

<b>Environment Committee Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	29 June 2023
<b>Report Title</b>	Use of Remaining Improvement & Resilience funds allocated to the Climate and Ecological Emergency
<b>EMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins, Director Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
<b>Head of Service</b>	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Janet Hill, Climate Change Officer
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To reallocate remaining Improvement &amp; Resilience funds for climate projects as detailed in the report below to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swale Cycle re-Cycle Project</li> <li>• Dedicated EV charge point for Sittingbourne Car Club</li> <li>• Carbon Footprint and Progress Review</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Delegate any further adjustments in spending of climate funding to the Head of Environment and Leisure and Director of Resources in consultation with the Chair.</li> </ol>

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 At the end of 2022/23 not all of the Improvement & Resilience Fund allocated to the Climate and Ecological Emergency had been spent as first bid for.
- 1.2 This report recommends the reallocation of funds to three projects, all of which contribute to fulfilling our Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration and it's Action Plan;
  - Swale Cycle re-Cycle Project - £5,000
  - Dedicated EV charge point for Sittingbourne Car Club - £7,000 (estimate)
  - Carbon Footprint and Progress Review - £25,000 (estimate)

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 In June 2019 Swale Borough Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency. An Action Plan was adopted to deliver actions to address the emergency. Over the years both the Special Projects Fund (SPF) and the Improvement & Resilience (I+R) fund have been used for this purpose.

2.2 For various reasons not all the bids to the I & R fund have been fully spent. This is due to a combination of projects coming in under estimate following tender, not happening or where funds from other sources have been able to be used.

2.3 The funds remaining/unallocated are;

Project	Allocated (£)	Actual/ Committed Spend (£)	Total Remaining (£)	Comment
EV charging points	£50,000	£53,219	£3,219	Power supply charges increase following excavation, so funding needs to cover overspend
Planting- trees, grasses, etc	£25,000	£25,000	£0	n/a
LED lighting	£70,000	£70,000	£0	n/a
Car club	£52,000	£36,611	(£15,389)	Better tender pricing achieved
Air quality (Sensor, Newington Assessment, Anti-Idling Signs & Car Club 2)	£48,000	£28,083	(£19,917)	Use of funds from other sources to deliver car club 2 and air quality reports
Business conference	£5,000	£0	(£5,000)	Engagement with businesses done through other sources
<b>Total</b>	<b>£250,000</b>	<b>£212,913</b>	<b>(£37,087)</b>	

2.4 Three new projects would benefit from a reallocation of funds as detailed in the proposals section below.

### 3 Proposals

3.1 It is proposed to use the unspent funds in the following way.

#### **a) Swale Cycle re-Cycle**

This project is already underway led by our Active Travel Co-ordinator.

It is proposed to use the £5k that was allocated for a business conference which due to lack of staff resourcing did not happen.

This meets several of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan targets including improving incentives for cycling and increasing recycling. In addition,

prisoners will learn new skills enhancing employability post release and bicycles will be available to more vulnerable residents who could not otherwise afford one.

The proposed spend is

- £3,500 for workshop parts and materials.
- £200 for delivery of a used container to be sited in a suitable location in Faversham
- £450 for removal of container from Swale House and delivery to Sittingbourne HWRC
- £850 for HWRC Bike Collection Point Displays and end user Bikeability Training

### ***b) Dedicated EV charging point for Sittingbourne Car Club***

The Sittingbourne Car Club was launched in March 2023 building on the success of the Faversham Car Club. The same model is being used. Initially starting with three hybrid vehicles and then switching one to an electric vehicle once a car becomes available and a dedicated charge point is in place.

We need to install a dedicated charge point in the Albany Road Car Park. It is expected to cost approximately £7k and will include an element of future proofing for any additional charging points in the future.

This helps to meet the target of installing more EV chargers across the Borough and gives residents the opportunity to try an EV before committing to purchase one. It also helps with reducing car numbers and air quality.

Since there was an overspend on the EV allocation it is proposed to use the underspend on the car clubs to finance this.

### ***c) Carbon Footprint and Progress***

In 2020 the Carbon Trust produced a report on our carbon footprint and proposed ways of reducing it to meet our 2025 target of net zero. Due to a number of reasons, we have been unable to undertake all the reduction measures required. We now need to recalculate our footprint to quantify the benefits we have achieved from each of the successful projects over the last 4 years and to enable us to ensure any use of funding delivers the highest possible impact in terms of carbon reduction. We also need to explore offsetting and adaptation further. We require a consultant to carry out the work with a cost in the region of £25k. The Action Plan is due for a review, which will be undertaken by the Climate and Ecological Steering group and reported back to the Environment committee. This report, if undertaken, would give us a better understanding of where we are, the options open to us and how we take the Action Plan forward.

3.2 The table below summarises the costs and remaining balance.

<b>Project name</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>
Swale re-Cycle project	£5,000
Car club 2 EV charging point	£7,000
Carbon footprint re-assessment	£25,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£37,000</b>
Available funding for reallocation	£37,087
Balance	£87

3.3 A further option for discussion is to use some of the funds for particulate monitoring equipment to support analysis at sensitive areas in the borough. The purchase of said equipment is estimated at £16,000 but further analysis of the need and justification needs to be undertaken by officers.

## **4 Alternative Options Considered and rejected**

4.1 Do not fund the Swale Cycle re-Cycle – this project is already underway and is proving very popular. Without this relatively small injection of funds the project could fail.

4.2 Do not fund the dedicated EV charging point for Sittingbourne Car Club – an alternative would be not to install a dedicated charge point. This would mean the Car Club would work on a different model to that agreed by the Environment Committee in June 2022 and remove the ‘try an Electric Vehicle before buying’ option for residents as only hybrid vehicles will be possible.

4.3 Do not fund the Carbon Footprint and Progress Review – we need to undertake this piece of work to establish our position in relation to our 2025 target of net zero and inform our way forward. We do not have the resource to do this within our current officer capacity.

4.4 The total unspent funding could be returned to the Budget Contingency reserve in order to support ongoing budget deficit.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

5.1 Internally informal consultations were held with members of the previous administration who were in favour of these proposals but given the timing thought it should be down to the new administration to decide. There is no need for external consultation.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p><b>Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges</b></p> <p>The Climate and Ecological Emergency is recognised as the biggest global challenge this generation will face. These proposals support reducing emissions.</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>The proposals do not involve additional expenditure, but the reallocation of existing I&amp;R funds.</p> <p>There is no specific revenue budget for climate projects at the current time, as all departments are expected to design services and commission projects that contribute.</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	None identified.
Crime and Disorder	The Cycle re-Cycle project should result in improved employability skills and reduce reoffending.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	These projects help to fulfil our targets in our Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.
Health and Wellbeing	The Cycle re Cycle project could improve the health and wellbeing of our more vulnerable residents.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified.
Equality and Diversity	None identified.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified.

## 7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report.

None

## 8 Background Papers

None