

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure Committee
DATE	24 May 2011
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	External Funding Update
REPORT NUMBER:	EP&I/11/068

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update on the Council's external funding initiatives. This report will provide:-

- a briefing regarding the Council's membership of the North Sea Commission (NSC),
- seek approval for Councillor Kate Dean to run for Vice Chair of the North Sea Commission (NSC) in the June 2011 election, and Chair of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions Energy Group (CPMR) if the current Chair resigns in 2011
- provide an update on promotional activities
- request approval for the development of new transnational projects;
- request approval for Officer travel in connection with the development of said projects and activities
- and also to note the success of the External Funding Unit in drawing down of £581,743 in external money.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

1. Approves Councillor Kate Dean in running for Vice Chair of the North Sea Commission in the June election and Chair of the CPMR Energy Group
2. Approves both Member and Officer travel and attendance to relevant NSC meetings (NSC Executive meetings in February, June and October / November 2011), Officer travel to European Project development meetings within Europe Member States in 2011/2012.

Locations and timings of project development meetings will vary in the year as and when the lead partners call for the meetings.

3. Note the European promotional activities which have been undertaken
4. Approves the Council's participation in the following European projects and officer travel to project meetings:
 - Life Time Proof Communities (Interreg IVB North West Europe)
 - Greenspace Infrastructure (GIN) (Interreg IVB North Sea Region)
 - Complex Challenges, Innovative Cities (CCIC) (Interreg IVC)
 - Broadband Office Network Europe (BONE) (Interreg IVC)
 - Policy Plan for Air Quality in Cities and Towns (PACT) (Interreg IVC)
 - Green Towns (Interreg IVC)
 - Hub for Domestic Violence (Daphne III)
 - A Low Carbon Action Plan for the North Sea Region (LOWCAP) (Interreg IVB North Sea Region)
 - EcoCities (Interreg IVC)
 - Green Economy in Urban Areas (Interreg IVC)
5. Notes the success of the Council drawing down £581,743 in 2010/11 of external monies to be utilised in EU projects over a period of three years

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The programme has been developed in line with a broadly similar level of funding as in 2010/2011.

- Costs for the Elected member attending various meetings of the NSC will be met from the Elected Members travel Budget and will cost approximately £2,000.
- Costs for the Officer accompanying Elected Members (Approximately £2,000), officers attending NSC and project development meetings will be met from the relevant Service's Budget. 50% of these costs will be recovered from the projects if successful. Where the Manager for European Policy and External Funding has to travel on NSC thematic group work all costs are covered by the North Sea Commission
- Match funding to partner EU funded projects will be met from existing budgets, from the relevant Services. The attached spreadsheet breaks down each project and which Service match funding will be met from. Any new projects will be forwarded to Committee for consideration, subject to budgets being available.

- The cost of travel in connection to promoting Aberdeen's European and sustainable activities has been provided for within the budget and business planning process. Where such promotion relates to a European Projects 50% match funding is available.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

European policy, representation and best practice supports the Council's objective of representing the interests of the people and organizations of Aberdeen within North East Scotland, the UK, and Europe. The Europe 2020 Strategy aims for a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Europe which is re-elected in the Council's 2011-2016 5 Year Business Plan. It also facilitates greatly the promotion of Aberdeen's City Vision, to be "a city which is vibrant, dynamic, forward looking – an even better place to live and work, where people can expect high-quality services that meet their needs".

Several of the challenges of the Community Plan identified in the Single Outcome Agreement are also supported, such as: Leading the City, Being Informed, Getting Involved, Land Use and the Environment and Clean City, Transport and Connections, Prosperity and Jobs, and Aberdeen's Image.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- Travel

There will inevitably be some risks associated with overseas travel. As far as possible, measures relevant to the destination will be taken to reduce any risks in line with Council Policy.

- Risk Management

It is important that Aberdeen is fully represented in all European matters and that all opportunities for influencing policy and the development of transnational projects for the City's benefit are grasped in order that opportunities are maximised. This level of participation will help to increase the understanding of the new programmes and will assist in developing the capacity to successfully develop new projects and work with other European cities that will benefit Aberdeen City.

- Human Rights/Equalities/Diversity

European Policy takes full account of the Equal Opportunities Policy of the Council.

