
To: Climate Change Sub-Committee

On: 1 September 2021

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Climate Change Action Fund

1. Summary

- 1.1 As part of the budget approved by Council on 9 March 2020, £1m of funding was allocated to support the organisation in progressing its response to the climate emergency through a Climate Change Action Fund.
- 1.2 The Climate Change sub-committee has considered a number of funding proposals developed by the organisation during 2021. Following detailed discussion and engagement with members, these proposals have been formally approved by the Leadership Board, with £768,000 of funding allocated to date from the Climate Change Action Fund.
- 1.3 This paper provides a high-level overview of the progress that has been achieved to date in terms of the projects and initiatives supported through this funding to date.
- 1.4 Two new proposals are also included within this paper for consideration by elected members. In line with previous proposals, these support the organisation's response to the climate emergency, with a key focus on testing new technology and practices, and in supporting local communities and businesses to reduce carbon emissions.
- 1.5 Following discussion at the last meeting of the sub-committee on 2 June 2021, officers have also progressed options for the development of community-based fund for local projects/initiatives which support the drive to net-zero. It is anticipated that a detailed proposal will be submitted to the sub-committee for consideration on 17 November 2021.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Climate Change Sub-Committee:
- Note the progress update provided on the initiatives funded through the Climate Change Action Fund to date;
 - Consider the proposals detailed at Appendix 1 of this report, with £115,000 of funding requested from the Climate Change Action Fund and;
 - Note that subject to agreement, these proposals will be submitted to the Leadership Board for formal approval.

3. Background

- 3.1 In the budget approved by 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. The 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, provide 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.

4. Progress – projects and initiatives supported by the Fund.

- 4.1 To date, £768,000 funding has been allocated to support 10 projects through the Climate Change Action Fund. A number of these projects relate to feasibility studies or engagement work with local businesses and communities and good progress has been made in terms of progressing these and appointing relevant suppliers and specialists to support this work. Appendix 1 provides specific detail on this progress which includes:
- Detailed assessment work underway in relation to various peatland restoration sites in Renfrewshire;
 - The research partnership to inform and guide the development of the new build Council housing programme is underway, with a key focus on delivering high quality housing in Renfrewshire which delivers on sustainability requirements.
 - The appointment of a lead officer to support the climate emergency response in Renfrewshire.
 - The purchase of new electric light commercial vehicles as part of the ongoing expansion of the Councils electric fleet.

- The launch of a public survey to assess the views of local residents in relation to the climate emergency with a business survey planned for September 2021.

5. New funding proposals

- 5.1 Two further proposals have been developed by services in relation to the Climate Change Action Fund, with a total of £115,000 of funding being requested this cycle. Further detail on these proposals is outlined within Appendix 2 of this report, and these would seek to deliver:
- The introduction of a business support scheme which would provide small grants to local businesses to support the transition to green energy sources and processes.
 - An energy modelling project in Bridge of Weir Primary, the findings from which could be used to inform the refurbishment of other similar primary buildings.
- 5.2 Subject to the views of the sub-committee, these proposals would be submitted to the Leadership Board for formal approval. If approved, £117,000 would remain within the Climate Change Action Fund for future allocation.
- 5.3 Following discussion at the last meeting of the sub-committee on 2 June 2021, officers are also progressing options for the development of community-based fund to support local projects/initiatives which support the drive to net-zero. It is anticipated that a detailed proposal will be submitted to the sub-committee for consideration on 17 November 2021.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – this report includes funding proposals to support engagement and collaboration with local businesses, partners and communities on the climate emergency 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 outlines work being undertaken by the Council to respond to the climate emergency.

List of Background Papers - none

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Appendix 1 – Update on projects supported by the Climate Change Action Fund

Name / Description	Funding allocated	Summary	Short summary of progress
Housing led Regeneration and Renewal Programme – Zero Energy Buildings (RenZEB)	£75,000	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>The project team appointed is formed by a collaboration between the Department of Architecture and Energy Systems Research Unit (ESRU) of the University of Strathclyde as lead partner, in collaboration with John Gilbert Architects Architects (JGA) and NBM Construction Cost Consultants. Led by the following: Professor Lori McElroy, Department of Architecture, University of Strathclyde, Chris Morgan, Director, John Gilbert Architects Ltd, and NBM Construction Cost Consultants.</p> <p>This collaboration includes members who recently undertook a review and technical evaluation of Renfrewshire Council’s approach to retrofit and includes experts with specific understanding of building standards and regulations, architectural design, construction industry and related industry processes, expertise in embodied energy in materials, ultra-low energy design and operation, indoor environmental quality survey methods, ventilation design expertise, indoor air quality and health in buildings.</p> <p>The commission is being managed by the Communities and Housing Directorate and regular updates will be provided to the relevant Council Boards including the Climate Change Sub-committee.</p>
Enhancement of Electric Vehicle Programme	£258,000	As the organisation moves through its vehicle replacement programme, all opportunities and external funding sources are being utilised to develop the electric fleet.	A total of 27 electric vehicles have been purchased by the Service utilising funding from the Climate Change action Fund and Transport Scotland.

