

Regional Economic Strategy – Green Business Support Programme – Position agreed.

9 There was submitted a report by the Director of Regional Economic Growth providing the Cabinet with an update on the recent development of the Green Business Support Programme in the Glasgow City Region (GCR), advising

- (1) that the GCR Regional Economic Strategy (RES) Action Plan, approved by this Cabinet in August 2022, had contained an initial 12 actions, of which Number 9 focussed on Green Business Support (GBS), as detailed in the report;
- (2) that the GCR Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) had identified that all 8 Member Authorities (MAs) had intended to deliver GBS and whilst there was a commitment to deliver activity, few had had experience of delivering this type of support in the past;
- (3) that the GCR Programme Management Office (PMO) had co-ordinated a number of workshops with Business Support representatives and partners from the GCR, and following a discussion, a definition of GBS in the GCR was proposed as follows, namely, “GBS in GCR 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”;
- (4) that, having provided the context in which the support would be delivered, partners then considered the support that would be available and 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;
- (5) that, following discussion with MAs and stakeholders, 3 core elements of GBS would be offered by MAs across the GCR, as detailed in the report;
- (6) that Glasgow City Council (GCC) was currently trialling specific Business Adviser training, accredited by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), and GCC was in the process of evaluating the training programme, to determine whether it should be rolled out across all advisers;
- (7) that the GCR group had agreed that supporting companies to undertake an Energy Audit as part of their journey to a net-zero transition plan was a critical part of the process;
- (8) that MAs, either through current programmes of support, or utilising UKSPF allocations, offered grant funding support to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to help with their transition to net-zero, and through discussion, all MAs had now committed to offer at least £10,000 worth of grant funding support to SMEs; and

- (9) of the proposed next steps, that would include the GCR working with MAs to develop a communication programme around GBS, ensuring a consistent regional offer with local delivery.

After consideration, the Cabinet agreed

- (a) the definition of GBS in the GCR; and
- (b) the next steps to continue to develop and refine a consistent regional GBS offer in the GCR.