
To: Planning and Climate Change Policy Board

On: 23 August 2022

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Climate Change Action Fund

1. Summary

- 1.1 As part of the budget approved by Council on 9th 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 Prior to the formation of the Planning and Climate Change Policy Board, the Climate Change Sub-Committee had previously considered a number of funding proposals developed by the organisation in response to the climate emergency. Following detailed discussion and engagement with members of the sub-committee, these proposals were then formally approved by the Leadership Board, with £978,000 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.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Planning and Climate Change Policy Board:
- Note the progress update provided on the initiatives funded through the Climate Change Action Fund to date;

- Note the projected financial outturn position detailed in Table 1 (section 5); and
- Note and agree the change to scope of projects detailed at section 4.2.

3. Background

- 3.1 In the budget approved by Council on 9th 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 27th February 2020. The 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.
- 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 particular it is anticipated that several of the feasibility studies will provide a baseline / evidence to support proactive future funding applications.

4. Progress – projects and initiatives supported by the Fund

- 4.1 To date, £978,000 of funding has been allocated to support 14 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:
- the Net Zero Business Grant, which launched in May 2022. This £100,000 discretionary fund offers local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Renfrewshire funding of up to £10,000 to cover up to 50% of eligible costs to allow them to make changes to their business premises and operations to reduce their carbon footprint. 15 organisations are currently engaged in the grant process.
 - the Community Climate Fund which provided awards of up to £3K to 18 community organisations across Renfrewshire to develop localised green community projects and initiatives. Recommendations for award were

approved at the previous meeting of the Planning and Climate Change Policy Board, with project delivery already underway.

- a feasibility study looking at the opportunity for a large-scale solar farm on the former landfill site at Moss Road, Linwood.
- feasibility work at peatland sites in Renfrewshire, to identify restoration projects to increase carbon storage, enhance biodiversity and improve flood retention.
- the development of an active travel strategy focused on accessing the main areas of employment across Renfrewshire.

4.2 Leadership Board also approved the allocation of Climate Change Action funding of £15,000 to carry out energy modelling at an archetype primary school to develop energy efficient refurbishment options, which could potentially be replicated across the school estate. Initially it was anticipated that Bridget of Weir Primary School would be utilised as the archetype school however it is now proposed that East Fulton Primary school is utilised for this purpose. East Fulton Primary School is an archetype of a number of primary schools in the portfolio and the modelling exercise will inform potential options for other properties across the school estate.

4.3 Further project proposals for allocations of the remaining funding will be brought to future Planning and Climate Change Policy Board for approval.

5. Financial Position – Financial Year 2022/23 to 24 June 2022

5.1 It is anticipated that £556,000 of the £978,000 funding allocated to the projects detailed in Appendix 1, will be spent over the course of financial year 2022/23 to deliver the Climate Change Fund Programme.

Table 1: Climate Change Fund Programme	Expenditure	Programme Funding
	£'000	£'000
Approved Programme		1,000
Funding Allocated to Projects		978
Financial Year 2020-21	258	720
Financial Year 2021-22	131	589
Financial Year 2022-23	556	33
Financial Year 2023-24	33	0
Available Funding		22

5.2 Expenditure of £389,000 has been incurred in previous financial years. £258,000 relates to the Enhancement of Electric Vehicle programme with the

remaining £131,000 representing the initial payments on several projects including the Housing Led Regeneration and Renewal Programme (£48,000) and the Town Centres Climate Resilience Programme (£30,000).

5.3 A balance of £22,000 remains available for allocation.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – the content of this report relates to allocated funding of £1M from the Climate Change Action Fund
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:

Climate Action Fund: Progress Update, 9 February 2022 Climate Change Sub-Committee

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Chief Executive's Service

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 specification within the context of the Council approved Regeneration and Renewal Programme.	<p>The University of Strathclyde are leading the partnership in the delivery of research work. The team summarised the Council's 2018 specification, which already complied with EESSH2 and then successfully evolved three further iterations of a standard new housing specification – the 2022, 2025 and 2030 specifications – which progressively reduced carbon emissions by concentrating respectively on operational, embodied and life-cycle emissions, culminating in the final (2030) specification's being theoretically net zero.</p> <p>The next phase of work will carry out further feasibility work on district heating and/or the use of ground source heat pumps as an additional zero-carbon alternative to air source heat pumps, the use of which is assumed in the 2025 and 2030 specifications.</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</p>	<p>A total of 27 electric vehicles were purchased by the Council utilising funding from the Climate Change Action Fund and Transport Scotland.</p> <p>The 27 electric vehicles consisted of 20 off Large 3.5Tonne Vans, 18 off Light Vans and 7 off Cars. These EVs bring the total number of Fleet EVs to 127 or around 30% of the Council Fleet. All 27 vehicles have now been delivered for operational use.</p>