- Sustainability

Aberdeen City Council has a clear contribution to make to sustainable development with an emphasis on enhances productivity through improved resource efficiency, new business opportunities in the developing market for sustainable technologies and delivering better and more efficient Council services. By attending these events, it will give us the opportunity to look at the possibilities of best practice and drawing down more funds from EU programmes to raise the quality of life through increasing economic opportunity for all on a socially and environmentally sustainable basis.

- Environmental

European activities are implemented in line with the aim of achieving a quality and sustainable environment.

- Social

The principles of Social inclusion underpin European cohesion policy.

- Economic

European representation and inter-regional networking contributes to the City's overall effort to maximize opportunities and to promote its interests, both at home and overseas with the aim of creating a vibrant and sustainable economy.

6. REPORT

- **Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions and North Sea Commission - Travel and attendance at CPMR, NSC and Project Development meetings**

In order for the Council to take full advantage of our role in influencing European Policy, and drawing down EU funds it is important that the Council, where possible, is well represented on the Executive Committees of the Council of Peripheral Maritime Regions, North Sea Commission and on the various EU funding programmes in order that we are kept fully informed of all new European Policy and funding opportunities through its continuing attendance and input into the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), NSC, the various thematic groups and project development meetings. Such activity will also contribute in us being able to draw down external monies to develop and deliver projects for the Council.

The CPMR "**Energy - Climate**" working group was created by the CPMR in 2004.

Its objectives are:

- In general, to develop a comprehensive approach to the energy issue, but with special attention on the energy balance and the use of energies of marine origin.
- To reflect on the nature of the relationship between production sites and places of consumption of energy in the context of a market economy and within the framework of the European Union and in particular, to promote the energy potential of Peripheral and Maritime Regions.
- To better understand, given the experience of the various regions, the places of power and decision-making in terms of energy.
- To promote better forms of governance amongst other things, to better manage conflicts that may occur in a region where the development of energy production is fraught with various oppositions.

To this end, the "Energy - Climate" Working Group intends:

- To inform and advise all the CPMR on matters relating to energy,
- To lead in accordance with decisions taken by the CPMR bodies, the actions necessary to defend the specific interests of Peripheral and Maritime Regions by

intervening as appropriate to the European institutions during the development and implementation of European laws.

- To promote the exchange of experiences and good practices between the Peripheral and Maritime Regions.

The CPMR Energy - Climate Working Group is currently chaired by the [Autonomous Region of Navarre](#).

Its work is developed by a Steering Committee and coordinated by Mr Jean-Didier Hache.

The advisor to the Sustainable Development Group of the NSC will be travelling to various meetings at various times on behalf of the NSC and all costs are covered by NSC.

Participation in projects will require travel to project development meetings, which are hosted, usually, in the lead project partner member state or a mutually agreed location across Europe. Where possible, Aberdeen City Council will host partner meetings in order to keep costs to a minimum. The number of meetings per project will vary.

- **European Promotional Activities**

Resilient Cities: 2011 ICLEI (Local Governments for Climate Change) 2nd world congress on cities and adaptation to climate change 3-5 June 2011

A paper and poster was submitted and accepted to be presented at the Resilient Cities 2011 conference. Both documents focus on the economic, social and environmental opportunities that are possible for Aberdeen adapting from moving from an economy based on Oil and Gas to an alternative fuels and growing knowledge economy.

They highlight the effect of the trans-national learning derived from the Council's experience with European Projects and the social and environmental dividend. This is a high profile opportunity to show case the city's successes as a spring board for other opportunities.

European Public Sector Awards (EPSA) 2011

A paper was written in application to the above awards in the Theme: Going Green: Concrete Solutions from the Public Sector. The application has been deemed as eligible. The online application process was simple and straightforward and free.

If successful, nominees will be invited to the preparatory workshop in October 2011. Provision within the budget is available for such travel. The travel and hotel accommodation for the participation of the EPSA 2011 nominees in the final event will be at the expense of EPSA. The EPSA trophy is of international importance.

- **Participation in EU Funded Projects**

The Council has been invited to participate in the following projects:

1. Life Time Proof Communities (Previously known as Age Sustainable Communities)

Life Time Proof Communities has been submitted for a second time under the North West Europe Interreg strand (NWE) This potential project was previously approved by E,P&I Committee in April 2010.

The project's aim is to increase the engagement on a social level, support integration and create effective and functional structures in urban districts in order to develop a life cycle proof neighbourhood.

