

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker	Cabinet
Date:	13 July 2021
Title:	HCC Climate Change Initiatives.
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The report seeks Cabinet approval for a programme of climate change neutrality and risk mitigation activities relating to the operational activities of the County Council

Recommendation

2. Cabinet is asked to approve the spend of up to £1.2M on identified climate change projects in the next 2 years.

Executive Summary

3. This report sets out a series of projects relating to the programme of climate change neutrality and risk mitigation activities covering the operational activities of the County Council. The £1.2m one-off funding that supports a series of projects for 2021 – 2023 is the outcome of early SP23 savings in CCBS relating to the realignment of the CCBS Community Grants scheme (as reported to Cabinet 25 February 2021).
4. The proposals are a combination of pilot projects, acceleration of existing schemes, a community offer and a strong educational focus. They are designed to enhance the Council's leadership on climate change by accelerating and demonstrating the County Council's own practice and intentions.

5. The proposals support the activities in the County Councils Strategic Climate Change Action Plan and the reports previously approved by Cabinet. Cabinet are asked to approve the programme.

Contextual information

6. The Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019 and committed to achieving net carbon neutrality. Corporately a Climate Change programme was established to deliver on the county-wide target of carbon emissions reduction to net zero and resilience to a 2°C temperature rise by 2050.
7. As part of this corporate programme the County Council is making significant progress on activities across the County Council's own estate and operations that reduce carbon emissions and mitigate the risks to the County Council from the potential impacts of climate change in the coming years. The diverse nature of the County Council's activities offers real challenge in building expertise and responding to Climate Change over a wide range of operational areas that include the County Council's built estate (including schools), the transport fleet, catering, procurement of supplies and countryside services. In addition, land holdings and land management practices present opportunities for the Council to sequester and store carbon. Examples of good evidence of the Councils commitment to Climate Change include making a policy decision to change all its small vehicle fleet to electric as they are replaced on a phased basis. There is also the recent success of securing government grant for a significant programme of carbon reduction projects. Around £30 million has been secured to deliver programmes of work to the built estate which includes window replacements, solar photo-voltaic and boiler controls. The expertise which exists within the Council secured these grants in a short timescale bidding process and programmes of work are now well underway.
8. The earmarking of £1.2m one-off funding for projects relating to the internal HCC climate change programme has enabled the identification of a series of new initiatives which will have a range of positive impacts related to climate change. In addition to carbon reduction, many of these projects will be visible to the public and will therefore play a key educational role.
9. Projects identified for funding fall into a number of climate change themes. These include:
 - de-carbonisation of fleet vehicles, operational plant and tools through a switch to electric or other carbon neutral power sources;
 - natural environment enhancements through tree planting, landscape regeneration and proof of concept projects;

- waste and recycling activities;
 - energy efficiency initiatives including examining the feasibility of a solar farm; and
 - further expansion of previous programmes that have delivered carbon reduction such as LED lighting and solar PV installation.
10. Support to implement energy efficiency options is proposed to be extended to community venues as well as more of the Council's own sites. Projects are also identified to examine the Council's resilience to climate change and consider how we may address this. The impact of the projects on the carbon footprint of the Council will be assessed as they are developed. At this stage financial allocations are preliminary and there will be some flexibility across the programme as the projects are progressed but the overall funding envelope will be adhered to.
11. Education and engagement with citizens is a central theme in a number of these projects. Collaborative opportunities exist across the County Council's public-facing services, particularly in the Countryside Service, Hampshire Outdoor Centres and the Library Service, all of which have a remit for the education of children and/or adult learners. Sir Harold Hillier Gardens is also strongly positioned to facilitate education objectives through their education programmes.

Finance

12. The £1.2m funding for these projects over the next two years is already approved (Cabinet: 25 February 2021). The detail of the funding breakdown to the individual projects is shown in the table below.

