

Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

To: Outer North West Area Committee

Date: 27th September 2010

Subject: Carbon Reduction Small Grant Scheme

Electoral Wards Affected:
Adel & Wharfedale
Guiseley & Rawdon
Horsforth
Otley & Yeadon

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council Function Delegated Executive Function available for Call In Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to propose to members the establishment of an Area Committee Carbon Reduction Grant Scheme and explain how such a scheme could be operated and managed in outer north west Leeds.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 To inform members of the proposal for a Carbon Reduction Grant Scheme and how such a scheme could be operated and managed in the outer north west area.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 In 2006, Leeds produced almost 6.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2). The three biggest contributors are the commercial and industrial sector (37%), domestic (30%) and transport (26%). Over the past four years, total emissions have declined by just 1% with falls in domestic and transport emissions offset by rising commercial and industrial emissions.

2.2 The UK Government has adopted a legally binding target in the Climate Change Act to cut UK emissions by 80% between 1990-2050 and by at least 26% between 2005-2020.

- 2.3 Leeds City Council has committed to encourage all sectors in the local community to take the opportunity to adapt to the impacts of climate change and to reduce their CO₂ emissions. The council itself is committed to achieve a significant reduction of CO₂ emissions from its own operations.
- 2.4 The commitment has been made by signing the Nottingham Declaration on 5th June 2006 which required the council, within the following two years, to develop plans with partners and local communities to deal with the causes and impacts of climate change to secure maximum benefits of the communities.
- 2.5 In the Leeds Strategic Plan, one strategic outcome linked to the environment is *“Reduced ecological footprint through responding to environmental and climate change and influencing others”* and three improvement priorities are identified as:
- Reduce emissions from public sector buildings, operations and service delivery, and encourage others to do so;
 - Undertake actions to improve our resilience to current and future climate change; and
 - Improve the quality and sustainability of the built and natural environment.
- 2.6 In the Leeds Climate Change Strategy – Vision for Actions published in July 2009, Leeds City Council and partners have committed to adopt a target to also reduce emissions from Leeds by 80% between 2005 and 2050. This means cutting total emissions to no more than 1.21m tonnes of CO₂ which equates to a reduction of 107,000 tonnes every year. These are very tough targets, but cities around the world will face similar targets over coming years. Early action now to make cost-effective carbon reductions will put Leeds in a strong position in future.
- 2.7 Leeds City Council provided part funding towards the EtheKwini Fruit Tree Initiative ahead of the 2010 World Cup to help implement a programme of fruit tree planting in selected low income housing projects in South Africa.
- 2.8 The Outer North West Area Committee has also paid great attention to environment protection and the reduction of CO₂ emissions. Since 2004, well-being funding has been allocated every year to community projects and organisations to carry out works which bring benefits to the environment and help to reduce CO₂ emissions. In 2009/10, nearly £80,000 was allocated to environment-focused projects from the well-being fund, including the Green Check Energy Savers project to help participating schools reduce their CO₂ emissions and become more energy efficient as well as to help form energy saving habits among their pupils.
- 2.9 The idea to have a scheme to fund carbon reduction projects in the area was suggested by members of the Outer North West Area Committee. The scheme has been an action in the Area Delivery Plan since last year. It is also in this year’s Area Delivery Plan which was approved by the Outer North West Area Committee on 29th March 2010 (action E2 – “Investigate a Carbon Reduction Grant Scheme in order to encourage and assist a variety of tree planting projects and help reduce CO₂ emissions”). If the scheme starts in 2010/11 it will be in good time to join in with efforts

of the City Council and partners in dealing with the climate change as specified in the Vision for Actions.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 Aims of the Scheme

3.1.1 The aim of the Carbon Reduction Grant Scheme is to encourage and assist a variety of tree planting projects, on both a large and small scale, that will help raise the awareness of climate change and contribute to reducing the amount of CO₂ emissions present within the Outer North West Leeds area.

3.1.2 Projects that involve children, young people and the community in the planting and maintenance of trees will be encouraged.

3.1.3 Approaches to local businesses will be made to request additional funding to be contributed to the scheme to encourage corporate social responsibility and to maximize the potential funds available for the scheme.

3.2 Eligible Work

3.2.1 To be eligible for the scheme, projects need to involve:

- Planting of trees, small woodlands, hedgerows;
- Grant funding request must be no more than 75% of the project's total cost. Match funding can be in the form of cash (other funding) or in kind (volunteer work)
- Land must be available and consent given to be used;
- It is encouraged that planting takes place between November and March.

3.2.2 What is not eligible?

- Projects which have already been carried out or completed;
- Maintenance of existing woodlands;
- Creation of flowerbeds;
- Trees in tubs;
- Woodland intended for the production of Christmas trees or biomass as a fuel;
- Land currently in receipt of public funding for other purposes

3.3 Who can and can not apply for the grant

3.3.1 It is proposed that voluntary organisations, schools, Parish or Town Councils and formal groups such as clubs, guides or youth clubs could apply. Alternatively it could be a community team assembled for the purpose of the project. A promotional leaflet will be circulated throughout the area and an application pack will be uploaded onto the West North West Area Management website which can also be emailed or posted to interested groups. Please see appendix 1 for a copy of the draft leaflet.

3.3.2 Landowners, individuals and statutory organisations will not be eligible to apply.

3.4 The level of grant available

- 3.4.1 The grant award will range from £200 to £500 and will be up to 75% of the total costs of the project.
- 3.4.2 Depending on the project involved, there may be a need to supply two independent quotes for the work/planting to be undertaken.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 Projects funded under this scheme will be processed and managed according to the procedures and regulations on managing small grant Wellbeing-funded projects.

5.0 Legal And Resource Implications

- 5.1 There are no new legal implications arising from the contents of this report.
- 5.2 It is proposed that the funds to support this scheme are allocated from the Well-being revenue budget of Outer North West Area Committee. It is recommended that an amount of £3,000 per ward is set aside for the scheme each year, and £1,500 per ward for the remainder of the financial year 2010/11.
- 5.3 The continuation and allocation for this scheme will be reconsidered in the following years depending on the public interest and outcomes of the funded projects.

6.0 Equality, Diversity and Cohesion implications

- 6.1 There are no new equality, diversity and cohesion implications

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The Carbon Reduction Grant Scheme is to encourage and assist tree planting projects, that will help raise the awareness of climate change and carbon emissions reduction. It is in line with the commitments of Leeds City Council and its partners on environment protection and climate change. It is also a local priority of outer north west Leeds as identified in the Area Delivery Plan of the area.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 Members are asked to:
- Agree the approach to be taken and allocate the amount requested as detailed at 5.2

- Authorise officers to approach local businesses and employers on their behalf to request additional funding towards the project
- Provide comments on the draft promotional leaflet (to be circulated)

Documents referred to in this report:

The Climate Change Act 2008

Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011

Leeds Climate Change Strategy – Vision for Actions, July 2009.

Ethekwini Fruit Tree Initiative Ahead of 2010 Soccer World Cup- City of Leeds Progress Report 2