This project will aim to integrate young migrants in the community and will form partnerships with younger and older people within the community, focusing on recently arrived migrant workers and their families in the Tullos area of Aberdeen.

Intergenerational and intercultural programmes will be developed which address the community's priorities and will be tailored to need local needs and build upon local assets. Through this working programme older and younger residents will be encouraged to work together with agencies to develop Aberdeen City local solutions to resolve local challenges including interaction with future resident and the local environment.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Providing for the needs of the most vulnerable people
- Addressing the ageing population
- Addressing areas of deprivation
- Addressing the increased demand for key services
- Encouraging Community Engagement
- Working with partner organisations

2. Green-space Infrastructure (GIN)

This project has previously been approved to participate in via EP&I Committee April 2010. This project aims to be resubmitted in September 2011 under the Interreg North Sea Region Programme.

This project is in-keeping with the Sustainable Urban Fringes (SURF) project funded 2009/10 and aims to take the SURF project to a higher, more political level. GIN aims to recognize the importance of green-spaces as an essential component of more sustainable communities in both urban and rural environments.

Green Infrastructure will aim to improve North Sea Region (NSR) competitiveness for investment, enhance quality of life through increase health and wellbeing, and promote biodiversity and more sustainable use of natural resources. This project will be both practical and policy based.

A free to use GIS based decision support tool will be provided for planners and other users which can be used during the development process. This will also be used in the implementation stages of the Torry Community Wetlands Project.

This project will provide the council with more utilised green-spaces and will build upon the work that the SURF project is undertaking.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Protect and enhance our high quality natural and built environment
- Increase the need to live in well designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need
- Value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations
- Facilitating new projects to improve Aberdeen's living and working environment
- Delivering statutory responsibilities effectively and efficiently
- Working with partner organisations

3. Complex Challenges Innovative Cities (CCIC)

This project will aim to work in partnership with the two Aberdeen Universities in order to promote innovation. Aberdeen City Council currently have an active public open data programme which requires a better approach to understand uses that business and community could make of datasets that ACC hold, this project will address this issue.

Aberdeen City Council will also engage with the ICT sector, life-sciences, energy sector, telecommunication network operators and the wider SME community.

This project will allow ACC to enhance the flow of innovative ideas from Universities and Businesses by working together with the existing EU partnership.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Ensure a sustainable economic future for the city
- Ensure efficient and effective delivery of services by the council and with its partners
- Encourage the growth of local businesses through support of existing business sectors and development of new sectors
- Working with partner organisations

4. Broadband Office Network Europe (BONE)

This project aims to work in partnership with our innovative ICT sector and local Small to Medium Enterprises (SME). We are currently in preparation stages of a programme which aims to enhance the knowledge base of our SME business community and the delivery of a Broadband Centre would enhance such a programme, this funding will assist in the development of the Broadband Centre.

The project will focus on increasing knowledge of benefits of the National Governors Association (NGA) to SME and consumer groups in disadvantaged locations and assisting in the identification of class leading applications.

The lack of High-Speed internet access can have a negative impact on local businesses in today's technological world; this project will address the increase in faster access and access to those in hard-to-access locations.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Ensure a sustainable economic future for the city
- Ensure efficient and effective delivery of services by the council and with its partners
- Encourage the growth of local businesses through support of existing business sectors and development of new sectors
- Working with partner organisations

5. Policy Plan for Air Quality in Cities and Towns (PACT)

The aim of PACT is to address air quality in Cities and Towns. For Aberdeen this project would pursue extending on an already undertaken feasibility study and detailed assessment for a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for buses and/or Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). The project would enable the implementation of any LEZ scheme, this in turn will have a significant benefit for air quality.

The project will also be an extension of the Interreg IVB Care North project in relation to the Car Club. Work on the car club is already underway and PACT would allow the second phase of these activities.

The project would also see extension of the feasibility study for an on-street cycle rental scheme and would look to undertake further work to support implementation. This will reduce the use of vehicles by providing alternatives thus reducing air quality impacts.

This project will also work with the bus operators to look at feasibility to extension of bus provision and park and ride provision in the City.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Support the delivery of a fully integrated transport network
- Keeping the public safe from environmental health risks
- Addressing pollution control
- Working with partner organisations

6. Green Towns

Green Towns will contribute to revitalize the city centre and stimulate economic growth. This will be achieved through the contribution to the regeneration of the City, including the City Gardens Project.