		<p>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	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 landfill site, with a feasibility study to be undertaken.	Consultants have been carrying out the feasibility study, with the final report due for completion in the coming weeks. Cross-council discussions and knowledge sharing has also taken place with North Ayrshire Council who are delivering a similar project, also on a former landfill site and have carried out feasibility, business case modelling, site investigations, planning, explored grid issues, and are currently out for tender.
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	The Climate Emergency Lead Officer was appointed in September 2021 and is now in post.

		engagement forums on 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 series of meetings involving local residents have been held and a nucleus of active participants has been identified. This core group of activists could form the committee of a formally constituted group for future funding applications, tenure arrangements, etc. Local people visiting the site have identified that this large space already performs roles as an informal recreational site and biodiversity conservation resource, so recognise the scope for this to become a multifunctional space. The group is keen to investigate further these options to supplement the main community food growing objectives. The Council's Biodiversity Officer has submitted grant application to NatureScot in a bid to secure supplementary funding for biodiversity enhancement works from the discretionary portion of the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund – outcome of the application yet to be announced by NatureScot/Scottish Government.</p>
Renfrewshire Active Travel Network - Feasibility	£75,000	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	<p>Specialist consultants have been working with Regeneration & Place and Environment & Infrastructure teams to develop an active travel strategy focused on accessing the main areas of employment across Renfrewshire. A large scale survey and a significant number of employer interviews has been conducted with the support of the Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce</p>

		<p>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 	<p>and the Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel. The report with all of its recommendations to develop new routes and initiatives to promote travel behaviour change will be complete shortly and will act as a source document for the development of specific projects for Council and external funder support.</p>
Town Centres Climate Resilience Programme	£75,000	<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>This major piece of work will conclude shortly. The report is in two stages with the first reviewing the extents of potential climate impacts on Renfrewshire's town centres and the potential measures that should be given consideration; to prevent significant disruption, to resolve ongoing pressures on the levels of human comfort and useability due to climatic factors and to assess new opportunities in town centres with the emergence of new economic sectors that could have a town centre presence. Six projects have been taken into a second more detailed stage for development. These relate to active travel, green/blue infrastructure, measures to mitigate climate discomfort, local food production and recycling/circular economy. Projects will be costed and at a point where further design stages and/or businesses cases could now progress with further funding.</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 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 - carbon storage - enhanced biodiversity - enhance water/flood retention in upland catchment areas</p> <p>£10,000 is required to support an initial feasibility study, so as to be well positioned to bid for external funding</p>	<p>There has been good progress at two of the three candidate sites identified by Renfrewshire Council and agreed with NatureScot.</p> <p>The assessment of the potential for Sergeantlaw Moss has been completed and works have been specified and costed. Further progress has been limited by a land ownership issue which is being investigated. This investment to date has been funded entirely from the Peatland Action Fund.</p> <p>The survey of West Tandlemuir Farm has been completed and identified an extensive peat restoration project to the SW of the old Barytes Mine, which would require 20 weeks for specialist contractors to complete at an estimated cost of £210,776. Officers are liaising with NatureScot's Peatland Action team to identify the Council's next steps for this project.</p> <p>Peatland Action issued a tender for survey and feasibility study work at Barochan Moss in 2021 but were unable to award as a result of a lack of suitable bids. Alternative approaches are now being considered by NatureScot</p>

		from a national programme, Peatland ACTION, which has £250m to invest over the next 10 years.	although timescales have been extended as result of resourcing issues within the Peatland Action Team.
Adaptation Plan – Carbon Budget	£50,000	Technical expertise is needed to support the development of an evidence base in Renfrewshire in relation to carbon emissions, and the actions required to achieve the net zero target set by Council in 2019.	Phase one of this work, which relates to the baseline evidence on carbon emissions is now completed. Officers worked with technical specialist consultants to calculate (for both Renfrewshire Council as an organisation and Renfrewshire area as a whole) the baseline emissions (using 2014-15 as the baseline year); the current emissions; and trajectories to 2030 using a best case and worst case scenario. The work also developed an emissions monitoring tool which is based on an open data platform and can therefore be updated as projects are implemented and updated data is available. Phase 2 will commence shortly which will look holistically and strategically at actions across all themes of the Plan for Net Zero with the relevant costings associated to reach net zero.
Business Survey & Climate Change Panel Survey	£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	The survey of local residents took place in September 2021 and the results were reported to the Climate Change Sub-Committee. Members of Renfrewshire's Climate Panel were successfully recruited from the respondents to the survey. The work to distribute the Business Survey was paused due to the emergence of the Omicron variant and impacts on the business community. The survey question set has been developed by officers in partnership with Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce and scoped and agreed by the Council's consultant partner to carry out the survey. It is anticipated that the survey will now be

