
To: Climate Change Sub-Committee

On: 2 June 2021

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Climate Change Action Fund

1. Summary

- 1.1 In the budget approved by 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 In February 2021, this Sub-Committee considered a number of funding proposals in relation to the allocation of this funding to support the Council's climate emergency response. The funding proposals recommended at that time by the Sub-Committee were subsequently agreed by Leadership Board on 24 February 2021.
- 1.3 £0.698m of the overall £1m Climate Change Action Fund was allocated in February 2021. Officers have now developed a small number of further funding proposals for consideration, with a total value of £70,000.
- 1.4 Given the role of the Climate Change Sub-Committee to oversee the Council's response to the climate emergency, this report outlines the proposals to allow for more detailed engagement and discussion on these initiatives. The focus of these is on:
 - supporting the development of Renfrewshire's Adaptation Plan, ensuring that this has a strong evidence base to inform future decision making; and
 - supporting the consultation and engagement programme with the business sector and Renfrewshire's communities, as previously agreed by the sub-committee.

- 1.5 In addition, the possibility of developing a Community Climate Fund to support engagement and grow local interest and small-scale climate projects is also highlighted for consideration.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Climate Change Sub-Committee:
- Support the funding proposals detailed at Appendix 1 of this report, with £70,000 to be allocated from the Climate Change Action Fund to progress those initiatives outlined.
 - Note that subject to agreement, these proposals will be submitted to the Leadership Board for formal approval; and
 - Agree that officers develop proposals for a Community Climate Fund, for further consideration by the sub-committee.

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.
- 3.3 In February 2021, this Sub-Committee recommended funding a range of proposals in relation to the Council’s climate emergency response and these were subsequently formally approved by Leadership Board on 24 February 2021. Within the first funding round, there was a strong focus on pilot projects which would be tests of change within specific services, ensuring the Council is well positioned to maximise external investment to support the implementation of initiatives at scale.
- 3.4 The total funding approved in February 2021 was £0.698m. Officers have now developed further funding proposals which could be supported within the balance of the funding (£302,000). The total amount of funding outlined in this report is £70,000 and this would leave a balance of £232,000 to support further funding rounds.

3.5 These proposals will assist the organisation further in working innovatively to reduce and offset carbon emissions in Renfrewshire, changing behaviours and supporting engagement with local people, businesses and communities. In particular, the proposals detailed in this paper will help to progress the work on Renfrewshire's Adaptation Plan and community and business engagement.

3.6 The proposals are summarised in Appendix 1, and can be summarised as follows:

- **Developing a robust carbon evidence base** - analysis and technical support to quantify the impact of the interventions and actions outlined in Renfrewshire's Adaptation Plan and highlight particular areas of opportunity for further development. It is critical that the Plan targets the areas most able to contribute to significant reductions in Renfrewshire's carbon emissions to meet the challenging 2030 target and that activity is accelerated where required. In order to do so effectively and on a sound grounding, technical support to measure the environmental impact of current and proposed future activity is required. In addition to this, in order to ensure Renfrewshire's approach continues to be ambitious and aspirational, this programme of work would also involve the investigation and bringing of exemplar options and ideas for further initiatives for potential application in Renfrewshire, particularly those where additional external funding could be levered in.
- **Business Survey and Community Climate Panel** – two key areas of focus to support the development of Renfrewshire's Adaptation Plan are to engage with the business community and also with Renfrewshire's citizens, to better understand the appetite for change, the opportunities and challenges and the potential gaps in support that the Adaptation Plan could help to address. Following engagement with Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce, it was requested that a 'business audit survey' be carried out across Renfrewshire businesses, with a range of questions focused on the climate emergency, green recovery, circular economy and opportunities for green investment and new green jobs. This piece of work would both identify the challenges and potentially barriers for local businesses but also highlight the opportunities and areas of best practice to share across the business community. An independent research firm will be commissioned to undertake this business audit survey.

In addition, support is also required to establish the Community Climate Panel previously agreed by the sub-committee. The recruitment of members to the Panel will be supported by an independent company, who will also undertake initial survey work to support the initial phases of the Panel's work programme. The Community Climate Panel forms a fundamental element of our community engagement, as previously endorsed by the Climate Change Sub-Committee, piloting a new approach to carrying out a climate conversation across Renfrewshire.

- 3.7 In addition to these specific programmes of work, it is proposed that officers develop an outline proposal for the potential establishment of a Community Climate Fund. Whilst the Climate Change Action Fund is not specifically intended to support the provision of grants, elected members may wish to consider whether a small scale community grant fund of this nature, may be beneficial in encouraging involvement at a local level, helping to build interest and engagement across communities, and demonstrating what could be achieved locally through small collective acts to support the change required.
- 3.8 There is potential for a fund of this nature to offer small amounts of funding to support local community activities and projects, through a simplified application process which would make it easier for smaller groups and organisations to be able to access the funding. This fund could potentially be launched in the Autumn, therefore tying in with the wider programme of engagement and action in the lead up to COP26.
- 3.9 Members are asked to consider this as a possible funding option for development. Subject to approval by the sub-committee, proposals would subsequently be developed for further consideration, including funding criteria and options for participatory budgeting.

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.
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List of Background Papers - none

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Appendix 1 – Climate Change Action Fund - Funding Proposals (second round)

£1 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 27th 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.
Specialist support to develop ‘carbon budget’ element of adaptation plan and identify key opportunity areas	£50,000	<p>Technical expertise is needed to analyse and accurately measure the impact of interventions outlined in the Adaptation Plan. This will highlight the priority actions where progress should be accelerated to achieve the net zero carbon emission target and the key areas of focus required by Council, partners, the private sector and communities.</p> <p>This will require specific expertise in measuring carbon emissions of existing activities, the reductions potentially achieved through identified activities and mechanisms for measuring this impact – effectively this forms a technical assessment to sit behind the Adaptation Plan.</p> <p>In addition, we would be seeking further expertise to identify potential opportunity areas, where external funding could be leveraged to accelerate our progress to net zero emissions.</p>
Business survey and analysis and Community Climate Panel survey and recruitment	£20,000	<p>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 the Community Climate Panel.</p> <p>Both activities require to happen at pace in order to influence the content of the Adaptation 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>