



**Urgent Leader of the Council Cabinet
Member Meeting
28 February 2023**

ITEM 05

Sponsor: Strategic Director of Communities and Place
Author: Environment & Business Energy Efficiency Group Manager

Innovate UK Fast Followers competition

Purpose

- 1.1 Innovate UK, part of UK Research and Innovation, are investing £6 million in the Fast Followers competition as part of the [Innovate UK Net Zero Living programme](#).
- 1.2 The aim of this competition is to support local authorities in up to 20 places and fund a dedicated net zero innovation and delivery officer role. The funding aims to help further develop net zero delivery plans, improve delivery pathways and enable adoption at scale of innovative products and services.
- 1.3 This report is to seek authority to both submit a bid for this funding and to accept the funding if successful.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the submission of the funding bid to Innovate UK by 28 February 2023 and the joint regional bid led by Nottingham City Council.
- 2.2 To delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Communities and Place and the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Decarbonisation, Strategic Planning and Transport to accept funding.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Communities and Place and the S151 Officer any minor changes to the bid along with agreeing any contractual arrangements if the bid is successful.

Reason

- 3.1 The Fast Followers competition would secure external funding and profile to help the Council and its partners develop innovative and exciting projects on the road to delivering net zero and to raise our skills, knowledge and experience in the social and technical aspects of this agenda. It will allow us to strengthen and accelerate the approach we already want to take, irrespective of the success of the bid in keeping with the development of the emerging Green Board as a successor to the City's Climate Change Commission.

Supporting information

4.1 **Fast Followers Competition**

Innovate UK is the United Kingdom's innovation agency, which provides money and support to organisations to make new products and services. It is a non-departmental public body operating at arm's length from the Government as part of the United Kingdom Research and Innovation organisation. Bids must be submitted by 1 March 2023 and if successful, will run from July 2023 to June 2025.

4.2 This latest opportunity provides funding of between £250,000 and £300,000 per place over 2 years if successful. This will be used to:

- recruit a specific Net Zero Innovation and Delivery Officer to participate in the programme
- actively participate in a programme of net zero delivery support modules to be provided by Innovate UK and its partners
- implement the learning gained to a specific net zero project.

4.3 **Derby's proposal**

Our approach will be twofold, firstly centred around our Council Climate Change Action Plan, which identifies those things we can do within our own control and influence to reduce our carbon footprint and secondly a strong external focus, working with our partners. Partnership is vital in the face of the challenges of decarbonization and adaptation. This funding supports the Council's place shaping and enabling role, to facilitate a much wider conversation on climate change, recognising the fact that its own carbon footprint represents a relatively small contribution to emissions (less than 2% for scopes 1 and 2). This work will be embedded within our partnership governance structures and this work makes up the majority of our proposal.

4.4 The primary focus of the funding is to address non-technical barriers to action towards net zero such as financing, capacity, skills, engagement and behavioural change. The Council's application is framed around the following main elements:

- a commonly owned net zero marketing campaign for the whole city
- working with the University of Derby on research/consultancy opportunities
- a Net Zero Partnership Board based on the 'green board'
- launch a Let's Talk Derby Climate platform to engage the public
- a Derby carbon insetting project (insetting is carbon offsetting but in a defined local area, ensuring benefits are locally retained for the community)
- a Derby Net Zero Delivery Plan (DNZDP) agreed with our partners
- learning and building our evidence base of data, intelligence and knowledge

4.5 **Core partners**

The Council's bid is being supported locally by The University of Derby, Community Action Derby, East Midlands Chamber and Toyota. This core partnership provides a strong balance in reaching out to the wider city community to ensure that all sectors are represented in the net zero conversation.

4.6 If the bid is successful, the detailed project development and delivery will be provided in full. At this initial stage it is envisaged that the role of each partner, and the work they take on over the two years of the project, will be different. The University, for example, will be engaged in many of the project activities, whereas the input of others will be more targeted and specific.

4.7 The Council itself, as the lead organisation, will not be required to provide any financial support for the project proposal apart from officer time. The time devoted to this work will take place irrespective of the outcome of this bid and is already largely accounted for (see 3.1). This opportunity would, however, provide more funding to make these things happen more quickly and at greater depth, as well as bringing greater skills, knowledge and experience and a national profile for the City.

4.8 **Other regional bids**

The Council is supporting another regional bid, led by Nottingham City Council, which includes Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils. There are no specific financial commitments in doing this apart from 1 day/month of officer time, however, it will ensure mutual understanding and alignment whatever the outcome of our bids.

Public/stakeholder engagement

5.1 The partners in paragraph 4.5 have engaged in the development of the application. The Council's Climate Champions will also be briefed about the opportunity.

Other options

- 6.1
- Not to apply for this funding: this option was discounted because of the close alignment with the aims of the funding call and what we are planning to do anyway in this area along with the funding and national profile it will give us.
 - Single regional bid: while this option was considered with our neighbours, it was agreed that Derby has a strong identity through its partnership structures which meant that it would have more impact with a specific city bid. We will, of course, work with our neighbouring authorities whatever the outcome.

Financial and value for money issues

7.1 As mentioned in Paragraph 4.7 the only commitment is officer time as match funding. This application includes some costs for a contribution towards the salaries of team members undertaking most of the work. Finance colleagues have worked closely with the Climate Change Team in preparing the application.

Legal implications

8.1 Legal Services will advise on the terms of any funding agreement.

Climate implications

9.1 The Fact Followers funding application directly supports the Council's and the City's zero carbon ambitions and will help to accelerate and strengthen our work.

Socio-Economic implications

10.1 The City's journey to net zero will reveal numerous social and economic benefits including, for example, better insulated homes helping to address the issue of fuel poverty and more diverse jobs associated with the emerging green economy.

Other significant implications

- 11.1 Our work in moving towards zero carbon will also bring about many co-benefits in the form of a cleaner environment, a healthier population, and a more diverse and resilient economy.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	E Feenan, Director of Legal, Procurement and Democratic Services	27/02/2023
Finance	J Hadfield, Head of Finance	27/02/2023
Service Director(s)	V Bayliss, Director of Planning, Transport & Engineering	27/02/2023
Report sponsor	R North, Strategic Director of Communities & Place	27/02/2023
Other(s)		

Background papers:

List of appendices: