

Report

Report to:	Climate Change and Sustainability Committee
Date of Meeting:	28 April 2021
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

Subject:	Climate Challenge South Lanarkshire Fund
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to :-

- ◆ Inform members of the range and scope of the areas which the £2m climate challenge fund would be directed and that detailed projects would be monitored and reported at future Committees

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- 1) Note the range and scope of the areas that the £2m climate challenge fund could be directed.
- 2) Note that detailed proposals would be subject to further reports for noting framed around the scope set out in section 3.0.
- 3) that the proposed establishment of six posts for a 23 month period as detailed in section 6 of the report, are endorsed and referred to the Executive Committee for approval.
- 4) that the proposed recruitment of PhD student jointly funded by Glasgow Caledonian University's Centre for Climate Justice for a period of 3 years as detailed in section 6 of the report, are endorsed and referred to the Executive Committee for approval.

3. Background

3.1. As part of agreeing the 2021-22 budget the Council agreed that the following fund be established:

Climate Challenge South Lanarkshire £2m

Despite the focus on the COVID pandemic, the Climate Change Emergency remains one of the biggest, if not the greatest, challenge we all face. The Council agreed to establish a Climate Change Committee and now we will establish a fund that will support work in this most vital of areas. This £2m investment fund will enable the Committee to prioritise match funding for external funding applications specifically linked to the UK and Scottish Government green economy and green jobs programmes. This is a signal of this Council's ambition to become a net zero carbon authority and for South Lanarkshire to be an exemplar area where renewable technologies, industries and ultimately jobs are delivered.

3.2. Since the budget approval at full Council meeting on 24 February 2021, discussions through the officer Climate Change Steering Group have identified a number of thematic areas where the budget could be directed. These are based on the initial output from the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy (SDCCS) development workshop held on 4 February 2021 and involved participants from all Resources. This event is part of the process to inform the development of the SDCCS 2022 – 2027 which was reported to the Committee on 17 September 2020. The output from the workshop included a list of suggested themes, detailed below:

- Natural environment
- Built environment
- Travel and transport
- Waste and recycling
- Communities
- Economy

3.2.1 **Natural environment**

This will include priorities in biodiversity, land use and management and access to nature that promotes health and wellbeing, improving air, water and soil quality and increasing carbon storage potential. The outcomes will be that South Lanarkshire's natural environment is protected and restored.

3.2.2. **Built environment**

This will include retrofitting and upgrading council buildings, creating climate ready buildings, and energy efficient and low carbon homes. The outcomes will be that buildings and homes in South Lanarkshire are high quality, warm, energy efficient and zero carbon. The current strategic energy review (reported to Committee on 4 November 2020) will inform the nature and scale of projects.

3.2.3. **Travel and transport**

This will include council fleet vehicles, low carbon vehicle charging infrastructure, active and sustainable travel options and improved air quality. The outcomes will be that we are able to use active or sustainable travel for our journeys.

3.2.4. **Waste and recycling**

This will include consideration of the circular economy, reducing consumption and maximising reuse and recycling. The outcomes will be that we use and reuse our resources wisely.

3.2.5. **Communities**

This will include place-making and planning, construction and infrastructure, awareness raising and education, empowering communities and groups to take action, and improving health and well-being. The outcomes will be that South Lanarkshire's communities live low carbon lifestyles and are resilient to the effects of climate change.

3.2.6. **Economy**

This will include the circular economy, training and skills and supporting businesses to transition to zero carbon. The outcomes will be that our low carbon economy protects and enhances our natural resources and the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

4.0. **Current Climate Change Activity**

4.1. The Council has been reporting on key actions from the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy for the last 15 years and has seen significant progress across Council services including:

- carbon reduction of 57% between 2005-06 and 2010-20
- energy efficiency measures in our homes and other buildings, with over £5m investment in council properties from the self generating Central Energy Efficiency Fund
- implementation of the biodiversity duty,
- increased electric vehicles and charging infrastructure and promotion of active travel, currently 25% of the Council's small cars and vans are electric,
- improved waste and recycling service,
- many successful open greenspace projects, eg Fernbrae
- working with local communities on environmental volunteering and schools in their bid to become eco schools, of which 100% are either accredited or working towards accreditation
- climate change is a key theme within the local development plan

4.2. Good progress has been made within all these activities but the next stage will be more challenging and this funding will help the Council progress to the next level of carbon reduction, climate change adaptation and mitigation and benefit from future opportunities.

