

To: Planning and Climate Change Policy Board

On: 14 June 2022

Report by: Head of Policy and Commissioning

Heading: Climate Emergency Work Programme - Progress Update

1. Summary

1.1 This paper provides a summary of the work undertaken to date by Renfrewshire Council in response to the climate emergency - outlining the work of the former Climate Change Sub Committee, established in 2020 following recommendations by the Climate Emergency Working Group and the approval of a work programme by Council in February 2020.

1.2 The paper also highlights the development of Renfrewshire's Plan for Net Zero, the recently commissioned work on Renfrewshire's baseline emissions and trajectory and the plans over the coming months to engage with officers, members and partners around the draft plan with a view to bringing this to Board after the summer recess.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Planning and Climate Change Policy Board:
- Note the progress achieved in relation to the current work programme;
 - Agree the remainder of funding allocated to take forward the Ren ZEB project be utilised to explore District Heating Options for Housing Regeneration Areas as outlined in paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4; and
 - Note the priority areas for continuing to progress the Council's response to the climate emergency as set out at section 6

3. Background

- 3.1 Renfrewshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, committing to net zero carbon emissions by 2030 for the whole area of Renfrewshire. This means reducing carbon emissions as far as possible and then offsetting any remainder. This target is significantly ahead of both the Scottish and the UK Government's own target dates of 2045 and 2050 respectively.
- 3.2 Following the declaration, work has been undertaken to develop a programme to drive the collective strategic response to the climate emergency in Renfrewshire. The focus has been to develop a plan which sets out how the Council will work with partners, communities and stakeholders to achieve the net zero carbon emissions target.
- 3.3 Alongside the strategic response, more operational work programmes such as the Council's waste services, asset management, active travel etc continue to support the organisation's own journey to net zero. Detailed information about the Council's emissions is submitted annually to the Scottish Government through the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report.

4. Progress update

- 4.1 £1m was allocated in the 2020/21 budget for the Climate Change Action Fund to progress the response to the climate emergency. This fund was intended to support projects that demonstrate innovation to reduce and offset emissions; assist with changing behaviours and supporting engagement with communities; and accelerating existing programmes of work. The fund was also intended to focus on projects which could act as 'tests of change' within services, to help position the Council favourably to take advantage of future external funding.
- 4.2 At the last meeting of the Climate Change Sub Committee in February 2022, an update report was presented on the Fund, recommending funding to two further projects which brought the total spend to £978k. Details of all the projects funded is included at appendix 1. Please note that one of the projects awarded funding is the Community Climate Fund and an update report on this is also being presented to this Board.
- 4.3 Climate Change Action funding of £75,000 was also awarded for the RenZEB Innovation Project by the University of Strathclyde and John Gilbert Architects, as part of the Council's Housing Regeneration and Renewal programme. This was to evolve a theoretically net zero carbon standard newbuild housing specification for future Council developments. This work has now been completed and the results will be presented to a future meeting of the

Planning and Climate Change Policy Board. The cost of this element of the project was around £50,000 and it is now proposed to divert the remaining £25,000 to support a feasibility study exploring the implementation of a District Heating System in one of the eight Housing Regeneration Areas. The system would primarily provide affordable heating for tenants and other residents but could also provide a heat source for other Council, public and business facilities within that area, while helping to meet the Council's wider climate change priorities.

