

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

Date: 23 May 2022

Title: Green Skills for Retrofit Jobs

Portfolio(s):	Environment Regeneration & Economic Development Employment & Skills
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Cabinet Member(s):	Cllr S Graham Cllr C Johnson
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Report from: Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the Green Skills Sub Group which was appointed by the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee of the Overview, Scrutiny and Development Committee to consider how the local training market could be stimulated to ensure local people have the skills and qualification required to deliver the retrofitting of energy efficient measures to homes and buildings.

The recommendations for Cabinet to consider are set out in the report and recommendations of the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee attached to this report at Appendix 1 and summarised in paragraph 1.5.5 below.

In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, Cabinet is required to provide a response to the recommendations of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee within two months. In providing this response Cabinet is required to indicate what (if any) action it proposes to take, and because the Sub-Committee's report has been published, Cabinet's response must be published.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) receive the report and recommendations of the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee's Green Skills Sub Group attached as Appendix 1; and
- b) agree to receive a further report in June 2022 setting out Cabinet's proposed response to the report and recommendations of the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee's Green Skills Sub Group setting out what (if any) action Cabinet proposes to take.

1.3 Forward Plan:

The report was included in the Forward Plan published in April 2022 under the heading “Matters arising from Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee and its sub-committees”.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The report relates to the following priorities contained in the 2021/2025 Our North Tyneside Plan:

A thriving North Tyneside

We will bring more good quality jobs to North Tyneside – by helping local businesses to grow and making it attractive for new businesses to set up or relocate in the borough

We will invest in adult education and to support apprenticeships to make sure people have the right skills for the job

A green North Tyneside

We will publish an action plan of the steps we will take and the national investment we will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030

1.5 Information:

Background

- 1.5.1 In determining its work programme for 2021/22 the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee agreed to appoint a sub-group to examine the Authority’s approach to adapting to a green industrial revolution and ensuring people have the right skills for the future green jobs.
- 1.5.2 The Sub-Committee subsequently appointed the Green Skills Sub Group, drawn from members of the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee, Environment Sub Committee and Children, Education and Skills Sub-Committee, to:
- a) consider the steps required to ensure residential, public, commercial and industrial buildings in the borough have the lowest possible carbon emissions to support the Council’s 2030 net zero ambition;
 - b) analyse the skills, qualifications and accreditations that will need to be gained by the local workforce so that:
 - i. they are equipped to deliver energy efficient buildings;
 - ii. the need for imported skills is avoided; and
 - iii. the borough benefits from the low carbon economic growth;
 - c) identify sources of funding that could be accessed for skills and training from a variety of sources to support the local economy; and
 - d) make recommendations to the Elected Mayor and Cabinet on how the Authority and its partners might stimulate the local training market so that the required skills, qualifications and accreditations can be taught to our residents by North Tyneside based providers.

- 1.5.3 The Sub Group held a series of evidence gathering meetings with officers and key stakeholders during January and February 2022 and also had regard to a wealth of policy documents and research papers which have been published in relation to decarbonising the built environment and the skills and jobs that will be required to deliver it.
- 1.5.4 The Sub Group has prepared a report setting out its findings, conclusions and recommendations and this is attached at Appendix 1. The report was considered and agreed by the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee on 10 May 2022. The Chair of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, Councillor Janet Hunter, has waived the requirement that the report be submitted to and approved by the Overview, Scrutiny and Development Committee because its next scheduled meeting is not until 13 June 2022. It is hoped that by presenting the report and recommendations to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity this will assist the Cabinet review and revise its Climate Emergency Action Plan.
- 1.5.5 The Cabinet is recommended to consider:
1. Developing a Retrofit Strategy to stimulate the local retrofit market, including a phased approach to:
 - a) retrofitting of the Authority's 14,000 council houses;
 - b) acceleration of energy efficiency retrofit in the 90,000 private homes; and
 - c) development of industrial/commercial retrofit clusters.
 - 2 Integrating the above as a key area of focus within its existing Climate Emergency Action Plan.
 - 3 Establishing a Climate Emergency Partnership Board. Within this establish two retrofitting working groups, one focused on industrial/commercial property, the other on residential property. Membership of the groups should be extended to significant property owners in the borough who share our ambition to lower the carbon footprint of their buildings and are committed to sharing best practice.
 - 4 Developing a communications strategy to stimulate demand by creating and maintaining a sense of urgency regarding the twin benefits of energy efficiency and carbon reduction. Promote the opportunities and benefits of retrofitting homes and buildings, including cost savings in the light of energy price rises.
 - 5 Developing a set of scenarios (fast, medium, slow) for the retrofitting of various building types under various ownership. Consider undertaking this work in concert with colleagues at NTCA.
 - 6 Developing a Knowledge Bank for the sharing of locally relevant retrofitting information, evaluation and case studies.
 - 7 Ensuring that the relevant officers take up the challenge of enabling 'Green Finance', both grants and loans, to flow into the borough, through a variety of routes.
 - 8 Increasing the number of PAS2035 qualified professionals in North Tyneside by commissioning a Retrofit Academy in North Tyneside for the delivery of PAS2035 qualifications. Recognise that this is likely to require the offer of some kind of financial incentive to professionals looking to upskill, to mitigate the risk to those professionals of shifting focus towards a newly emerging sector.

- 9 Commissioning pilots, trials and demonstrator projects that can be used to establish feasibility and grow the number of willing to invest in their properties, be they domestic or commercial.
- 10 Working closely with North of Tyne Combined Authority on its retrofitting-related workstreams, to ensure that North Tyneside is an early adopter of any programmes to upskill in green construction skills and to accelerate the pace of retrofitting of local property.

1.5 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Cabinet accepts the recommendations in paragraph 1.2 above

Option 2

Cabinet does not accept the recommendations in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 1 is the preferred option because under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 Cabinet has a duty to provide a response to the report and recommendations presented to it by the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee's Green Skills Sub Group.

1.6 Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Green Skills for Retrofit Jobs – A Report from the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee

1.7 Contact officers:

Michael Robson, Democratic Services Officer Tel. (0191) 643 5359

1.8 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- [Minutes of the Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee](#)
- [Local Government Act 2000](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The financial implications associated with each recommendation will be included in Cabinet's response to this report.

2.2 Legal

The legal requirement for Cabinet to respond to the report and recommendations under the Local Government Act 2000 are dealt with in the report.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

The Study Group met with those officers listed in Appendix A to the report.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

The Study Group met with a range of key stakeholders from outside of the Council, listed in Appendix A to the report.

2.4 Human rights

There are no direct issues relating to human rights arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no direct issues relating to equalities and diversity arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

There are no direct issues relating to risk arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no direct issues relating to crime and disorder arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

The report is directly related to the Council's decision to declare a climate emergency and to publish an action plan of the steps it will take and the national investment it will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by the earlier date of 2030.

PART 3

As a report from a Scrutiny Committee, the report has been circulated to the following officers for information.

- Chief Executive
- Directors(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Asistant Chief Executive