

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET 15TH MARCH 2021 FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL MEETING ON 9TH MARCH 2021

EC172: PUBLIC SECTOR DECARBONISATION SCHEME

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The Assistant Director, Planning presented the report.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Kemp congratulated those involved in the initiative and asked for clarification on the percentages of savings of carbon outputs across facilities. The Energy Efficiency and Greenspace Officer agreed to send the details to Councillors. With regard to surplus energy it was explained that it was more cost effective to use this on site, but there were options available to export it to the grid.

In response to questions from Councillor Bullen regarding Re:Fit and Ameresco and the Assistant Director outlined the procurement process and the framework agreements. It was also confirmed that some sub-contractors would be used.

Councillor Bubb commented that he hoped that British parts and local contractors were used where possible. He also asked about ongoing maintenance and it was confirmed that this was not covered by the grant funding.

Councillor Holmes addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He noted the short timescales involved and asked if the procurement of items would fit into this process. He also asked if Covid would have an impact on delivery. The Assistant Director explained that lots of work had been carried out to get the bid in and to move the project forward and the ordering of heat pumps etc would be considered.

Councillor Ryves addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He commented that the project would not make a massive difference to the Carbon output of the Borough and the Assistant Director explained that savings should be realised after five years. It was also confirmed that the project was 100% funded by the Government and that all public services had the opportunity to bid for funding.

Councillor Kunes, the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change commended the project and the cumulative impact of these projects on the environment needed to be considered.

Councillor Bambridge commented that consideration needed to be given to the maintenance of air source heat pumps.

In response to a question from Councillor de Whalley regarding the Guildhall, the Assistant Director confirmed that careful consideration would be given to the Listed Building and meetings to take the project forward were being held. In response to a question regarding air and ground source heat pumps and underfloor heating the difference between the pumps were outlined by the Energy Efficiency and Greenspace Officer and how they worked with underfloor heating.

Councillor Dark, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Public Protection, congratulated the Council on the successful bid for grant funding and explained that the Council was taking a lead and the Council should be proud of delivering this project and others that could come forward in the future.

Councillor Rust addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. She raised concerns about the tight timescales to apply for the grant and the time allowed to spend the funding. She asked if the Local MP's could be lobbied to ask Government to give consideration to enable Councils to forward plan. She also referred to the contracts with Ameresco and if a review of the projects they have already carried out for the Council had been conducted. The Assistant Director referred to the Re:Fit programme and providers included within it.

Councillor Ryves addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and referred to overall carbon footprint of the Borough and the savings which would be achieved as part of this project. He didn't feel as if this project made significant savings, however it did send a message, and educating the public on carbon reduction was important. He also referred to car usage in the Borough, the transport policy, tree planting and carbon zero targets.

Councillor Kemp referred to car usage in the Borough and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and encouraging Council staff to walk and cycle to work. The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change explained that cycle paths and cycle ways were being looked at in development sites. He explained that a variety of measures were being looked at to reduce carbon.

RESOLVED: That the Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as set out below:

1. As the value of the required separate contract is above £500,000 for these extra grant funded works, that Cabinet approve the utilisation of our existing Re:Fit delivery partners, Ameresco, to deliver the project on behalf of the Council.
2. That Cabinet notes and endorses the utilisation of the grant awarded under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, subject to the granting of any specific consents required for any of the buildings.