- 4.4 Elected Members have previously expressed a desire to explore District Heating within Council housing as a measure to support the Council's climate targets. Housing Regeneration Areas such as the Howwood Road Area in Johnstone offer an excellent opportunity to explore the installation of a District Heating System as there is sufficient land and scale of housing numbers alongside large scale energy users such as schools, leisure facilities and small businesses. This exploratory work would augment the research already carried out and would allow an informed choice to be made on appropriate heating and hot water supply systems by comparing capital and operational costs, maintenance and carbon omissions. This work would also seek to build on any learning from the district heating initiative which is being implemented as part of the AMIDS and NMIS developments which is sector leading.
- 4.5 Another project funded by the Climate Change Action Fund, the Net Zero Business Grant was 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. To be considered for the grant, applicants are required to submit details benchmarking their existing emissions along with other relevant details. SMEs who have expressed an interest have been contacted and the fund is published on [FindBusinessSupport.gov](https://www.findbusinesssupport.gov.uk) in addition to the Council website.
- 4.6 A key element of a just transition to net zero is community engagement and collaborative working to build resilient communities and ensure no one is left behind. In order to ensure Renfrewshire's Plan for Net Zero is accessible, relevant and meaningful for citizens, the previous Climate Change Sub-Committee agreed for a small-scale, informal 'citizen's panel' to be developed, recruited through the climate survey carried out in September 2021.
- 4.7 Renfrewshire Climate Panel has been established, and four cycles of sessions have successfully taken place. Subjects covered have included the background to the global climate emergency and explaining why Renfrewshire declared a climate emergency and what this means; exploring in more details

the findings from the climate survey; and single focus sessions on waste and recycling and active travel.

- 4.8 Officers have also met with Engage Renfrewshire and Council colleagues leading on Renfrewshire's Social Renewal Plan to discuss further engagement with particular groups on areas of overlap such as climate justice, food and fuel insecurity.
- 4.9 Officers have established Renfrewshire's Net Zero Network – an informal group of community planning partners and representatives from the business community to offer peer support around climate issues and identify shared areas of focus and potential opportunities for partnership working. In addition, in partnership with the Improvement Service, officers have been trained to carry out carbon literacy training – training which helps to show the carbon dioxide costs and impacts of the everyday activities how and why to reduce this - and have already begun to roll this out.

5. Plan for Net Zero

- 5.1 A key deliverable of the climate emergency work programme is the development of a 'Plan for Net Zero' – a high level plan focusing on mitigation activities and interventions to help reduce the carbon emissions for Renfrewshire as an area as low as possible by 2030.
- 5.2 The engagement and partnership activities outlined above form part of the foundations of this plan, alongside a significant piece of work commissioned earlier this year on Renfrewshire's carbon emissions baseline and trajectory to allow us to understand our own organisational and area-wide footprints and allow us to identify the interventions required to meet our 2030 target. Technical expertise was provided by the climate consultancy Aether who have compiled a draft report which is currently being analysed by officers in advance of a further draft and access to a data modelling tool as a first phase of this work.
- 5.3 Whilst this work has been underway, the Plan for Net Zero is being drafted, based around the following proposed themes:

Clean Energy	Minimise energy demand, maximise energy efficiency and transform our energy systems to deliver clean, affordable energy for all
Sustainable Transport	Maximise sustainable transport opportunities to deliver an inclusive, affordable transport system that provides choice for all
Circular Economy	Become a zero-waste society with a circular economy: minimising waste & maximising reuse, recycling & recovery of resources rather than treating them as waste
Connected Communities	Empower our communities by ensuring a just transition with social justice at its core
Resilient Place	Optimise biodiversity and nature locally to enhance our natural environment and maximise green economic opportunities, while planning and preparing for impacts of climate change

5.4 To coincide with the engagement around Renfrewshire’s Plan for Net Zero, a ‘Ren Zero’ brand has been developed by the Council’s Communications and Marketing Team. Alongside the ‘Ren Zero’ tagline, bright and eye-catching designs have been created, available for use in presentations, social media releases and on documents, reports and guidance. It is intended these can be shared with partners and communities as they are not specifically Council branded. By developing an overarching, recognisable climate ‘brand’ it is hoped to make the climate emergency agenda more accessible for all, to show the reach of the issues relating to climate and more clearly identify the diverse range of activities and actions already undertaken. Examples of the branding are shown at appendix 2.

