

Supporting the Rollout of Repair Cafes, Upcycling and Recycling and Reuse Initiatives

To: Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee

Meeting Date: 8 December 2022

From: Interim Deputy Director of Communities, Employment and Skills

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Outcome: Consider the proposal and costings in Appendix 1 in the context of the council motion and contextual information as set out in the paper.

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

Agree to fund, by way of a grant, the proposal from Cambridge Carbon Footprint, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

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1. Background

- 1.1 This paper is written in response to a motion agreed at the Full Council meeting on 15th March 2022, which requested that a report be brought to the Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee to outline a model whereby the Council can support the rollout of new repair cafes and similar reuse and recycling initiatives and offer any necessary support to repair cafes already operating.

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 In considering how to meet the requirements of the motion agreed by Full Council, the following key issues were considered:
- The Council's budget position for 2023/24 onwards.
 - The fact that many repair cafes and the like across the county and the country are self-sustaining without local authority support.
 - The fact that such initiatives typically fail to meet the return-on-investment criteria of the Cultivate Cambs Fund, and the fact that no resources are available to run a Cultivate Cambs Fund in the 2022/23 financial year.
 - The repair café movement is already flourishing in Cambridgeshire. Indeed, Cambridge Carbon Footprint (a registered charity which works to raise awareness of climate change issues and to support people in moving to low-carbon living), states that "Cambridgeshire is blessed with a huge number of Cafes, with more starting up all the time. In fact, we are probably a global hub with more individual Cafes than anywhere else".
 - Despite the high number of repair cafes across the county as a whole, their geographical distribution is uneven. A [map of local repair cafes](#) produced by Cambridgeshire Carbon Footprint shows a significant concentration of repair cafes in the Greater Cambridge area.
 - Cambridge Carbon Footprint has already produced a guide on [how to organise a repair café in your community](#), to support those wishing to open repair cafes in their community.
- 2.2 These considerations led to the development of the following set of key principles that the Council's approach should adopt:
- To build capacity within areas where repair cafes are not currently in operation.
 - To build capacity through the development of enablement tools and skills sharing.
 - To recognise that the expertise to support repair cafes does not lie within the Council.
 - To explore opportunities to invest in existing local skills, knowledge and infrastructure.
 - To support a decentralised approach by supporting the outcomes of the Council's motion, while also leaving flexibility for individual local responses.
- 2.3 In investigating options to support the motion, it was recognised that Cambridge Carbon

Footprint, a registered charity with 15 years' experience in providing local guidance and support on carbon reduction activity, already delivers work around the local Cambridgeshire repair network.

- 2.4 Cambridgeshire Carbon Footprint was therefore approached to generate a proposal which supports the roll-out of repair cafes in areas where residents do not have opportunities to access them. That proposal is attached at Appendix 1 to this report, and is recommended to the Committee for approval.
- 2.5 Further, it should be noted that given the Council's difficult financial position, ongoing or repeat investment of this type is unlikely to be possible. The longer-term response to this motion will therefore ensure these initiatives are aware of and can access support from not only Cambridge Carbon Footprint, but also through Support Cambridgeshire (the Council's contracted Voluntary and Community Sector infrastructure support provider) and the Council's Communities service. Such support would cover both setting up repair cafes and identifying external funding opportunities to make them self-sustaining in the longer-term.

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 Environment and Sustainability

Details of impact in this area are set out in Appendix 1. The recommendation to support the roll out of Repair Cafes as per the proposal would have a positive impact in regard to this priority.

3.2 Health and Care

There is evidence that positive activities such as repair cafes can have positive effects on health and wellbeing by addressing loneliness, and therefore poor mental health. Although this recommendation is not specifically focused on this as an outcome, there are links to this priority.

3.3 Places and Communities

The detail set out in Appendix 1 shows links in regard to supporting communities to live low carbon lives, as well as delivering practical localised support which reduces poverty and helps address inequality.

3.4 Children and Young People

No specific links in this section

3.5 Transport

No specific links in this section

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

The proposal is for the Council to fund the requirement by way of a grant. The Council's Contract Procedure Rules therefore do not apply. The grant will be made in compliance with the Council's Grants to External Organisations Policy.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.7 Public Health Implications

Repair cafes can play an important role in contributing to healthier environments in terms of re-cycling and making better use of resources, along with increasing local accessibility, which will reduce travel.

4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Neutral

4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Neutral

4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.

Neutral

4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Positive – the proposal in Appendix 1 should see a positive net effect in the minimisation of waste and plastic pollution through the reuse and repair of items.

4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:

Neutral

4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Neutral

4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure, and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Neutral

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?

Yes or No

Name of Financial Officer:

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement?

Yes or No

Name of Officer:

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or Pathfinder Legal?

Yes or No

Name of Legal Officer:

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your EqIA Super User?

Yes or No

Name of Officer:

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?

Yes or No

Name of Officer:

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?

Yes or No

Name of Officer:

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?

Yes

Name of Officer: Val Thomas

If a Key decision, have any Environment and Climate Change implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer?

Yes or No

Name of Officer:

5. Source Documents

5.1 None