

Carbon Literacy Training (External Projects and Climate Change, Sarah Hides)

Synopsis of report:

This report evaluates the options available for delivering carbon literacy training to elected members and senior officers within the Council. Further information is given regarding carbon literacy training, the details of the course and the options for delivering it.

Recommendation(s):

That Corporate Management Committee AGREES:

- (i) To appoint Three Point Five to deliver carbon literacy training to Councillors and Level 3 Senior Officers in the format described in paragraphs 2.11 and 2.12 of the officer report.

1. Context and background of report

- 1.1 At the Environment and Sustainability Committee meeting of 12th January 2023, it was raised that there was interest from Councillors to be given carbon literacy training. It was agreed this would be investigated further by officers with a view to carrying out this training.
- 1.2 Carbon literacy training is defined by the Carbon Literacy Project ([Home – The Carbon Literacy Project](#)) as, ‘an awareness of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis.’
- 1.3 The Carbon Literacy Project is a registered charity whose goal is to provide access to relevant climate change learning for everyone. This goal is based on the principle that we need to change culture and behaviour alongside technology and policy to achieve the required reductions in carbon emissions needed to meet national and global targets.
- 1.4 The project aims to catalyse action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by providing the resources to provide carbon literacy training to workplaces, educational institutions and communities.
- 1.5 The Carbon Literacy Project was recognised by the UN at the COP21 climate negotiations in 2015 as one of 100 ‘Transformative Actions Projects’ worldwide that could materially change the way we deal with climate change.

2 Report

- 2.1 In order to become certified as carbon literate, learners must successfully complete a day’s worth of approved carbon literacy learning.
- 2.2 As part of the certification process, participants are required to complete an action plan where they must commit to both a significant individual and group/organisational action to reduce their carbon footprint.

- 2.3 Upon successful assessment of this action plan by the Carbon Literacy Project, a learner is awarded an individually numbered certificate to evidence their Carbon Literacy, and confirm that they have met the requirements of the Carbon Literacy Standard.
- 2.4 On completion of the training, participants will understand:
- The climate change impacts we're already experiencing;
 - What's causing climate change;
 - What future impacts we will experience on our current trajectory;
 - What's required from a big picture perspective to tackle climate change;
 - What we're doing at the global and national level;
 - The steps councils need to take for local authorities to play their full part in tackling emissions;
 - What emissions are produced by your administrative area and council as an organisation;
 - What is being done to tackle these emissions;
 - The carbon footprint of UK households and what can be done to reduce it;
 - Which nations and income groups are most responsible for climate change;
 - The co-benefits of tackling climate change;
 - How to engage the public in climate action.
- 2.5 The course is interactive and is delivered through a mixture of presentation, group exercises, polls and discussion.
- 2.6 Initially officers are intending to focus on delivering training for Councillors and Level 3 senior officers within the Council., It is intended that training takes place as soon as possible after this year's local elections for Councillors, and as soon as suitable dates and times are secured for senior officers.
- 2.7 On request from the Leader, an email to all Councillors was sent to gauge interest in taking part in the training and to gather preferences for the different options available to deliver the training. Due to the length of the training (8 hours), three different options were offered for delivery. These options are set out as follows:
- Option 1
- The course is delivered in one full day during the week. This could be via MS Teams or in person.
- Option 2
- The course is delivered in one full day at a weekend. This could be via MS Teams or in person.
- Option 3
- The course is split into four, two-hour sessions delivered weekly in the evening. This could be via MS Teams or in person.
- 2.8 16 Councillors responded who wanted to take part in the training. Two additional Councillors have already received the training via Surrey County Council.

- 2.9 Of these 16 respondents, 9 stated that option 3 was their preferred choice, 2 chose option 2, 1 Councillor chose option 1, 1 Councillor was happy with either option 1 or 2 and 3 Councillors were happy with all of the options.
- 2.10 All those who chose option 3 showed a preference for delivery via MS Teams. 2 of those who showed a preference for option 1 or 2 preferred delivery in person. The other respondents did not show a preference for either MS Teams or in person delivery.

Officer recommendation

- 2.11 Based on the preferences listed above, officers propose that the course for councillors should be delivered virtually via the route of Option 3, where the training will be split into four, two-hour sessions and delivered weekly in the evening.
- 2.12 Officers are also currently evaluating delivery options for senior officer training. Initially officers would look to provide training to all Level 3 senior managers of which there are enough to fill the 25 participant course. On the advice of the Human Resources team, face to face training is recommended for officers which is the format used for most other aspects of the Managers training programme to maximise engagement. Should it occur that there are spaces available on the Level 3 managers course, the training will be offered to other officers who play a key role in climate change across the Council.
- 2.13 Officers are intending to use an external trainer to deliver the training to Councillors and senior officers. Officers have researched a number of different providers and a company called Three Point Five ([Climate change training specialists - Three Point Five](#)) has been found to be the most suitable. Three Point Five have been recommended by the Carbon Literacy Project as an approved provider and have delivered training to Councillors, senior officers and general officers in many local government settings.