5. Project Development

5.1. On the basis that the thematic areas and scope, set out in section 3, are supported by members, this provides a framework on which to develop detailed projects, identify support and resources to implement these. It is noted that the fund has an indicative 3-year timeframe, however, should circumstances present themselves to accelerate spend, for example through match funding for external funding opportunities to support project development and/or implementation, these opportunities will be exploited. In this regard, and by way of background, the following funding areas are currently available (this list is not exhaustive):

- The UK Government's Community renewal fund - feasibility studies for delivering net-zero and local energy projects.
- The UK Government's Levelling Up Fund - transport investments including active travel, high-impact small, medium and by exception larger local transport schemes to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality.
- UK Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund (Phase 2) - £75 million grant funding for the public sector to decarbonise heat from their estate.
- Scottish Government's Peatland Restoration Fund – £22 million for 2021-22 as part of the Scottish Government's 10 year commitment of £250 million for peatland restoration.
- Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund - £70 million fund to improve recycling infrastructure across Scotland

5.2. It is anticipated that additional funding will be forthcoming in the year and years ahead. The type of funding and investment that has been included in the Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2020-21 includes:

- £1.6 billion in transforming buildings to ensure that emissions from heating are eliminated by 2040 and to remove poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty. This includes at least £95 million to decarbonise the public sector estate, £50 million Green Recovery Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme (LCITP), £25 million for zero carbon energy infrastructure and heat networks for residential and commercial premises along the river Clyde's

path, Additional £55 million to support scale up of energy efficiency programmes

- £100 million Green Jobs Fund, investment in heat and energy efficiency and industrial decarbonisation
- £500 million over five years for active travel infrastructure, access to bikes and behaviour change schemes
- Extra £150 million for flood risk management
- £200 million of low carbon investments through new Green Growth Accelerator deals with pathfinder projects to be identified in 2021.

- 5.3. Following on from the above, it is proposed that funding should be directed to support both projects and develop feasibility studies to ensure that the Council is in a position to apply for external funding opportunities. In this regard, it is proposed that, at this stage, the fund can be split into the following broad areas of spend as set out below.

Staffing

- 5.4. It is recognised that Members view Climate Change as one of the Council's top priorities and this is reflected in the budget decision and funding allocation. Given the elevated level of importance now given to Climate Change, and the ambition to make a step change in the Council's activities to contribute to these objectives, this will increase the level of work for officers on top of existing workload. Therefore, there is a need to add to the current staffing resources for a period of 23 months to match the Council's commitment. Therefore, it is proposed to add 7 officers (6.5 FTE) to the establishment with a summary of the posts set out below:

- 1 FTE Development Officer (Sustainable Development Support) to support the current Sustainability Team (1.6 FTE). This will allow the current team to focus on the development of the new strategy with this additional staff member to provide support.
- 1 FTE Development Officer (Sustainable Development Funding) to focus specifically on funding opportunities available to the Council and third parties with regard to climate change and sustainability. This post would work with Services to develop and deliver projects and with both internal and external parties to source funding for the benefit of the South Lanarkshire area. This officer would support the existing external funding team that comprises of 2 FTE officers.
- 1 FTE Development Officer (Green Economy) to co-ordinate and promote the Green / Low carbon Economy by building a portfolio of potential investment projects to help the Council develop achievable actions within the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy (SDCCS) while simultaneously contributing to economic development activities to stimulate economic growth and employment opportunities.
- 1 FTE Strategy Team Leader (Built Environment) and 2 FTE Strategy Officer (Built Environment) to develop the Council's approach to meeting the milestones and targets contained within the various built environment strategies that are under development, as well as the agreed activities set out in the Strategic Energy Review previously reported to Committee. Following this, it is envisaged that these work streams will be fully in the implementation and monitoring/reporting phases and will be progressed through existing delivery teams.
- A Project Support Assistant (Sustainable Development) through the employment of a PhD student placement will also be employed to undertake work with a focus on ensuring climate justice in South Lanarkshire, both in terms of climate

adaptation and climate mitigation with the Glasgow Caledonian University's Centre for Climate Justice agreeing to fund 50% of their salary for a period of 3 years.

5.5. The 3 officers that would progress the Strategic Energy Review would be added to Housing and Technical Resources establishment while the remaining 4 officers would be within Community and Enterprise Resources. Having said that, these additional officers would work across all Resources in the Council taking a corporate approach to contribute to Climate Change objectives.

5.6. Details of the staffing financial implications are set out in section 6 and are based on the full costs being met by the Council, with Glasgow Caledonian University's Centre for Climate Justice agreeing to fund 50% of the PhD post. In this respect, should external funding be sourced, officers will seek to explore the opportunity that part of the funding can be directed to project management costs. In turn, this may off-set some of the staffing costs set out. This will be monitored as matters are progressed.

