



Glasgow City Region Cabinet

Item 9
14th February 2023

Report by the Director of Regional Economic Growth

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Regional Economic Strategy: Green Business Support Programme

Purpose of Report:

The report provides the Cabinet with an update on the recent development of the Green Business Support programme in the Glasgow City Region.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is asked to agree:

- The definition of Green Business Support in the Glasgow City Region
- The next steps to continue to develop and refine a consistent regional Green Business Support offer.

Purpose

1. The report provides the Cabinet with an update on the recent development of the Green Business Support (GBS) programme in the Glasgow City Region.

Policy Background

2. The [Glasgow City Region Regional Economic Strategy](#) (RES) was approved by Cabinet in December 2021 and the subsequent [Action Plan](#) was approved by Cabinet in August 2022.
3. The Action Plan contains an initial programme of 12 actions of which Number 9 focuses on Green Business Support:

GREEN BUSINESS SUPPORT

Programme Ambitions: To review how Business Support programmes across the Region can help businesses transition to Net Zero. This will be designed to help business meet climate needs as well as helping them target business growth opportunities.

In addition, there are also implications for the retrofit of non-domestic premises.

Progress to date

4. The GCR Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) identified that all eight Member Authorities (MAs) intend to deliver GBS. While there is a commitment to deliver activity few have had experience of delivering this type of support in the past.
5. The GCR PMO has co-ordinated a number of workshops with Business Support representatives and partners from the City Region. Following discussion, a definition of GBS in the City Region was proposed:

'Green Business Support in Glasgow City Region is a range of advice, expert help and funding to aid businesses to achieve cost savings whilst improving their sustainability, resilience and management of waste.'

6. Having provided the context in which the support will be delivered, partners then considered the support that would be available. Any direct support would need to take into account existing interventions provided by other public sector agencies including: Scottish Enterprise and Zero Waste Scotland / Business Energy Scotland.

Proposed approach

7. Following discussion with MAs and stakeholders, three core elements of GBS will be offered by MAs across the GCR:
 - Business Adviser training, to an appropriate level
 - Energy Audit
 - Grant Funding of at least £10,000 to support the transition to Net-Zero

Business Adviser Training

8. Glasgow City Council is currently trialing specific Business Adviser training, accredited by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). One manager and three advisers have been through the training and passed the assessment and now have the foundation qualification. GCC is in the process of evaluating the training programme, to determine whether it should it be rolled out across all advisers.
9. The specific IEMA training builds on more generic inhouse Carbon Literacy Training. The Carbon Literacy Training provided staff, including Business Advisers, with a basic level of understanding of the topic.
10. In addition to the training commissioned by GCC, Scottish Enterprise has provided details of a bespoke programme of training for their business facing staff. The training has been created by the Sustainability Team within Scottish Enterprise.

Energy Audit

11. The GCR group agreed that supporting companies to undertake an Energy Audit as part of their journey to a net-zero transition plan is a critical part of the process.
12. A number of methods of support are currently available including:
 - Business Energy Scotland (BES)
 - Renfrewshire Council in-house provision
 - GCC has commissioned BES to provide a bespoke offer to businesses within the GCC area
 - East Renfrewshire Council is currently working with Strathclyde University to offer an energy audit.

Grant Funding

13. Member Authorities, either through current programmes of support, or utilising UKSPF allocations offer grant funding support to SMEs to help with their transition to net-zero.
14. Through discussion, all Member Authorities have now committed to offer at least £10,000 worth of grant funding support to SMEs.

Next steps

15. While GCC review the IEMA commissioned training, GCR will work with Scottish Enterprise to explore the possibility of Member Authority Business Adviser accessing the bespoke SE training programme. This training will enable all advisers in the GCR to achieve a consistent level of understanding and confidence in the topic area.
16. GCR to continue to work with MAs on refining access to Energy Audit support

17. GCR to work with MAs to develop a communication programme around Green Business Support, ensuring a 'consistent regional offer with local delivery'.

Recommendation

18. The Cabinet is asked to agree:

- The definition of Green Business Support in the Glasgow City Region
- The next steps to continue to develop and refine a consistent regional Green Business Support offer in the Glasgow City Region.