

**To: Leadership Board**

**On: 16 June 2021**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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**Heading: Climate Change Update**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 In February 2021, the Climate Change sub-committee considered a number of funding proposals which could potentially be supported through the £1m Climate Change Action funding agreed in the Council budget in March 2020. Leadership Board formally approved the allocation of £0.698m of funding to support these proposals on 24 February 2021.
- 1.2 The first tranche of funding allocated through that round had a strong focus on progressing pilot projects and initiatives 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.
- 1.3 Two further proposals have been developed which were considered and agreed by the Climate Change Sub-committee on 2 June 2021. These proposals have an enabling role and will support the overall progression of the Climate Emergency work programme at pace. The first of these relates to an identified requirement to commission external technical expertise and capacity to support the development of Renfrewshire's adaptation plan. The adaptation plan will set out the key actions that must be taken to achieve a target of net zero carbon emissions in Renfrewshire by 2030, therefore it is essential that these are informed by a strong evidence base.
- 1.4 In addition, it is proposed that funding is also allocated to support the delivery of the extensive consultation and engagement programme that has been agreed by the climate change sub-committee and which will inform the development of Renfrewshire's net zero plan.
- 1.5 Further detail on the funding proposals is included within Appendix 1 of this report, with the total value of funding requested being £70,000. If approved by

the Leadership Board, a balance of £232,000 would remain available for allocation from the Climate Change Action Fund.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Leadership Board:
- Agree the funding proposals detailed at Appendix 1 of this report, with £70,000 to be allocated from the Climate Change Action Fund to support those initiatives outlined.

## **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.

## **4. Funding Proposals**

- 4.1 Two funding proposals were considered and agreed by the Climate Change Sub-committee at its meeting on 2 June 2021. An overview of the proposals is provided within Appendix 1 to this report, 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.

- 4.2 The sub-committee also agreed that officers should develop proposals for the possible establishment of a Community Climate Fund, which could be used to support small-scale community based projects. Proposals will be brought back to the sub-committee for discussion.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – This paper outlines proposals to allocate £0.07m of the total £1m funding allocated by the Council in March 2020 to support the response to the climate emergency. £0.698m of this funding has been allocated to date.
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.

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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>