Through the Green Towns project a business case will be developed looking at the benefits of a city garden, economically, environmentally, culturally and for the people of Aberdeen. Current Policy will be tested to see if there are improvements that could be of benefit and see whether the existing policy is sufficient and whether the vision fully meets the needs.

A design competition will be undertaken to look at the feasibility and additional needs such as the easing of traffic to improve air quality. An implementation plan of a fully costed City Garden and the City's vision will be undertaken. Policies will be compared trans-nationally and knowledge will be shared trans-nationally.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Encouraging community engagement
- Working with partner organisations
- Encourage future economic and business development in the city
- Protect and enhance our high quality natural and built environment
- Ensure the council's physical assets are managed and maintained in a cost effectively and efficiently

7. Hub for Domestic Violence (Daphne III Funding Programme)

Working in close partnership with Grampian Police, Drugs Action, Aberdeen Cyrenians, Alcohol Support, NHS Grampian, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal this project will seek funding in order to create a hub for victims of domestic violence. The idea will be a one-stop-shop in which victims can access all areas of support under one roof, including forensic examination. In this project we will work alongside European partners in order to share best practice.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Reduce antisocial behaviour, crime and the fear of crime
- Working in partnership
- Maintaining high profile within communities
- Addressing domestic violence
- Addressing sexual exploitation
- Provide for the needs of the most vulnerable people

8. A Low Carbon Action Plan for the North Sea Region (LOWCAP) (Interreg IVB North Sea Region)

Building on previously funded Interreg Projects LOWCAP aims to develop a cluster which brings together the key results from the partner projects in key sectors and combines them with knowledge and expertise from across the North Sea Region. This project will also support the development of a Low Carbon Action Plan and will contribute an important regional perspective to the EU2020 strategy's resource efficient Europe Flag Ship Initiative.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Ensure a sustainable economic future for the city
- Ensure efficient and effective delivery of services by the council and with its partners
- Encourage the growth of local businesses through support of existing business sectors and development of new sectors
- Working with partner organisations

9. Ecocities

This project will focus on looking at areas of Waste Prevention for the city in particular in terms of communication and prevention activities. The Waste Strategy team will focus on multi-occupancy users and those in hard to reach areas. Good practices and experiences on waste management will be exchanged amongst the EU partners in this project.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Addressing current waste strategy
- Address areas of deprivation
- Contribute to managing our waste better and increase recycling
- Working with partner organisations

10. Green Economy in Urban Areas

Many centres and suburban zones of European cities suffer from economic and social degradation. Investments in urban local infrastructure such as small shops,

attractive open spaces, leisure opportunities or green areas are often not carried out in older city quarters to a satisfactory degree. Moreover, the building stock in these areas is usually not modernised. As a consequence, the wealthier citizen groups tend to leave these areas and move to the outskirts of the city agglomerations, whereas mostly underprivileged groups (e.g. old or poor people, immigrants) remain in the old neighbourhoods. The result is a permanent and irreparable degradation in all fields of urban life. Current economic crisis, new immigration waves from North Africa and Asia as well as the on-going trafficking phenomenon force even more pressure on these inner-urban problem areas.

This project links to the following Council priorities as set out in the Five Year Business Plan:

- Address areas of deprivation
 - Encouraging community engagement
 - Protect and enhance our high quality natural and built environment
 - Increase the need to live in well designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need
 - Value and enjoy our build and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations
-
- **Notes the success of the Council in drawing down £581,743 in external monies to be utilised in EU projects over a period of three years.**

The Council was successful in drawing down £581,743 in 2009/2010. These funds are for the following projects, which cover a period of up to three years.

	ACC Money	EU Money
MUSIC, Interreg North West Europe Programme	£274,190	£274,190
Peri-Urban, Interreg IVC Programme	£27,665	£82,994
Lively Cities, Interreg North West Europe Programme	£94,559	£94,559
Total	£396,414	£451,743

	ACC Money	Scottish Government Money
Low Carbon Transport Fund	£0	£130,000
Total	£0	£130,000

It must be noted that most European Funding programmes require the Council to identify and put in place match funding and the rate of match funding can vary from programme to programme. The attached spreadsheet identifies the Services in where the match funding is being met from, the spreadsheet includes existing projects as well as the potential project which have been submitted for 2011.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Susan Fraser
External Funding Officer
sufraser@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 523759

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None