



# Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee

**25 October 2024**

Title:	Climate Programme Delivery
Report of:	Judith Barker, Executive Director, Place and Connectivity
Lead Member:	Cllr Bridget Smith
Public Report:	Yes
Key Decision:	No Key Decisions
Voting Arrangements:	A simple majority of voting Members

## Recommendations:

A	To note and endorse the approach to the further development of the Climate Action Plan review for 2025-30 and in particular to ensure the Plan is co- produced and co- owned
B	To note the progress on developing the projects within the Climate Programme since the last Committee in July 2024
C	To note the plans for the launch of the Opportunity Fund bidding round later this year.

## Strategic Objective(s):

The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):

x	Increased connectivity
x	Enabling resilient communities

## 1. Purpose

1.1	<p>The purpose of this paper is to provide the Committee with an update on three key elements of the Climate Change Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Progress with the Climate Action Plan review. It is an opportune time to be undertaking the review and production of a refreshed Action Plan as Government gives an increased focus to local economic growth through Mayoral Combined Authorities and the need for strategic plan alignment at local and national level. Progress with the development and delivery of the current programme of interventions and projects.</li><li>• The development and planned delivery of the Opportunity Fund and bidding round aimed at approval of projects in March 2025</li></ul>
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## 2. Background

2.1	The projects and activities described below have previously been approved and endorsed by the Committee. The purpose is to give assurance to Committee members on progress
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### 3. Approach taken to shape the Climate Action Plan review

3.1	<p>The Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee (ESC) approved a review of the current Climate Action Plan leading to the development of a new Climate Action Plan for 2025-30. This plan will be informed by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilising and developing the Locally Determined Contributions already taking place– the Committee will have a presentation on this work at their December committee</li> <li>• An updated climate risk assessment.</li> <li>• Updated pathways to reducing emissions.</li> <li>• A range of complementary evidence including the local area energy plans.</li> <li>• Alignment with the Local Growth Plan and responsive to emerging Government policies and initiatives</li> </ul> <p>Members of the Independent Commission have been invited to reconvene and some have agreed to provide the independent ‘check and challenge’ as we develop a revised Plan.</p> <p>It is vital that the Review and development of the new Plan is co-produced, co-owned and co-resourced with partners and is seen as collective plan for the sub region for all partners</p> <p>The new Government and the introduction and development of Local Growth Plans brings a focus to more substantive review of what the area needs for the next Climate Action Plan to 2030.</p>
3.2	<p>To deliver on a co-produced Climate Action Plan review, funding has been approved by CPCA that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £200K for specialist services and stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• £230K for Climate Change Risk Assessment for the area (a supporting evidence base for the review)</li> <li>• £200K for the Cambridgeshire Local Area Energy Plan (and £60K previously committed)</li> <li>• £20K to include Peterborough in the Locally Determined Contributions project</li> </ul> <p>A project plan is being developed with the aim of presenting a new action plan for approval late in 2025 following development and engagement.</p>
3.3	<p>At the Climate Programme Board on 10 October, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis workshop was held with members to identify lessons learned on the current Climate Action Plan and views across the partnership on how to take this review forward, ensuring a collaborative approach. The findings will feed into the project plan for the work.</p>
3.4	<p>There was agreement that this will be a collectively owned shared plan across the region aligned and aligning other strategies. It was recognised the importance of emerging plans such as the Local Growth Plans, integration with other public sectors plans (Local Nature Recover Strategy, ICS and Public Health) and the current projects underway that will provide the evidence base that will underpin this Climate Review. Lessons learned from the last process and consideration of future governance for this area were agreed as priorities.</p>
3.5	<p>During 2025, the Combined Authority will lead, alongside the analysis of the strategic evidence base, the stakeholder engagement that will include the evaluation and analysis of stakeholder, resident and business engagement, with two-way dialogue with partners and stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political engagement with Members / Political Leaders (to be progressed through the Climate Partnership &amp; Environment and Sustainability Communities Committee )</li> <li>• Senior Management engagement through Place Directors, Senior Management Teams and Climate Officers</li> <li>• Engagement of stakeholders, residents and businesses on the vision including deliberative techniques and engagement with national and international stakeholders.</li> </ul>

	<p>Thorough engagement, that could include, but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops and stakeholder events</li> <li>• Online activities</li> <li>• Utilising existing forums</li> <li>• Partner research and surveys</li> <li>• Opinion polls</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> <li>• Communication of finished product to raise awareness with stakeholders and public.</li> </ul>
3.6	<p>A technical consultancy will be procured to collate and analyse the evidence and will collaborate with the Combined Authority Stakeholder Engagement Team to share data, intelligence and evidence to make the most of the stakeholder engagement opportunities that will feed into the development of the plan.</p>
3.7	<p>Following the procurement of a technical consultant through a competitive tender, it is planned this work will commence in January 2025.</p> <p>The timetable in Appendix 1 sets out the timescales for the delivery of the Climate Review. The ambition is to complete the draft of the Climate Action Plan by Autumn 2025 and to be formally agreed in November 2025.</p>

