure that engagement can take place at the earliest opportunity in line with Scottish Government advice.

5 Climate Change Action Fund

5.1 In the budget approved by full Council on 9 March 2020, £1 million was allocated to establish a Climate Change 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 Emergency Working Group, which had been convened following the Council’s declaration of a climate emergency in June 2019.

5.2 Within the report, it was recognised that the 2030 target for achieving net zero carbon emissions in Renfrewshire represents a significant challenge and will only be achieved through the collaboration and commitment of businesses, communities and citizens. Furthermore, responding to the climate emergency will need to be seen by all stakeholders as one of our most significant priorities, with the Council providing leadership to drive and influence this agenda at both a local and national level.

5.3 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.

5.4 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 Board. These proposals are outlined in detail within Appendix 1, which, if approved, would represent £0.698 million of the total funding available through the Climate Change Action Fund.

5.5 The proposals were discussed at a special meeting of the Climate Change sub-committee which took place on 16 February 2021. Members of the sub-committee considered the proposals in detail and agreed these would 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;
- Engaging with businesses, communities and citizens;
- Supporting required changes to culture and behaviours; and
- Innovating and developing expertise to maximise external investment opportunities.

6. Governance Arrangements

6.1 The first meeting of the sub-committee took place on 28 October 2020, with regular meetings taking place thereafter. As a new sub-committee, officers have been working with elected members to ensure that meetings run smoothly and that information and officer updates are provided to the sub-committee in an effective and timely manner.

6.2 A small number of procedural updates have been identified by officers which are recommended for implementation to further enhance the work of the sub-committee. These relate to the scheduling and timetable of sub-committee meetings and a minor amendment to the terms of reference for the sub-committee. Although these changes are being put forward within 6 months of the initial decision being made to establish the sub-committee, the chair of the sub-committee is satisfied that the proposals identified will allow for more effective meeting arrangements to be in place going forward.

6.3 Firstly, meetings of the sub-committee have been scheduled to broadly align with those of the Leadership Board with dates agreed as follows:

- 3 March 2021 at 11.30am
- 5 May 2021 at 12 noon
- 23 June 2021 at 1pm

6.4 In order to support the sub-committee to move forward with its programme of work more effectively it is proposed that these are rescheduled to be held approximately two weeks prior to each Leadership Board meeting, subject to public holidays and recess arrangements. This will support the sub-committee to refer matters for decision to the Leadership Board much more quickly than at present. Revised meeting dates are proposed as follows:

- 19 April 2021
- 2 June 2021
- 1 September 2021
- 17 November 2021
- 9 February 2022
- 6 April 2022

6.5 In addition, as set out in section 3 of this report, the Climate Change sub-committee has the following agreed remit:

To consider matters relating to Climate Change and the Council's response to the Climate Emergency including its progress towards achieving the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030, the development of an adaptation plan for the Council in order to achieve this target, and to make recommendations to the Council and the Leadership Board regarding those matters.

6.6 It is recommended that the following addition is made to the terms of reference, in order to ensure that any relevant matters being considered by the sub-committee can be referred for decision to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board, which has a broad remit covering areas such as biodiversity, recycling and waste which are critical to the Council's ongoing response to the climate emergency.

Addition

Where appropriate, specific matters relevant to the remit of the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board may be referred by the sub-committee to that board.

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** – the report highlights a proposal to recruit a climate change officer on a fixed term basis.
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** - The report includes recommendations to change the governance arrangements for the Climate Change Sub-Committee.
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

Author: Laura McIntyre, Head of Policy and Commissioning
Chief Executive's Service

APPENDIX 1 - 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	Summary
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 Council’s 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> <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>

Name / Description	Funding required	Summary
		<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>
<p>Enhancement of Electric Vehicle Programme</p>	<p>£258,000</p>	<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>
<p>Feasibility study – photovoltaic project</p>	<p>£30,000</p>	<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. Funding of £30,000 is required to allow a feasibility study to be carried out.</p>
<p>Climate Change Response – Programme Governance</p>	<p>£125,000</p>	<p>In December 2020, Leadership Board considered an update on the Council's transformation programme which confirmed that the Head of Policy and Commissioning had been identified as the strategic lead officer to support the work of the Climate Change Sub Committee and the development of the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan.</p> <p>Given the scale of the response to the climate change by Renfrewshire Council and the need to move this forward at pace, a climate change 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 which have been identified by the Climate Change Sub-Committee as key priorities.</p>

Name / Description	Funding required	Summary
		<p>There will also be a clear 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 supported.</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. The project would provide a key opportunity for learning to be applied across other projects, and would also be informed by the expertise of the local Growing Grounds Forum and associated groups.</p>
The Renfrewshire Active Travel Network Feasibility level funding to identify and deliver interventions and new links	£75,000 - £25,000 to support overall analysis of network gaps relative to economic opportunities - £50,000 for follow-on specific feasibility	<p>Investment in Renfrewshire's Active Travel Network is a priority of the approved Economic Recovery Plan (December 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

Name / Description	Funding required	Summary
	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 some 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 across a number of key sites in Renfrewshire. 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>