		Panel, will allow the administrative element of this work to be completed in a robust and independent manner.	launched in August, with the findings therefore available to inform Phase 2, the action planning element of Renfrewshire's Plan for Net Zero.
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Net Zero Business Grant Support	£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>	<p>The Net Zero Business Grant was launched in May 2022.</p> <p>Applicants are required to submit details benchmarking their existing emissions, to be considered for the grant the project should demonstrate a reduction in carbon emissions from this baseline. Promotion of the fund is ongoing and SMEs who have expressed an interest in the fund have been contacted.</p>
Energy Modelling – East Fulton PS (in lieu of Bridge of Weir PS)	£15,000	<p>Proposal to undertake detailed energy modelling of East Fulton PS (in lieu of Bridge of Weir Primary School) to facilitate design and development of enhanced and integrated energy efficient 'Enerphit' refurbishment options. Note the specific property is only being used as a data gathering archetype model rather than funding works/improvements to that location.</p> <p>East Fulton 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>	<p>A specialist consultant has been identified and engaged to undertake detailed energy modelling.</p> <p>Further internal resources are now being identified to survey and digitally plot base information in response to consultant technical requirements.</p>

Charity Shop Pilot – promoting the circular economy	£5,000	<p>The Council is working with a national organisation to develop a charity shop pilot in Renfrewshire, which would help to support objectives in relation to the circular economy.</p> <p>This would operate through a gift voucher model, aiming to break the stigma and to promote the benefits of accessing and reusing good quality items on sales within charity shops.</p> <p>The pilot will be small scale and will initially involve a shop in the Paisley locality, with a view to this informing potential options in other areas of Renfrewshire if successful.</p> <p>The gift vouchers would be available through local community organisations in the first instance to people accessing support and being interested in this type of option.</p>	Project is under the final stages of development and it is anticipated that pilot will commence prior to end of 2022.
Sustainable Procurement Programme	£40,000	<p>As previously discussed by the Climate Sub-Committee, the Council potentially contributes in the region of 3-4% of Renfrewshire's carbon emissions, and therefore the leadership role of the organisation is crucial in terms of working with citizens and businesses to reduce wider carbon emissions. An important element of leadership is through the Council's spending arrangements.</p> <p>Scottish public procurement legislation includes in law a Sustainable Procurement Duty which requires that procurement consider how our contracts can improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of our own area with a particular focus on reducing inequality. The core principles of the Sustainable Procurement Duty are reflected in our Procurement Strategy and the goals and objectives for the</p>	<p>Following an external recruitment process, the procurement manager appointed a Climate Emergency Adviser (CEA) in June this year on a fixed term contract with a view to practice being embedded within the procurement team and across services to guide all future activities.</p> <p>The CEA provides advice and support to the procurement team to ensure that the team have access to the most up to date training, guidance and resources which allow the team to actively contribute to the Council's climate change ambitions.</p>

		<p>procurement team and there is good practice across the procurement team in this regard.</p> <p>The pace of change across markets and in terms of service requirements in terms of sustainable procurement is exponential, and it is essential that the Procurement function is able to maximise sustainable procurement opportunities to ensure contracting activities support net-zero aspirations throughout the contract lifecycle, using all relevant tools and support available and maximising engagement with supply chains.</p> <p>Our ambition is to ensure that the Council not only keeps abreast of best practice but has an opportunity to engage and consult with our suppliers, our colleagues and the wider public sector to help shape and form future Council policy and innovation. Funding from the Climate Change Action Fund will help to develop initial resource to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a clear framework for training and development to ensure that our processes support embedding sustainable procurement in all of our practice and we actively contribute to the Council's Net Zero goal; • the development of an approach to monitoring and recording climate change and circular economy initiatives throughout the life of contracts; • active engagement with Economic Development to help run events for local businesses about sustainable procurement and to help them become more sustainable and focused on tackling the Climate Emergency; the development of cross functional roadmaps for major and targeted impact areas setting out key milestone and targets for action and implementation. 	<p>The CEA supports the team with the completion of individual climate literacy e-learning modules and helps to ensure that the team understand how they can effectively take account of carbon in production, reduce harmful emissions and promote reduction in production of waste as well as encouraging an increasingly circular approach to specification of our requirements for goods and materials. This learning is reflected in new contract strategies and throughout our entire tender documents.</p> <p>The CEA works closely with the Councils Climate Emergency Lead Officer and the Green Economy Officer to help maximise the impact of procurement, exploring opportunities for procurement to support with the delivery of our climate goals and our community wealth building aspirations for our local economy.</p> <p>Next steps for the CEA include working with internal stakeholders and colleagues in the wider public sector to help establish a clear framework for monitoring progress and for managing contracts to</p>
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