Name / Description	Funding allocated	Summary	Short summary of progress
		<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>The 27 electric vehicles consisted of 20 off Large 3.5Tonne Vans, 18 off Light Vans and 7 off Cars.</p> <p>These EVs bring the total number of Fleet EVs to 127 or around 30% of the Council Fleet.</p> <p>25 of 27 vehicles arrived in Summer 2021 for operational use at Underwood Road Depot. The remaining two vehicles are due to arrive in late August 2021.</p>
Feasibility study – photovoltaic project	£30,000	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, with a feasibility study to be undertaken.	<p>The EMU is currently in the process of appointing an identified contractor to undertake this work.</p> <p>Project specification currently being finalised and timescales for completion will be confirmed shortly.</p>
Climate Change Response – Programme Governance	£125,000	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	A new post of Climate Emergency Lead Officer was developed, job evaluated and recruited for through My Job Scotland and an appointment has been made. The successful candidate is due to start in mid-September. The post is temporarily funded for up to two years within the allocated funding.

Name / Description	Funding allocated	Summary	Short summary of progress
		climate change issues which have been identified by the Climate Change Sub-Committee as key priorities.	
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>A project group has been formed, which has supported initial engagement with local groups and organisations who are interested in working together with the Council on this project. The engagement process is ongoing, although the timelines for this have been impacted by COVID and associated restrictions.</p> <p>Officers have been preparing initial costings to support the development of a project plan, which will be progressed by the group in Autumn 2021.</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	<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</p>	<p>Procurement exercise in June failed to attract a bidder. Market analysis reveals that initial budget was considered too low in a very buoyant market for active travel consultants. Our revised strategy is to retender with a higher budget with support from Sustrans – Places for Everyone budget in September.</p>

Name / Description	Funding allocated	Summary	Short summary of progress
	specific feasibility development of interventions	<p>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 	
Town Centres climate resilience programme	<p>£75,000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £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 	The commissioning of the studies to inform the programme is underway. Tenders have been returned and these are being evaluated for a contract award in September.

Name / Description	Funding allocated	Summary	Short summary of progress
		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 Glenniffer Braes and Muirshiel, and there are lowland peat bogs within the extended site at Bishopton. The feasibility of a programme of peat moss restoration, as part of the NatureScot (NS) 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>	<p>3 sites in Renfrewshire currently being progressed, 2 of which are Council owned - Sergeantlaw Moss (Gleniffer Braes); West Tandlemuir (Clyde Muirshiel) and Barochan Moss, Bishopton (owned by BAE).</p> <p>Licence to Occupy issued by Council to NatureScot (NS) in June 2021.</p> <p>NS completed its in-house site assessment of Sergeantlaw Moss mid-July and is currently preparing its report for presentation to the Council.</p> <p>All relevant tenders have now been issued to support the work programme.</p>
Specialist support to develop 'carbon budget' element	£50,000	Technical expertise is needed to support the development of an evidence base in Renfrewshire in relation to carbon emissions,	Market engagement undertaken during Summer 2021, with procurement exercise to commence shortly.

Name / Description	Funding allocated	Summary	Short summary of progress
of adaptation plan and identify key opportunity areas		and the actions required to achieve the net zero target set by Council in 2019.	
Business survey and analysis and Climate Panel survey and recruitment	£20,000	Two immediate priorities are to carry out a climate emergency survey of Renfrewshire's businesses and to survey and then recruit a representative sample of Renfrewshire's population to participate in a Climate Panel. Both activities require to happen at pace in order to influence the content of Renfrewshire's net zero plan and it is proposed that using a research partner, similar to the approach used for the Council's Public Services Panel, will allow the administrative element of this work to be completed in a robust and independent manner	<p>Business survey has been developed in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and will be issued during September 2021.</p> <p>Survey of local residents is now underway to gain greater insight to views in relation to the climate emergency. Members of the Climate Panel for residents, are currently being recruited from the respondents to the survey.</p>

APPENDIX 2 - Climate Change Action Fund – Funding Proposals August 2021

Name / Description	Funding required	Summary
Net Zero Business Grant Support – Renfrewshire Council Grant programme for local businesses	£100,000	<p>This proposal aims to encourage local businesses to embrace net zero ambitions and to support Renfrewshire’s goal of net zero emissions by 2030.</p> <p>With one in three small businesses worried about rising energy prices, including more than half of SMEs in hospitality and leisure, this proposal ensures business get the support they need to cut emissions and their bills at the same time.</p> <p>50% grant support (up to £10k per grant) will be offered to support local businesses to make changes to business premises and operations. For example, a move to low carbon heating systems, solar powered energy and other measures to reduce emissions.</p> <p>The grants will be delivered through the Economic Development Team in line with other similar business grant funds.</p>
Energy modelling Bridge of Weir PS	£15,000	<p>Proposal to undertake detailed energy modelling of Bridge of Weir Primary School to facilitate design and development of enhanced and integrated energy efficient ‘Enerphit’ refurbishment options.</p> <p>Bridge of Weir PS is an archetype of a number of Primary Schools in the portfolio and the modelling exercise/data will inform potential options for other properties across the school estate.</p>