

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

8 SEPTEMBER 2020

Title:

Climate Change Fund – Budget allocation

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Steve Williams, Portfolio Holder for Environment

Head of Service: Richard Homewood, Head of Environmental Services

Key decision: No

Access: Public

1. Purpose and summary

To seek approval of the main budget headings to allocate the £200k Climate Emergency Fund set aside in the 2021 budget to enable delivery of the Action Plan.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive approves the budget headings identified in Annexe 1 to be funded from the climate change earmarked reserve.

3. Reason for the recommendation

3.1. In February 2020, the Council set aside £200k of New Homes Bonus funding to create a Climate Change Emergency fund for the purpose of supporting the delivery of the Climate Emergency Action Plan. Whilst this funding is approved and available in an earmarked reserve for this purpose, it is not yet included in the detailed service budget and the Executive need to agree the main budget headings to enable officers to spend the budget on those activities. The approved 20/21 budget also includes £100k for the ongoing revenue costs needed to deliver the action plan including staff, consultation and engagement and other operational costs.

3.2. Officers were preparing a proposed spend of the £200k reserve a few months ago but the emerging pandemic impact triggered management action to freeze certain spending and recruitment, as reported to Executive on 12 May. Now that the Council has approved the revised 20/21 budget, leaving the £200k earmarked reserve and £100k revenue working budget in place, approval can be sought to agree the main budget headings.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Service Plan

4.1 This project supports many of the Council's aspirations in the Corporate Strategy principally the delivery of the climate change targets.

5. Implications of decision

5.1 Resource (Finance, procurement, staffing, IT)

Budget spending plan

- 5.1. The £200k allocation is a significant amount of money but very limited in the context of an ambitious long-term action plan, therefore, it will need to be allocated carefully to pump prime potential projects and fund initial research. It is unlikely to be sufficient to deliver any significant projects in their entirety. There is therefore a need for a consistent approach to the evaluation of proposed use of this funding in order to maximise its impact. The proposed Assessment Criteria are set out in Annexe 2 to this report.
- 5.2 Following discussions with the portfolio holder, the Climate Change Advisory Group and the Climate Change Officer Group, the proposed spending plan is attached as Annexe 1 to this report. This will be kept under review and can be varied if necessary but having these broad headings agreed at this stage will enable officers to progress with authority.

5.3 Legal

Legal advice and support may be required throughout the various stages of delivering the climate change action plan. However, there are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

5.4 Equality, diversity and inclusion

There are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications in this report. Equality impact assessments are carried out when necessary across the council to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

5.5 Climate emergency declaration

The report sets out the main budget headings to allocate the funding required to deliver the Climate Change Action Plan so that work can start on the required programme of work. As with all approved budgets, this initial allocation can be reviewed and changed as necessary. This report completely supports the climate emergency declaration and seeks to fund a plan for identifiable actions.

6. Consultation and engagement

- 6.1 The detailed climate change action plan will be consulted on and subject to councillor scrutiny in due course. This initial allocation of budgets to the main headings enables officers to commence the preparatory work immediately.
- 6.2 Work is underway with the Communications Team to develop a comprehensive communications plan to engage effectively with the community and partner agencies in the development of the Action Plan. The draft Action Plan and Sustainability Strategy has been published on the web site and as an initial step

the public have been invited to submit comments and suggestions by email. Work is also underway on a survey that could go out to all residents with questions that will focus on key elements of the strategy and action plan. The draft Climate Action Plan will also be reviewed by Environment Overview and Scrutiny in the Autumn cycle prior to Executive.

6.3 Engagement with Town and Parish Councils has also commenced and the Portfolio Holder has written to them inviting them to feed back their views and how the Waverley Borough Councils Strategy and Action Plan aligns with their own plans.

6.4 Like Waverley's other service budgets, these can be changed as the specific details are reviewed using the scheme of virement under the approved financial regulations. If the budget headings aren't agreed now, officers will not have the approval to incur expenditure to deliver the action plan.

7. Governance journey

7.1 The funding has been approved by full council in February 2020. The Executive are being asked in this report to allocate the funding across the main budget headings necessary to support the delivery of the Climate Action Plan.

Annexes:

Annexe 1 – Proposed budget allocations for Climate Emergency Fund

Annexe 2 – Climate Emergency Budget Assessment Criteria

Background Papers

There are no background papers, as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972).

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Richard Homewood

Position: Head of Environmental and Regulatory Services

Telephone: 01483 523411

Email: richard.homewood@waverley.gov.uk