Summary of projects proposed

13. A summary of the project areas, value of spend, and anticipated start date is shown below:

Theme	Project title	Value	Start year
Transport	Enhancements to the electric vehicle fleet	£30,000	2021/22
	Electric alternatives for operational heavy vehicles and electric power tools	£20,000	2022/23
	Expansion of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil pilot	£57,000	2021/22

Natural Environment	Hillier's Propagation Unit – phase one Frontier Garden project	£150,000	2021/22
	Tree Planting	£200,000	2021/22
	Rewilding / landscape-scale regeneration (proof of concept) and promotion	£100,000	2021/22
	Climate positive carbon negative country park at River Hamble	£35,000	2021/22
Waste & Recycling	Proof of Concept: Food waste station installation at Royal Victoria Country Park	£10,000	2021/22
	Onsite composting to facilitate sustainable approach to biodegradable and compostable food packaging in addition to food waste	£45,000	2021/22
	Increased recycling facilities and signage at customer-facing sites	£5,000	2022/23
Energy	Renewable Energy Studies including Solar Farm potential	£10,000	2022/23
	Extension of LED lighting programmes at HCC corporate sites	£100,000	2022/23
	Energy efficiency for community buildings (additional to Parish and Town Council Funding)	£150,000	2022/23
	Renewable energy in HCC depot locations	£10,000	2021/22
	Demonstration project for carbon neutrality at Runway's End Eco-Activity Centre	£50,000	2022/23
Education	Range of initiatives to engage positively with schools and visitor groups of all ages around climate change and to facilitate community learning	£118,000	2021/22
Climate Change Adaption	Commission expertise to look at the need to adapt our land and assets to be resilient to the impacts of climate change	£10,000	2021/22
Built estate	Feasibility, design and proof of concepts for building technologies to test reductions in carbon emissions and explore innovation	£100,000	2022/23

Consultation and Equalities

14. A high-level Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and no negative impacts have been identified at this stage. It should be noted that further development of these projects is required and more detailed EIAs may be completed subsequently, if deemed appropriate for individual projects.
15. The climate change tools were not applicable because this is a programme of multiple projects. However, where appropriate, the tools will be applied to individual projects to assess carbon mitigation and vulnerabilities to adaptation to enable the best outcomes. The programme is anticipated to have a favourable impact on climate change, positively contributing towards carbon neutrality.

Conclusions

16. These projects offer further opportunity for the Council to show leadership on climate change, and to demonstrate that it is putting investment behind its Climate Emergency declaration to reduce its emissions and examine its resilience to climate change.
17. The breadth of projects identified would enable the Council to reduce its carbon emissions, inform and inspire partners and other stakeholders to take further action on climate change and educate and engage with Hampshire citizens on this critical issue across a range of channels, locations and experiences.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Revenue Budget and Precept 2021/22 2021-22 Budget - Cabinet Report FINAL.pdf (hants.gov.uk)	9 February 2021
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

18. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

19. Equalities Impact Assessment:

19.1. No service is being reduced or withdrawn. Therefore, a full EIA is not necessary for these proposals because they will not have a negative impact on any group with a protected characteristic. Instead, these proposals represent an increased focus on tackling climate change by the County Council, in order to meet its targets of net zero emissions and resilience to a 2°C temperature rise by 2050.

19.2. The majority of the proposals will have positive benefits for Hampshire residents e.g.

- carbon emissions reductions from use of electric vehicles and tools or an increase in HVO fuel use, will contribute to improved air quality.

- Landscape regeneration and tree planting will similarly improve air quality and provide increased and improved areas of nature for people to enjoy.
- Educational activities will inform people about positive action that can be taken on climate change, promoting emissions reduction across the county.

19.3. Such benefits are expected to positively impact many Hampshire residents, but they are not targeted specifically at groups with protected characteristics, hence assessing the impact as neutral for each group.

19.4. More detailed EIAs may be carried out for individual projects at a later date, where appropriate.