

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Climate and Nature Grant Scheme
Date of decision:	17/12/21
Decision maker:	Interim Director for Economy and Place in conjunction with Cabinet Member Economy and Environment and Section 151 Officer
Authority for delegated decision:	https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50037870
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	Political groups were consulted. No comments from ward members received relevant to this piece of work. Full details found in linked report above.
Decision made:	Delegate approval of grants under the Climate and Nature Grant Scheme to Service Director Highways, Environment and Waste.
Reasons for decision:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the Full Council meeting on 14 Feb 2020 £200,000 of revenue funding from the new homes bonus and future dividends from West Mercia Energy operational surplus was allocated as a new dedicated climate reserve. • A further allocation of £248,614 was added to the reserve in October 2021 from the 2019/20 WME operational surplus and the current forecast for the 2020/21 operational surplus is £165k which will be allocated to the reserve in October 2022. • The grant scheme will be administered by the Council's Delegated Grants team. The grant administration costs will be funded within the £220,000 budget allocation. • £220,000 has been allocated from the climate reserve to establish a new Climate and Nature grant scheme to empower local community groups, organisations and parish councils to apply for funding, which the council will consider and award, to deliver carbon reduction and ecological enhancement projects across the county. • The climate and Nature Grant Scheme was launched in September 2021.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £220,000 has been allocated from the climate reserve to establish the Climate and Nature grant scheme.
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not to draw down and utilise the dedicated Climate Reserve in order to accelerate the delivery, engagement and communication of the Council's climate and ecology commitments (rejected). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. This is not recommended as this dedicated reserve has been established to support the ongoing delivery of Council's declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency and to deliver the climate and nature commitments within the County Plan.

	<p>2. Not to draw down the dedicated climate reserve to support countywide carbon activity (rejected).</p> <p>a. This is not recommended as significant investment will be required over the next decade as the County works to achieve net zero carbon. The allocation of £220,000 from the dedicated climate reserve will ensure there is sufficient resource available to develop and facilitate new carbon reduction and biodiversity projects across the county via the climate grant scheme. This allocation includes up to £20,000 to resource the administration of this grant scheme which will be undertaken by the council's Delegated Grants team.</p> <p>3. To directly allocate resources to the Climate and Nature Partnership (rejected).</p> <p>a. This is not possible as the proposed partnership will not be a legal entity and the Council need to ensure that all activity is procured under the council's contract and financial procedure rules.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date: