

Title of Report: Sustainable NI	Officer presenting: Head of Capital Development & Building Control Author: Energy Manager
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1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval in relation to continued support for Sustainable NI.

2 Background

- 2.1 Members are reminded of Environment and Regeneration Committee minutes ER161/16, ER176/17, ER36/18, ER76/19 and ER67/20 which approved financial support for Sustainable NI since 2016.
- 2.2 Members are also reminded that Nichola Hughes from Sustainable NI gave an in-depth presentation to members in November 2017 (ER226/17) highlighting the importance of Sustainable Development, the work Sustainable NI is doing on behalf of and in conjunction with Councils in NI. Nichola highlighted Council's statutory duty to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development under the NI (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006, reinforced in the Community Planning component of the 2014 Local Government Act. This legislation provides a strong mandate for action on sustainability by Councils and Sustainable NI's support is especially important in the face of a diminished role undertaken by Central Government.
- 2.3 Sustainable NI sponsors NILGA's annual Excellence in Environmental Sustainability by a Local Authority award, which was won by the Council's CLIMATE Project at the awards ceremony in October 2018.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Sustainable NI has been a source of expert advice to Council in the development of its Climate Adaptation Plan.

- 3.2 Sustainable NI has provided responses to the 6th Carbon Budget and the Climate Bill which Council has supported through the work in the Climate Adaptation Plan and the Sustainable Development Forum.
- 3.3 Council has been very well represented at the Sustainable Development Forum quarterly meetings which were held virtually due to the COVID pandemic. To maximise the opportunities presented to Sustainable, these meetings served a dual role of officer engagement and officer training covering subjects such as Climate Change, Fair Trade, Carbon Budgets, the impact of COVID 19 on food, transport waste and energy, the barriers associated with Electric Vehicle charging points and DAERA's work on the Climate and Environment Bills.
- 3.4 Sustainable NI continues to work closely with Climate NI on the development of the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP) and continues to provide support to the Council's CLIMATE project.
- 3.5 Sustainable NI provides secretariat support to All Party Group on Climate Change, set up to influence policy direction on Climate Change, and hold the Executive to account on Climate and Environmental commitments made in the New Decade. New Approach deal. Membership of the All Party Group membership includes elected representatives spanning both local and central government. Officers from local councils are invited to participate in the All Party Group's quarterly meeting as observers and have found the experience very informative and an insight into the internal lobbying activities at central government level.
- 3.6 Sustainable NI have in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) with funding from DAERA continues to develop a programme to Reduce the Production and Consumption of Single Use Plastics. Sustainable NI in conjunction with DAERA and the Department of Finance has developed a clause for insertion into public sector tenders to mitigate single use plastic. This procurement template is available for Councils to include in their own tender exercises.
- 3.7 Sustainable NI's knowledge, experience, lobbying and advice has been invaluable to Council over the last number of years and its membership offer for 2021/022 builds on the on-going successful relationship with Council. Membership benefits focusses on Demonstration of Sustainability Progress, Achieving Sustainability Objectives and Helping to Shape the Sustainability & Climate Agenda. A copy of Sustainable NI's Membership Offer is contained in Appendix 1.
- 3.8 Sustainable NI's forthcoming work plan is ambitious, but it is deliverable and continues to demonstrate a high level of performance for the organisation and real value for money for Council, despite the modest size of Sustainable NI's resources and team.

4 Financial and Other Implications

- 4.1 Council have received a request for continued financial support for Sustainable NI at the same rate provide in previous years, namely, £5,000. A copy of the subscription request in included in Appendix 2.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 Members are asked to endorse the Membership offer and approve annual financial support drawn from existing budgets for Sustainable NI for 2021/22 to the value of £5,000.

Background Papers

ER161/16, ER176/17, ER226/17, ER36/18, ER76/19, ER67/20

Appendix 1 - Membership Offer

Appendix 2 - Sustainable NI Subscription