

Launch of the 'Clyde Peatlands' project in the Glasgow City Region – Position agreed etc.

4 There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of East Dunbartonshire Council and the Portfolio Lead for Land Use and Sustainability providing an update on the Clyde Peatlands project, developed for the Glasgow City Region (GCR) by the GCV Green Network (GCVGN) and supported by NatureScot's Peatland Action Fund, advising

- (1) of the background to the GCVGN and of a number of initiatives already launched, including the Clyde Climate Forest, as detailed in the report;
- (2) that recent work had focused on the development of Clyde Peatlands which, with the support of NatureScot's Peatland Action Fund, was about to advertise for 2 new officers to drive forward peatland restoration across the region, with the multiple climate and ecological benefits that brought;
- (3) that preparations were underway for the launch of Clyde Peatlands to coincide with the appointment of the new officers and to raise awareness with key audiences and stakeholders;
- (4) that around 20% of Scotland was covered in peatland, with Glasgow City Region (GCR) having around 50,000 hectares and healthy peatlands captured and stored vast amounts of carbon, playing a critical part of the drive for Net Zero, however, degraded or dried out peat emitted carbon rather than storing it;
- (5) that Scotland's peatlands emitted roughly the same amount of carbon each year as all of Scotland's homes, and addressing this degradation had a major role to play not only in the drive to Net Zero, but in restoring a unique habitat that was home to an array of plants and animals;
- (6) that, in healthy conditions, peatlands provided a range of nature-based solutions to the twin and linked challenges of a changing climate and ecological collapse, as detailed in the report;
- (7) that NatureScot's Peatland Action Fund had £250m up to 2030 to support peatland restoration and was 100% funding the creation of the 2 new officer posts in GCR, and the officers would proactively engage with public and private sector landowners to identify opportunities, support them through feasibility work and funding applications and project manage on the grounds work;
- (8) that the new Peatland officers would be jointly funded by South Lanarkshire Council and the GCVGN, with support from NatureScot and the GCVGN team was proactively engaging with partners in advance of the officers being appointed to identify a first suite of projects, and would welcome discussions on potential peatland restoration projects with local authority partners; and

- (9) that the aim of the Clyde Peatlands was to deliver a step change in the amount and rate of peatland restoration across GCR as a response to the Climate Emergency and Ecological Crisis.

After consideration and having heard a presentation by Mr Ally Corbett, GCVGN, the Cabinet

- (a) welcomed the development of the Clyde Peatlands project; and
- (b) agreed to proceed with a formal launch of the project.