#### 4. Update on the Climate Action Programme Delivery 2024/25

4.1	<p>Members are aware that the Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan includes a four-year allocation totalling £2.4m revenue and £9m capital for the Climate Programme. We acknowledge that this year has been a development year to agree projects and spend for this year and next year of the MTFP period.</p>
4.2	<p>Since the last committee in July, allocation of funding has progressed. The ambition is to gain approval for the five remaining projects line with the timetable shown in Table 1 below.</p> <p>The 2024/25 Climate Action plan funding committed to date totals £870k revenue and £120k capital with a further £120k revenue and £475k capital proposed for this financial year, as detailed in Table 2.</p>



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Table 1		Enabling Resilient Communities	Investment Panel/Committee			
Theme	Project		July - Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nature	Natural Cambridgeshire	by providing capacity funding to our local nature partnership (Natural Cambridgeshire), to champion the improvement of the area's natural environment	Committed funding			
	Constituent council's Biodiversity	by funding biodiversity audits on council land assets, enabling development of biodiversity improvement plans supporting the Doubling Nature vision, including delivery aspects of the CPCA's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (due 2025).	Committed funding			
Soil & Peat	Fenland Soil	by providing capacity funding to Fenland Soil, enabling them to bring together farmers and academics to address the impact of climate on our vulnerable Fens soils.	Committed funding			
Public Sector Retrofit	Schools retrofit -Low carbon Heating	by providing three local maintained schools to come off fossil fuels for their heating contributing to the area achieving Net Zero ambitions.	Committed funding			
Strategic	Climate Review	by reviewing the current Climate Action Plan and producing a plan for 2025-2030 to enable future CPCA business planning to adapt to climate change and meet Net Zero targets.	Committed funding			
Energy	Cambridgeshire LAEP (Plan development)	through the development of a Local Area Energy Plan for Cambridgeshire which will contribute to the unlocking of an estimated £15bn of early investment in energy infrastructure over the next 20 years to achieve Net Zero	Committed funding			
	Cambridge City Sustainable Culture	by reducing Cambridge City's carbon footprint by moving to green electricity and reducing the reliance on diesel for the City's events.			Business Case to Panel 14/11	• Funding approval to Committee 16/12
Domestic Retrofit	Extending "Retrofitting your Home" Guidance	through the review and extension of the Cambridge City Council's guidance to encompass housing archetypes so that it can be used by all authorities across the area.		• Concept paper to CA Board 13/11	• Business Case to Panel 14/11 • CEO funding approval 21/11	
	Domestic energy and efficiency - Phase 1	by retrofitting low-income homes in conjunction with government funding via the home Upgrade Grant, through the installation of energy efficient measures and low carbon heating.		• Concept paper to CA Board 13/11	• Business Case to Panel 14/11 • CEO funding approval 21/11	
Transport	Fen roads Trial	by trialling innovative solutions to address the continuing maintenance and safety problems related to roads constructed over fenland soil deposit		• Concept paper to CA Board 13/11	• Business Case to Panel 14/11	• Funding approval to Committee 16/12
	Climate Opportunity Fund	By allowing Public Sector and community organizations to bid to CPCA for investment ready projects that deliver the Climate Change Action Plan priorities.		• Business Case to Committee 21/10		



4.3

**Climate Programme**

Table 2 below details the profile of funding for 2024/25, the later years and the areas of impact.

Table 2		Investment £'000						Area of Impact
Theme	Project	24/25		25/26-27/28		Total		
		Rev	Cap	Rev	Cap	Rev	Cap	
Nature	Natural Cambridgeshire	50	0	120	0	170	0	Areawide
	Constituent Council's Biodiversity	350	0	0	0	350	0	Areawide
Soil & Peat	Fenland Soil	60	0	60	0	120	0	The Fens
Public Sector Retrofit	Schools retrofit - Low carbon Heating	0	120	0	243	0	363	Cambridge, Fenland and Huntingdonshire
Strategic	Climate Review	220	0	230	0	450	0	Areawide
Energy	Cambridgeshire LAEP (Plan development)	170	0	30	0	200	0	Cambridgeshire
	City of Cambridge - Sustainable Culture	0	225	0	141	0	366	Cambridge
Domestic Retrofit	Extending "Retrofitting your Home" Guidance	0	0	60	0	60	0	Areawide
	Domestic energy efficiency and low carbon heating - Phase 1	0	475	0	475	0	950	Areawide
Transport	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil & Alternative Fuels Research	0	0	60	0	60	0	Areawide
	Fen roads Trial	0	0	0	1,500	0	1500	The Fens
All	Climate Programme Opportunity Fund	70	0	30	1,000	100	1000	Areawide
<b>Total committed and proposed funding from Climate 24/25 budget</b>		<b>920</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>3,359</b>	<b>1,510</b>	<b>4,179</b>	

