

## The Highland Council

Finance, Housing and Resources Committee – 26/02/2014

Agenda Item	20
Report No	FHR/42/14

### Carbon CLEVER Funding

#### Report by Head of Policy and Reform

This paper seeks approval for funding to support the Carbon CLEVER Cycles project to sponsor the Etape Loch Ness cycling sportive. Both of these proposals were presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee, December 2013, and Members noted the potential of these for enabling an increase in cycling in Inverness.

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 At a meeting of the Highland Council in June 2013, Members agreed to an initiative to achieve a carbon neutral Inverness in a low carbon Highlands by 2025, Carbon CLEVER. This was launched at a conference held at the Council headquarters, Inverness on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2013.
- 1.2 It is important that action arising from Carbon CLEVER is visible to encourage others to participate in the initiative, and for it to gain the momentum it requires to deliver both in terms achieving a carbon neutral Inverness in a low carbon Highlands, and the multiple associated benefits, such as: less air pollution; a healthier population; more accessible services; stimulated growth; improved infrastructure, and more inward investment. At the conference, SSE made an offer to install the infrastructure required for an innovative pilot electric bicycle scheme in Inverness.
- 1.3 Another important aspect of Carbon CLEVER is its brand. By supporting, developing, and raising the profile of the brand, it will enable Carbon CLEVER to effectively bring together and coordinate action which is occurring across the region to reduce carbon emissions. This can then be utilised to attract external investment to the region.

#### 2. Carbon CLEVER Cycles

- 2.1 As a contribution to the Carbon CLEVER initiative, SSE made an offer to install a pilot electric bicycle hire scheme in Inverness, which could be branded as Carbon CLEVER Cycles. The bicycles would be installed in two clusters of six bicycles in secure lockers, operated by smart card.
- 2.2 The total capital works cost of the scheme would be in the region of £40,000, which SSE would procure. SSE would also be the contracting authority for the leasing of the bicycles. The total cost of leasing 12 bicycles is estimated to be £15,000 p.a. This would include insurance, maintenance, and a 24 hour helpline. The bicycles would generate revenue and a self-sustaining costing model is under development. Leasing costs would need to be paid at the start of the scheme for the year ahead. More details on the electric bicycle scheme will be published in a report to the City of Inverness Area Committee in March.

2.3 The electric bicycle hire scheme was presented to Members of the City of Inverness Area Committee in December 2013 who noted its potential for increasing cycling in the city.

### **3. Etape Loch Ness**

3.1 The Etape Loch Ness could prove to be a flagship cycling event for Highland, Scotland, and the UK. The event is a 67 mile closed road cycling challenge around Loch Ness. Hosting such an event in this iconic destination has attracted entrants from across the UK and internationally. The event sold out its 1,000 places in a matter of hours, and has a target of over 4,000 participants by 2017.

3.2 Etape Loch Ness aims to increase the number of females cycling by targeting a 40:60 Female to Male ratio in the event, which is much higher than the typical gender split of cyclists. A wide demographic is also being targeted, with 35% participants aged 31-40, and 30% aged 41-50. The event will promote the Highlands as a cycling destination, leading to an increase in cycle tourism and benefitting the local economy. It will also help to expand the appeal of cycling to Highland residents, encouraging a modal shift to more active and sustainable forms of travel which is significant in terms of achieving a carbon neutral Inverness in a low carbon Highlands.

3.3 It is suggested that Carbon CLEVER could sponsor the Etape Loch Ness to promote the aims and objectives of the initiative to a local and global audience.

Support sponsor status would include:

- Branding – Use of the Carbon CLEVER name and logo, Banner sites along the route, and sponsorship announcements.
- PR & Marketing – Use of the Carbon CLEVER logo on promotional materials, media both pre- and post- event across all types of media (TV, radio, written press, and online).

Along with a range of other opportunities. The cost of sponsoring the event is £15,000 per annum.

3.4 The potential for Carbon CLEVER to sponsor the Etape Loch Ness was presented to Members of the City of Inverness Area Committee in December 2013 who noted its potential for increasing cycling in the city.

### **4. Implications**

4.1 Resource Implications: The upfront costs of the leasing the 12 bicycles and associated costs for the Carbon CLEVER Cycles scheme is £15,000. £5,000 has been identified from the Policy Team budget, CEX. £5,000 is also being applied for from both the Inverness Common Good fund, and the Inverness Central ward discretionary budget.

4.2 The cost of sponsoring the Etape Loch Ness is £15,000. £5,000 has been identified from the Policy Team budget, CEX. £5,000 funding has been approved from the Highland Culture Fund. An application for the remaining £5,000 is being made to the Inverness Common Good Fund. Funding for one year only is proposed at this time.

- 4.3 As awards of discretionary funding of over £10,000 require approval from this Committee, members are asked to agree the Council's funding contribution for both events from core and ward discretionary budgets and note that the applications for Inverness Common Good Fund are still to be considered.
- 4.4 Legal Implications: The Council has a duty to assist Scotland achieve its national carbon emission reduction targets as set out by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The Scottish Government have also outlined a target of cycling achieving a 10% modal share of transport by 2020.
- 4.5 Equalities Implications: The implementation of Carbon CLEVER Cycles will assist those unable to use push bikes to travel using an electric bicycle at a low cost. The Etape Loch Ness is specifically aiming to encourage more females, and a wide demographic, to cycle.
- 4.6 Climate Change/ Carbon CLEVER Implications: Carbon CLEVER Cycles and sponsoring the Etape Loch Ness will both have benefits to Carbon CLEVER in by promoting and enabling cycling in the region. This will assist modal shift to cycling in the region leading to a reduction in transport related carbon emissions, and as such mitigate against climate change.
- 4.7 Risk Implications: There are no risks associated with sponsoring the Etape Loch Ness identified at this stage. There is a risk attached to Carbon CLEVER Cycles that bicycle hire rate is low. However, the project is significantly de-risked through the investment by SSE. The costing strategy will be reviewed regularly to ensure utilisation is high, and that it is sustainable. The project has been carefully consulted on with stakeholders from its commencement to ensure it is successful.

## **5. Recommendation**

5.1 Members are asked to agree Council funding as follows:

1. for a contribution to the Carbon CLEVER cycle scheme in 2013/14 of £10,000, made up of £5,000 from a budget in the CEX policy team and subject to a successful application for £5,000 from the Inverness Central Ward Discretionary Budget.

2. for a contribution to the sponsorship of the Etape Loch Ness of £10,000 in 2013/14, made up of £5,000 from a budget in the CEX policy team and £5,000 from the Highland Culture Fund for events.

5.2 Members are asked to note that applications for funding will be considered at the Inverness City Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> March for:

- £5,000 of Common Good Funding for carbon CLEVER cycles
- £5,000 of Common Good Funding towards sponsorship of the Etape Loch Ness.

Designation: Head of Policy and Reform

Date: 07-02-2014

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Background Papers: [Cycling in a Carbon Clever City](#)