These include:

- Delivering training to Councillors in various Scottish cities (Stirling Council, Edinburgh City Council, the Highland Council in Inverness, Aberdeen City Council), East Dunbartonshire Council, The Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames (course mixed with officers);
- Delivered to senior officers at The Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames, Wolverhampton City Council, East Dunbartonshire Council;
- They have also very recently delivered training to officers at Elmbridge Borough Council.

- 2.14 The costs for their services are given below (please note the two facilitator option is not available in the evening).

Carbon Literacy Training (8-hour course)		
Delivery option	Details	Price
Virtual – One facilitator	Up to 25 participants	£1200 + VAT

Virtual – Two facilitators	Up to 35 participants	£1800 + VAT
Face to face – One facilitator	Up to 25 participants	£1800 + VAT

- 2.15 There is additional cost of £10 per learner payable to the Carbon Literacy Project which will cover the cost of the certification process.
- 2.16 The Members Training Budget will cover the cost of the training for Councillors and the Human Resources Learning and Development budget will cover the costs of the Senior Officer training. In total, this initial roll out of training will cost in the region of £3,500.
- 2.17 For other officers across the wider organisation, it is likely that the training would be delivered by the Climate Change Officer and rolled out to small groups over a longer time period due to the number of potential participants. As more staff become certified it would be possible for other certified staff to also deliver training sessions. The process and costs associated with the delivery of carbon literacy training across the wider organisation is likely to be the subject of consideration in a future report.

3. Policy framework implications

- 3.1 The Council's Climate Change Strategy states, *'that change can only be achieved at the scale necessary if it is embedded within every aspect of our operations'*. It also states that, *'changing the direction of a complex organisation is not easy and requires a sustained input from all areas of our operations. This demands clarity about our mission, and everyone involved understanding how they will contribute. Each lead manager will have responsibility for filtering down the climate agenda into the work of their teams and ensuring there is proactive consideration of the strategy throughout their portfolios'*.
- 3.2 Providing carbon literacy training to Councillors and senior officers will enable them to provide leadership in the Council's response to climate change and explore how this can be integrated into decision making. It will also provide Councillors with the information they need to mobilise change within their constituencies and to communicate various matters related to climate change effectively to hard-to-reach groups.

4. Resource implications/Value for Money

- 4.1 The cost of this initial training for Councillors and Senior Managers approx. £3,500 (depending on the final number of attendees and the number of certificates which are issued) to deliver the training described in this report.
- 4.2 Officers will ensure they achieve best value for money by optimising course uptake as far as possible and securing dates and times that are agreeable to as many participants as possible.
- 4.3 The organisation and communication of the training schedule will be managed by the Climate Change team through existing staff resources, as will the management of the external training partner and certification process for participants.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 More than 190 countries, including the UK, have adopted the Paris Agreement, a legally binding international treaty on climate change reached at COP21 in 2015. The Agreement aims to keep a rise in global temperatures to below 2°C from pre-industrial levels, by the end of this century.
- 5.2 The overarching target for the Borough and the UK is to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. In addition, the Council adopted its climate change target in January 2022 'to achieve operational 'Net Zero Carbon' emissions from its services and operations by 2030'.
- 5.3 We can only achieve this as an organisation if the business centres across the Council work together, and with stakeholders, to achieve this outcome. A good understanding of climate change throughout the core of the Council will unify goals and enable linkages and co benefits between policy areas to be maximised to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

6. Equality implications

- 6.1 The Council has a Public Sector Duty under the Equality Act 2010 (as amended) to have due regard to the need to:
- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a Protected Characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share those characteristics;
- in relation to the 9 'Protected Characteristics' stated within the Act.
- 6.2 The final version of the Council's Climate Change Strategy has been subject to an Equalities Screening. Carbon literacy training supports the aims of this strategy as described in Section 3 above.

7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

- 7.1 The objectives set out in the Climate Change Strategy seek to enhance the environment and to promote sustainability and biodiversity. Carbon literacy training to Councillors and senior officers within the Council will ensure climate change impacts, mitigation and adaption are considered across the business areas in the decisions that we make.

8. Timetable for Implementation

- 8.1 It is anticipated that if the funding for this training is agreed, the training would begin as soon as possible after the elections for Councillors and training for senior officers could start as soon as suitable dates and times for the training sessions are secured.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 Carbon literacy training aims to equip Councillors with the information they need to mobilise change within their constituency and to communicate climate change

effectively to hard-to reach groups. It aims to enables all local authority leaders and managers to explore how they can provide leadership in climate change and how this can be integrated into decision-making.

- 9.2 Initially officers would like to focus on delivering carbon literacy training via an external trainer to Councillors and Level 3 senior officers within the Council. Once this training is complete, officers will evaluate the success of the courses and consider options for further roll out across the Council.

Background Papers

None

(To resolve)