

ITEM No ...15.....

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 27 JUNE 2022

REPORT ON: DUNDEE CLIMATE FUND – DELIVERING COMMUNITY CHOICES THROUGH PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

REPORT NO: 174-2022

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the proposed structure and operation of the Dundee Climate Fund Community choices exercise, which is the first Scottish Local Authority led green Participatory Budget (PB), and seek agreement to proceed to implementation.
- 1.2 To seek agreement to deliver the Dundee Climate Fund over the next 4 years.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee:
 - a) endorses the Dundee Climate Fund proposal as set out in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.4.
 - b) agrees that an internal governance group be established to provide effective fund management with representatives from Communities, Sustainability and Climate Change, Dundee Partnership Team, Finance and Legal (see para 4.5.1).
 - c) agrees that a Review Panel consisting of experts in energy, transport, waste, resilience and capacity building be established to review project proposals for eligibility, feasibility and deliverability (see para 4.5.2).
 - d) agrees final decision on spend is made by public vote and delegates authority on proposed distribution of funding to the Executive Directors Corporate Services and Neighbourhood Service, with a report to committee on final spend

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Council have allocated £750,000 to implement the Dundee Climate Fund over the next four years, comprising £500,000 capital and £250,000 revenue.
- 3.2 The Scottish Government have approved the award of £60,000 to the Council to assist with citizen outreach and engagement costs for the Dundee Climate Fund.

4. MAIN TEXT

4.1 Background

- 4.1.1 COSLA and the Scottish Government developed a framework agreement setting down that at least 1% of local government budgets will be subject to participatory budgeting by the end of 2021. The framework defines Community Choices as the term used in Scotland for Participatory Budgeting (PB) and sets PB as the enabler for active participation of citizens in local decision making. The Council will be the first local authority in Scotland using a community choices model to identify and have citizens decide on local climate change spend.
- 4.1.2 Dundee declared a climate emergency recognising the serious environmental, social and economic challenges faced by climate change and has set a target of achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 or sooner. The City Council has a key leadership role in

responding to this and supporting delivery of the Dundee Climate Action Plan. The Dundee Climate Fund is an important part in the Council's policy response to mobilising community action on climate change, where there is none, enabling existing communities to have a greater impact, and facilitating capacity building within the network of local stakeholders.

4.2 DUNDEE CLIMATE FUND OVERVIEW

4.2.1 The Dundee Climate Fund aims to involve citizens in developing proposals for and deciding on the allocation of £750,000 which will deliver community-led climate change projects in the city over a four-year period. It is a democratic process built on the principles of Participatory Budgeting whereby citizens decide directly how to spend part of a public budget and supports the delivery of the Dundee Climate Action Plan.

It is an educative process raising awareness of climate change and supporting communities to identify and vote on local projects aimed at delivering on the following themes:

- **Energy:** reducing consumption, promoting energy efficiency, use of renewables
- **Transport:** encouraging active travel, decarbonising transport
- **Waste:** reducing waste, recycling, reusing resources
- **Resilience:** improving greenspaces, biodiversity, local food growing
- **Building Capacity:** increasing awareness, engaging communities and young people in climate change.

4.2.2 It will operate over 4 years (Sept 2022 – March 2026) and split into two funding rounds. The first round will start in Autumn 2022 and the second starting in Spring 2024. The rationale for having two rounds is to allow time for community engagement with groups/communities who are not already active in climate change, especially those in community regeneration areas. Having this time will allow for discussions and ideas to be developed, especially in communities which aren't already involved in climate changes discussions. It is intended to develop a space on the online platform for an ideas bank which can be developed for round two. It is estimated that the funds for each round will be split approximately 50-50. An internal Governance Group' (see para 4.5.1) will finalise the level of funding for each round, depending on the value of submitted bids. Available funding for round 2 will be determined by spend in round 1.

4.2.3 Project proposals submitted will be vetted by a Review Panel (see para 4.5.2) with eligible projects then going forward to a public vote. Applications will be considered for both small projects (a minimum of £6,000 to a maximum of £25,000) and large projects (up to a maximum of £100,000). For proposals over £25,000 organisations with free reserves in excess of three months operating expenses will require to provide match funding of 25% in kind/cash.

4.2.4 It is intended to use CONSUL as the online platform for the initiative and the platform will be renamed as Dundee's Voice. It will be used to promote the Dundee Climate Fund, invite citizens to submit ideas and proposals and be the online voting platform. It will also be used as a discussion platform, to allow individuals to submit climate change project ideas to generate an 'ideas bank' which can inform future project proposals for funding Round 2. Guidance of the types of sustainability and climate change ideas from funding such as keep Scotland Beautiful will be provided to help generate discussion and ideas.

4.3 OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

4.3.1 The Scottish Government have agreed to provide £60k financial support for the promotion and public engagement work. The Council is seen as a local authority innovator in delivering Scotland's first local authority climate community choices project. An extensive community engagement programme will be undertaken with ideas being drawn up to involve young people and communities, including a schools' project where pupils will create five sculptures aligned with the Dundee Climate Fund themes of waste, resilience, transport, energy and community engagement. Pupils will participate in litter picks to gather materials and will create sculptures to be exhibited in the Overgate's Gather Space, with the possibility to exhibit these at other locations such as the V&A.