4.4

**Grant Funding Agreements updates – key points:**

- Based on the agreement to deliver the Net Zero Villages programme through constituent councils Grant Funding Agreements (GFA) have been drafted and shared with the five councils. East Cambridgeshire's GFA has been signed and sealed. The remaining Authorities have been asked to respond by 25 October 2024.
- Natural Cambridgeshire – Capacity. A Deed of Variation to the original GFA is being drawn up to reflect the change to the funding profile.

Once approved work advances to issue funding agreements to allow funds to be spent and projects delivered as quickly as possible with appropriate monitoring and evaluation.

**5. Opportunity fund bidding round**

5.1

This Committee has previously resolved to support the launch of a capital bidding round this autumn to attract investment ready schemes from not for profit and public sector organisations to deliver the Climate Action Plan outcomes. The following project principles were agreed in March 2024:

- Collaborative or innovative demonstrator projects that can be replicated or scaled in the area
- Establishing or unlocking crucial 'building blocks' to support the key objectives of Climate Action Plan delivery
- Significantly cuts carbon emissions with high value for money
- Delivers tangible adaptation benefits
- Delivers a nature-based solution

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unlocks significant additional funding</li> <li>• Changes market behaviour</li> </ul> <p>In addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alignment with the Climate Action Plan and/or the Independent Commission's recommendations</li> <li>• whether prioritised in more than one partners climate strategies/action plans</li> <li>• not replacing other mainstream funding or responsibilities</li> <li>• dependencies and avoiding unintended climate consequences</li> </ul>
5.2	<p><b>Delivery of the Opportunity Fund</b></p> <p>The Outline Business Case is being submitted to Investment Committee on 21 October, to approve the principles and schedule.</p> <p>To enable the bidding round to progress at pace, we have engaged the services of a consultancy, Deyton Bell, who have extensive experience of setting up and managing climate related bidding rounds.</p> <p>The intent is to allocate up to approx. £1M capital to projects identified via the bidding round in line with the principles approved by Committee. Bids would be a minimum of £50K and up to £150K with bids of £250K considered for exceptional bids involving collaboration and innovation at scale.</p> <p>10% match funding would be required so the intervention rate would be no greater than 90% for any grant.</p> <p>Eligible bidders would include not for profit organisations including parish councils, social enterprises and voluntary organisations.</p> <p>The expectation is to generate a robust programme of investment ready, deliverable capital projects to contribute to the Climate Action Plan outcomes with a clearly defined set of measurable programme outcomes and benefits. The delivery will take place in 2025/26.</p> <p>The processes and documentation for the application fund are now well under development including eligibility, appraisal and scoring criteria. The intention is to present some of this documentation to members at the Committee meeting. A communication plan is being developed to inform potential grant applicants of the fund and the opportunities that it presents. The programme will start with online briefing events to inform applicants and stakeholders, and to begin the process of supporting applications.</p> <p>The window for applications will open on the 25<sup>th</sup> November and remain open until January 17<sup>th</sup> 2025, allowing time for applications to be completed noting the Christmas holiday. Further briefings will be offered to meet demand for support, which will be available to all applicants to help them write strong and compelling applications. A full suite of guidance notes, templates and guides (written and video) will be produced and distributed. The applications will be independently appraised, scored, ranked and prioritised before submission for verification through the CPCA governance process.</p> <p>The aim is for the short list of prioritised projects to be submitted to the Investment Panel on 13 February 2025, and then the Investment Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025 for approval.</p>

<b>6. Appendices</b>	
6.1	Appendix 1: Climate Review Timetable

## 7. Implications

### Financial Implications

7.1 The projects are contained within the existing Climate budget.

### Legal Implications

7.2 Grant Funding Agreements will be required for each Business Case that involves external partners leading on delivery.

### Public Health Implications

7.3 Tackling emissions and impacts of climate change can have significantly positive impacts on public health and future risks to health.

### Environmental & Climate Change Implications

7.4 The Climate Action Plan is a key component of the Combined Authority's response to environmental and climate change impact.

### Other Significant Implications

7.5 None.

### Background Papers

7.6 None