



Glasgow City Council
City Administration Committee

Item 2

24th February 2022

**Report by Councillor Susan Aitken, Leader of the Council and
City Convener for Inclusive Economic Growth**

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STEP UP TO NET ZERO

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to advise City Administration Committee of the intention to deliver a circular economy demonstrator as part of the Council's commitment to delivering a COP26 Legacy, and to seek approval for funding of the Step Up to Net Zero programme.

Recommendations:

Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of the report;
- approve the provision of £628,676 to deliver the programme; and
- Note that an evaluation report will be presented to Committee at the conclusion of the project.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Over the last six months the Council has made significant progress in addressing the climate emergency and has developed a clear vision in realising its green ambitions through the development of the Glasgow Green Deal and creation of a Greenprint for Investment. At the same time, the city has successfully hosted and delivered COP26, putting Glasgow firmly on the map as a place of green innovation and a leader in driving change.
- 1.2 One of the eight areas of focus outlined in the Glasgow Green Deal is ensuring competitive industry and a circular economy, and it is under this particular area of focus that an opportunity exists to roll-out a city-wide programme of support that helps businesses adopt circular principles and net zero carbon ambitions as part of Glasgow's COP26 Legacy.

2 Greening Glasgow's Business Support

- 2.1 Glasgow's business community has a significant role to play in supporting the city's ambitions to become net zero carbon by 2030, and a circular city by 2045. The council has made a commitment to green its wider business support offer and work is ongoing to put in place a comprehensive support programme. This programme will play a key part in informing the Council's longer-term approach to green business support.
- 2.2 It is important to note that Green Business Support is not consigned to one particular activity. It consists of several component parts, all of which contribute to the goal of supporting businesses in the city contribute to the Council's ambition of being net zero carbon.
- 2.3 Circular Economy sits firmly under the umbrella of Green Business Support, helping the city's businesses progress and adopt circular practice that sees greater utilisation of repair, reuse and remanufacture. The programme presented not only aims to support Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the city with this, but also has an employability dimension where individuals will be upskilled/reskilled and trained in circularity.

3 Step Up to Net Zero Programme

- 3.1 Committee approved the submission of six Community Renewal Fund applications to the UK Government in June 2021. This project, Step Up to Net Zero, proposed by Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and delivered through Circular Glasgow, was the highest scoring application received. The receipt of national employability funding has created some resource within the wider Economic Development budget for a one-off investment. This will enable the Council to proceed with this demonstrator project and begin addressing the climate emergency through direct support of initiatives that will positively impact on the business community, individuals and the climate.
- 3.2 Essentially, the project will see SMEs receive resource into their business that will help embed circular practices. This will be achieved through recruitment of

an individual who will be mentored and trained to help realise the efficiencies identified through a Circle Assessment.

- 3.3 Glasgow Chamber of Commerce through its Circular Glasgow initiative and Climate Chamber brand have been championing business action in this area over the last few years. The Developing the Young Workforce team has made huge strides in engaging with young people on the circular and green agenda through its COP educational legacy project 'My Climate Path', engaging with over 2000 young people.
- 3.4 This Step Up to Net Zero project has been designed as a demonstrator to address the wider circular economy challenge, as well as ensuring a just transition, to encourage and enable the business community to take action. The programme will offer opportunities to provide upskilling and reskilling to the workforce, whilst supporting SMEs in their decarbonisation efforts.
- 3.5 The programme will see SMEs assessed through a Circle Assessment tool with an action plan developed, encouraging the business to adopt more circular practices within their organisation, which will, in turn, aim to support a reduction in their carbon footprint. The business will also be supported by an individual through a business placement to drive this action plan forward. The individual undertaking the placement will be upskilled/reskilled on this agenda throughout, gaining real industry insight through the work placement, helping move these individuals further towards meaningful employment.
- 3.6 Developing a circular economy is part of the solution to the global climate emergency, one in which products, services and systems are designed to maximise their value and minimise waste. The business will also receive support from an individual via a business placement, and who will be mentored by a circular industry partner, to drive the action plan forward.
- 3.7 This 12-month project will create 40 job placements in Glasgow and provide upskilling and reskilling opportunities both for those not yet in the workplace, as well as those already in work and looking for re-skilling opportunities.
- 3.8 Participating businesses will undertake an assessment on circular opportunities with an action plan developed to improve current practice. This will be followed by the provision of a four-month, fully funded placement for individuals looking to re-skill or who are currently not in employment, and who will be paid more than the age relevant Glasgow Living Wage. Tailored training support will also be provided to help individuals throughout the placement to maximise their time in the role, whilst helping to set them up for future work opportunities.
- 3.9 Throughout the project duration, best practice events will be delivered to connect the businesses and individuals, disseminate knowledge and best practice.
- 3.10 There will be three key beneficiary groups:

- Individuals working on moving the action plan forward will benefit from mentoring and upskilling offered by the role, supporting the city's ambitions on net zero carbon and creating a workforce ready for a changing environment;
- Businesses will be encouraged and supported to develop ambitions to move towards circularity and net zero carbon. This would mean the Glasgow business community will continue to play its role in supporting the city's carbon neutrality and net zero ambitions as part of a legacy from COP26. Businesses will also be encouraged to sign up to the Green Charter, established by Sustainable Glasgow, as part of their journey; and
- The broader business base will benefit from data and insights captured and shared to inform and inspire through city-wide events.

4 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: Funding of £628,676 required from Economic Development budget.

Legal: Contractual setup to be concluded.

Personnel: None.

Procurement: None.

Council Strategic Plan: Specify which theme(s) and outcome(s) the proposal supports. Where relevant the specific numbered priority should be listed.

- A Thriving Economy, specifically priority 3
- A Sustainable and Low Carbon City, specifically priority 67

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify. Yes, recruitment of individuals will be in line with the Council's Equality Outcomes and may lead to an improvement economic outcome for people with protected characteristics.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? Positive impact. Potential increase in opportunity for people with protected characteristics.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

The programme may lead to businesses supported in some of the more deprived areas of the city and may lead to individuals from similar areas securing work placements.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

Yes. Directly contributes to the delivery of the Glasgow Green Deal.

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

A reduction in carbon and increased energy efficiency.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

The adoption of circular practice will have a positive impact on the environment and the Council's ambitions around net-zero carbon.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

None.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of the report;
- approve the provision of £628,676 to deliver the programme; and
- note that an evaluation report will be presented to Committee at the conclusion of the project.