5.7. **Project and Development Funds**

It is proposed that funding is set aside to maximise benefits and deliver projects over the full three years by supporting fully funded Council projects and grants to external and community organisations to deliver small scale projects that can be delivered in the short term. The fund would also allow projects that require match funding to be submitted in the medium term and to have funds available to develop projects that will be delivered over a longer time period. The funds would be split as follows:

- **Short term** : Council projects/pilots and a small grant fund for local groups and schools
- **Medium term** : Match fund to bid for external funding
- **Longer term** : Development fund to allow feasibility studies on identified/proposed projects that meet the climate change objectives

5.8. The fund will be managed through the Climate Change and Sustainability Steering Group with bi-annual reports to the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee for updates on progress.

6 **Employee Implications**

6.1. The following posts should be added to the Community and Enterprise Resources establishment on a fixed term basis for up to 23 months, as detailed below:

Post	Proposed Number of Posts (FTE)	Grade	SCP Range	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Gross Cost inc on costs 30.3%	Total Costs (per annum)
Development Officer (Sustainable Development Support)	1	G3 L2 - 4	63 - 74	£18.08 - £21.65	£32,994 - £38,779	£42,991 - £50,529	£42,991 - £50,529
Development Officer (Sustainable Development Funding)	1	G3 L2 - 4	63 - 74	£18.08 - £21.65	£32,994 - £38,779	£42,991 - £50,529	£42,991 - £50,529
Development Officer (Green Economy)	1	G3 L2 - 4	63 - 74	£18.08 - £21.65	£32,994 - £38,779	£42,991 - £50,529	£42,991 - £50,529
Total costs							£128,973 – £151,587

- 6.2. The following post should be added to the Community and Enterprise Resources establishment on a fixed term basis for 3 years with Glasgow Caledonian University's Centre for Climate Justice agreeing to fund 50% of the post, as detailed below:

Post	Proposed Number of Posts (FTE)	Grade	SCP Range	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Gross Cost inc on costs 30.3%	Total Costs (per annum)
Project Support Assistant - Placement (Sustainable Development)	1	G2 L1 -2	34 -40	£11.78 – £12.86	£22,725 - £24,809	£29,611 – £32,326	£29,611 – £32,326
Total costs							£29,611 – £32,326

- 6.3. The following posts be added to the Housing and Technical Resources establishment on a fixed term basis for up to 23 months, as detailed below:

Post	Proposed Number of Posts (FTE)	Grade	SCP Range	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Gross Cost inc on costs 30.3%	Total Costs (per annum)
Strategy Officer (Built Environment)	2	G3 L2 - 4	63 - 74	£18.08 - £21.65	£32,994 - £38,779	£42,991 - £50,529	£85,982 - £101,058
Strategy Team Leader (Built Environment)	1	G3 L8	79 -80	£22.89 - £23.24	£41,771 - £42,410	£54,428 - £55,261	£54,428 - £55,261
Total costs							£140,356 - £156,319

- 6.4. As these are new posts, the grades for these posts have been validated using tasks evaluated using the Council's Job Evaluation Scheme and will be reviewed in 12 months to reflect any changes as the post evolves.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. The majority of the £2m fund will be targeted to additional external funding, and savings achieved from implementing projects could be reinvested in additional efficiency projects. There are significant external funding opportunities available to the Council, as outlined in section 6 of the report and these will be investigated and progressed.

- 7.2. Continued investment through the usual capital programme will also be required to meet our targets.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 8.1. The Scottish Government is committed to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, with interim reduction targets of 75% by 2030 and 90% by 2040 (based on 1990 levels) and becoming carbon neutral by 2040. The Council has an obligation to contribute to these targets and fulfil its duties under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

- 8.2. The statutory order for public bodies to report annual progress on meeting their climate change duties was updated in 2020. The updated Statutory Instrument means that public bodies are required to report on their zero direct emissions target and how they will align their spending plans and use of resources to contribute to

these targets. This will apply to the Climate Change Duties Annual Climate Change 2021-22 report due to be submitted to Scottish Government in November 2022.

- 8.3. By investing in staffing, consultancy, projects and administering small grants it helps the Council contribute to national targets and meet the new reporting commitments.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1. Failure to build resilience against the impacts of a changing climate is included in one of the Council's top risks.

10.0 Next Steps

- 10.1 On the basis that the Committee approve the recommendations, the following matters would be progressed:

- Commence recruitment of additional officers and seek to have them in post by late Summer.
- Develop detailed proposals to commence the grant funding for local communities by late Summer
- Progress project identification and external funding opportunities
- Provide regular updates to the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee

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14 April 2021

Link(s) to Council Objectives and Values

Work with communities and partners to promote high quality, thriving and sustainable communities.

Previous References

- ♦ None

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Full Council meeting on 25th September 2019 - Notice of motion: South Lanarkshire Council's Statement of Intent in Response to the Climate Change Emergency
- ◆ Full Council meeting on 24th February 2021 - budget approval

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:- Michael McGlynn (Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

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