4.3.2 Additionally, engagement content creation and advertising will be created and promoted to maximise outreach, including stills, video, voice-over (for radio). Dundee's Climate Fund will be advertised across various platforms to increase outreach: social media, radio, podcast ads, video ads, digital ads, Dundee Street advertising. Further products will include banners for each community centre and for events (i.e. University of Dundee's Festival of the Future) / shopping centres/ pop-up locations, posters for Community Centres, local shopping centres and local businesses. We aim to encourage and support applications from all areas of the city, focussing our outreach on communities who are less engaged in this area of work.

4.3.3 The Dundee Climate Fund initiation and application deadlines will be shared widely through the Sustainable Dundee Network and community partners. The Council's Community team will support the dialogue with local groups and support their application process. This engagement work will also be supported by an educative process building the capacity of young people and communities to take part in dialogue about climate change, identify proposals and take part in voting.

4.3.4 The voting stage will receive the largest promotion push to increase the public's engagement to vote. The outreach will be evaluated following round 1 and adapted to build on for round 2.

4.4 **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

4.4.1 Only not-for-profit, constituted groups will be able to submit proposals for consideration and these will have one of the following structures:

- Constituted community group or club
- Social Enterprise
- Community interest companies (CIC)
- Registered charity (SCIO)

4.4.2 Eligible submissions must be able to demonstrate:

- That their proposals are feasible and can be delivered;
- Their plans for how their proposals will achieve a lasting impact and how they will measure change. Projects that can show how their work will support lifestyle changes across Dundee, and potentially longer-term attitude shifts will be particularly encouraged;
- How they will reach more people - proposals need to engage with people outside of those already taking climate action and will be able to show clear plans for, and a commitment to, public engagement.

4.4.3 Proposals require to submit an estimate of the total project cost detailing the range of staff, resources and services required to deliver the project. There are restrictions on what can be funded, pre-conditions for certain projects and an expectation that all purchasing will be done with consideration to minimise the environmental impacts and related carbon emissions by buying locally and using ethical and sustainable materials and suppliers.

4.4.4 The Dundee Climate Fund will not fund:

- Any proposals with recurring revenue impact or place any burdens on the Council
- Proposals that lobby or require the Council to change policy
- Proposals that the state has a legal obligation to provide, such as a local recycling service, bus stops, local bus services, etc.
- Items that other Scottish Government or UK government grants are available to finance (e.g. cycle paths which can be funded by Sustrans, or bicycles through CyclingScot)
- Proposals that involve improvements to buildings that are not owned by the applicant, or significant infrastructure being installed on land that is not owned by the applicant unless written permission by the owner is given.
- Research studies, development costs, design fees, planning costs.
- Costs incurred before the Project Start Date or after the Project End Date.

- Organisational management costs
- Proposals that can be funded via CRF

4.5 GOVERNANCE

4.5.1 It is proposed that a small internal Governance Group be established to support the administration, monitoring and review of the Dundee Climate Fund which would convene at agreed stages over the four years of the fund's operation. The Group would provide effective fund management and be responsible for preparing grant agreements, setting eligibility criteria, ensuring financial and legal compliance, monitoring project progress etc. The Group would comprise Service Manager Communities, Sustainability & Climate Change Manager and Officer, Senior Community Planning Officer, as well as representatives to be nominated from Finance and Legal.

4.5.2 In addition to the internal Governance Group, an expert Review Panel would be established to review proposals submitted. To ensure the principles of participatory budgeting are met this would be a collective Council/community process with a virtual group consisting of Council officers and invited representatives of external organisations with a knowledge and experience of climate related action at a community level. To improve the efficiency of the Review Panel and optimise time spent, it will comprise of a core of (Service Manager Communities), (Sustainability & Climate Change Manager and Officer) and (Senior Community Planning Officer). Appropriate experts from a pre-agreed 'pool' will then be called upon during the proposal review process as required to provide additional advice and direction on the feasibility and deliverability of proposals depending on the theme (energy, waste, resilience, transport, & building capacity). This group would only be required to meet on a limited basis to review eligibility of applications prior to them being submitted to the public vote, it is estimated once or twice each round. We will involve the Eden project and bring in expertise from energy companies to maximise partnership involvement.

4.5.3 The following review panel is proposed:

- Energy: DCC Property SRV Energy Team Leader and Home Energy Scotland.
- Transport: DCC Sustainable Transport Team Leader and Cycling Scotland.
- Waste: DCC Senior Waste Policy Officer and Zero Waste Scotland.
- Resilience: DCC, Greenspace Team Leader, UoD Botanic Garden's Curator and Eden in Dundee
- Building Capacity: DCC Community Benefits Officer, DCAN, and Community Planning Partnership representative

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report has been subject to an assessment of any impacts on Equality and Diversity, Fairness and Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk.

A copy of the Impact Assessment is available on the Council's website at www.dundee.gov.uk/ia.

6 CONSULTATIONS

The Council Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with its content.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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10 June 2022

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