6. Key priority areas

6.1 Looking ahead to the next quarter, the significant focus will be on the finalisation of the draft Plan for Net Zero, with consultation on the draft alongside the findings of the baseline and trajectory report to take place over the summer. As part of the consultation, it is proposed to hold a special round of meetings with Renfrewshire Climate Panel and intended to also engage with underrepresented groups and with children and young people on the content of the draft report.

6.2 As previously requested by Elected Members, as part of our Plan for Net Zero we will also develop an update report specifically aimed for children and

young people, given the importance of this agenda for them and to ensure inclusivity of our approach.

- 6.3 As previously reported to the Climate Emergency Sub-Committee, the work to distribute the Business Survey had been paused but the survey question set has already been developed by officers and the work scoped and agreed by the Council's consultant partner to carry out the survey. The distribution, due to take place in Spring, has been delayed due to the focus on distribution of the Public Services Panel and it is anticipated the survey will now be launched in late June, with the findings therefore available to inform phase 2, the action planning element of Renfrewshire's Plan for Net Zero.
- 6.4 As considered within a separate report to this Policy Board, recommendations have been made on the allocation of Community Climate Funding and it will also be a priority action to award and support the roll out of this funding.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4 outline a recommendation to utilise part of the funding which has already been approved to support the Ren ZEB housing initiative. Specifically, it is proposed that £25,000 of the £75,000 funding previously awarded be utilised to support the additional feasibility study proposed.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – this report includes updates and further 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** – the paper includes an appendix detailing funding agreed for Council climate projects, including £40,000 for a Sustainable Procurement Programme
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:

Climate Emergency Work Programme – Progress Update 9 Feb 2022, Climate Change Sub Committee

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Appendix 1 – Projects supported by the Climate Change Action Fund

Name/Description	Funding Allocated	Summary
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.
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. 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>
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.
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 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>
Renfrewshire Active Travel Network - Feasibility	£75,000	<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 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	£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>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. 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 from a national programme, Peatland ACTION, which has £250m to invest over the next 10 years.</p>
Plan for Net Zero – baseline emissions	£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.
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 Panel, will allow the administrative element of this work to be completed in a robust and independent manner
Net Zero Business Grant Support	£100,000	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>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>
Community Climate Fund	£50,000	<p>The purpose of the Community Climate Fund is to provide awards of up to £3K to community organisations to develop localised, green community projects and initiatives which are tailored to the needs of individual communities. The aim of this funding is to encourage participation and raise awareness of the climate emergency within our communities, with initiatives being designed and delivered by local residents but supported by the Council.</p>
Charity Gift Shop Pilot – promoting the circular economy	£5,000	<p>Proposals are being developed to pilot an initiative in Renfrewshire which would promote local efforts in terms of the circular economy, whilst also offering a potential source of additional support for low-income households.</p>

		<p>The pilot is anticipated to work by gift cards being made available to individuals and families working with local community organisations to purchase clothing and other items.</p> <p>The CSGC organisation would cover all administration costs, liaison with charity shops and partners and promotion of the service. This initiative not only helps families in need, but also fits with climate emergency work as it demonstrates an example of the circular economy. Agreement has been reached with one charity shop in Paisley to take vouchers at present. The pilot would be expected to start in 2022.</p>
Sustainable Procurement Programme	£40,000 max	<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 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.
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Appendix 2 – Examples of the Ren Zero branding

Examples of the primary logo with different icons separating the words – a range of icons are available:



Examples of the stacked wording with some different icons:



Example use of the presentation template:

REN  ZERO

Lochwinnoch Community Council

May 2022

Renfrewshire – progress to date

- Appointment of Climate Emergency Lead Officer
- Ongoing consultation and engagement programme
- Climate Emergency Survey
- Renfrewshire Climate Panel established
- Ren Zero Network established
- Allocated almost all £1m funds to projects and pilots
- Community Climate Fund
- Baseline emissions inventory and emissions trajectory to 2030
- Alongside this, ongoing work by Council as an organisation to reduce our own emissions

