
To: Climate Change Sub-Committee

On: 9 February 2022

Report by: Head of Policy and Commissioning

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 The Sub-Committee has considered a number of funding proposals developed by the organisation during 2021. Following detailed discussion and engagement with members of the sub-committee, these proposals have been formally approved by the Leadership Board, with £933,000 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 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 to support two further initiatives, with £45,000 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 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.

4. Progress – projects and initiatives supported by the Fund

- 4.1 To date, £933,000 of funding has been allocated to support 12 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 purchase of new electric light commercial vehicles as part of the ongoing expansion of the Council’s electric fleet.
 - A feasibility study looking at the opportunity for a large-scale solar farm on the former landfill site at Moss Road, Linwood (see Figure 1, below).



Figure 1: Example of solar farm

- Energy modelling at Bridge of Weir Primary School to develop energy efficient refurbishment options, which could potentially be replicated across the school estate.
- Completion of our residents' Climate Survey, including weighting and analysis of results to ensure a representative view as part of the evidence base for Renfrewshire's net zero plan (see Figure 2, right). A representative sample of residents who responded then formed the Climate Panel.
- Development of a local response to ensure resilient town centres by addressing current and issues within our towns and local centres in Renfrewshire. Work includes interventions to mitigate climate change impacts and support local centres from further economic impact.
- Establishing the Community Climate Fund to provide awards of up to £3K to community organisations to develop localised green community projects and initiatives. This was launched on the 31st January 2022 and closes on the 14th March 2022.

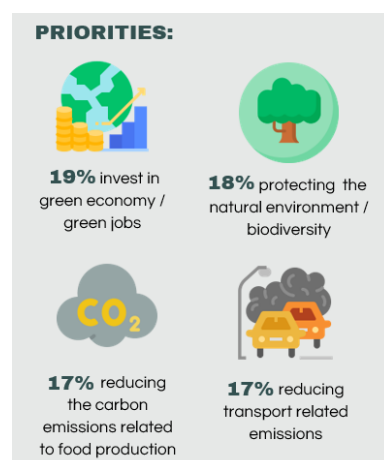


Figure 2: Top priority areas according to Survey respondents



- 4.2 Further project proposals for allocations of the remaining fund will be brought to future Sub-Committee meetings and Leadership Board for approval.

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 £45,000 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:
- A Charity Shop Gift Card pilot, which would support local work in relation to the circular economy, whilst also being a potential source of support to low income households.
 - Funding to support the development of a Renfrewshire Sustainable Procurement programme which would strengthen and accelerate the local approach and support net-zero ambitions across Renfrewshire.
- 5.2 Subject to the views of the Sub-Committee, these proposals would be submitted to the Leadership Board for formal approval. If approved, £22,000 would remain within the Climate Change Action Fund for future 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, 1 September 2021 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 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. This element is due for completion by 31st March 2022.</p> <p>Follow on works, to inform the Council's commitment to minimise the extent of embedded and operational carbon in new building stock we are building, will commence in financial year 2022-23.</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 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>A total of 27 electric vehicles were purchased by the Council utilising funding from the Climate Change Action Fund and Transport Scotland. 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>

		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.	
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.	The Council have appointed a consultant to carry out the feasibility, with the project completion set for mid to late March 2022.
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.	The Climate Emergency Lead Officer was appointed in September 2021 and is now in post.
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>	Work has been undertaken to develop initial options for discussion with local community groups and organisations. A community meeting was held in late 2021 to gain support for the project and to identify local groups and organisations that would wish to participate.

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 	<p>Procurement exercise in June failed to attract a bidder due to a very buoyant market for active travel consultants. The study has been retendered and returns are currently being evaluated, with an award and start anticipated in February 2022.</p> <p>A key part of this work is engagement with major employers and their employees to jointly develop active travel solutions that will support moves towards a net zero Renfrewshire.</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>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more climate resilient communities - supporting local centres from further economic impact 	<p>Commission awarded to a consultant of multi-disciplinary engineers, environmental scientists and architects to advise on potential applicable climate resilience measures for Renfrewshire's town centres.</p> <p>Part 1 of the commission to report in January with the definition of particular projects to follow.</p> <p>Stakeholder consultation on future areas of work for particular town centres also taking place in January.</p>

		- 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>	<p>The 3 sites in Renfrewshire remain, 2 of which are Council owned - Sergeantlaw Moss (Glennifer Braes); West Tandlemuir (Clyde Muirshiel) and Barochan Moss, Bishopton (owned by BAE).</p> <p>The assessment of the potential for Sergeantlaw Moss has been completed and works on restoration will begin in the summer months where drier ground is required for vehicular access. This investment is being funded entirely from the Peatland Action Fund.</p> <p>The survey of West Tandlemuir is being conjoined with a survey within the Inverclyde Council area to form an extensive survey of peatland restoration potentials across the Renfrewshire Heights. This work is to report in 2022.</p>
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	This work is now focused on the development of a net zero plan for Renfrewshire and has been rephased. For phase one in relation

		zero target set by Council in 2019.	to baseline evidence on carbon emissions, we are currently seeking experienced consultants to carry out this piece of work.
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	The timeline around distributing the business survey has been altered to reflect the emergence of the Omicron variant on the business community and to avoid the Christmas period. It is now planned for distribution in Spring 2022. The survey content has been developed in partnership with Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce. 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.
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>	The grant programme will be developed following the appointment of the new Green Economy Officer, with a projected launch date of March 2022.

		<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>	<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>

Appendix 2 – Climate Change Action Fund – Funding Proposals February 2022

Name/Description	Funding Required	Summary
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</p>

		<p>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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