



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management

Cabinet – 17 December 2020

### Welsh Government Green Recovery Circular Economy Funds 2020-21- Funding Applications for Four Repair/Re-use Projects

<b>Purpose:</b>	To seek authorisation to bid for capital and revenue grant funding from two Welsh Government's Circular Economy Funds FY 20-21, for four repair/re-use projects.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Swansea Waste Management Strategy. Welsh Government's Towards Zero Waste Council constitution FPRs
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) Approval is given to submit funding bids to the Welsh Government Circular Economy Funds FY 2020-21 to support: A - the setting up of a Repair Café and Library of Things at the Council's Re-use Shop. B - the setting up of a Mobile Repair Café. C - the installation of bike repair network in partnership with the Environment Centre D - improvements to repair and re-use through partnership with the private and 3rd Sectors  2) On approval of any of the grant the schemes are added into the councils programme in line with FPR7 and delegated authority given to the Cabinet member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management and director of Place to commit the relevant capital expenditure
<b>Report Author:</b>	Chris Howell
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Roach
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Cabinet with the background regarding a Welsh Government (WG) grant opportunity that could be used to support the Council in diverting waste from landfill, greatly increasing the amount of products repaired and kept in, or put back into, beneficial use.
- 1.2 The WG have sought grant applications to two separate Circular Economy Funds:
- i) Capital and revenue bids for funding to support repair and re-use activities in town centres.
  - ii) Capital bids for projects to help Wales' shift towards a circular economy driving further increases in recycling and decarbonisation.
- 1.3 The first three projects outlined below are relating to the first, capital and revenue, fund above, whilst the last project has been submitted to the second, capital only, fund above.
- 1.4 These bids will not only increase repair and re-use, thereby diverting items from landfill, they will also:
- Engender a repair and re-use ethos both within, and outside of the projects
  - Assist with easing poverty through the Library, repairs, and the provision of low cost pre-loved goods, avoiding the need to buy new
  - Support local commercial, charity, and community organisations through the provision of products for repair/re-use
  - Provide volunteering opportunities
  - Upskill visitors to the Repair Café sessions
  - Expand the Council low emissions fleet

## **2. Project A - Repair Café and Library of Things**

- 2.1 This first project is to insulate and extend the Council's Re-use Shop, Tip Treasures, at Llansamlet to accommodate a Repair Café, a Library of Things, and a textile area. The setting up of these will be done with full support from Repair Café Wales and Bentyg, who have extensive experience in these areas.
- 2.2 A Repair Café is a facility to run periodic sessions where residents can bring along items which need repairing, and a network of volunteers do the repairs, if possible, upskilling the resident at the same time. The idea is to build an ethos of repair and re-use rather than discard and buy new.

- 2.3 A Library of Things is a place where residents can hire everyday items such as diy tools, gardening equipment, household gadgets etc. instead of having to buy and only use a couple of times. The inventory of items are generally items others have discarded, and have been brought back into re-use.
- 2.4 It is intended to employ fashion students to set up and run the textile repair/upcycling and re-use area.
- 2.5 The additional member of staff to run the Library and textile area will be self-funding through the income they will generate.

### **3. Project B – Mobile Repair Café**

- 3.1 This project is to purchase a low emissions hybrid vehicle and toolkits, which will visit locations where there is a volunteer network and demand for Repair Café sessions to be run.
- 3.2 Whilst at the venue, the vehicle will also be used as a mini bring site for items such as small electrical goods, textiles, toys, and batteries, all of which can end up in black bags.
- 3.3 As well as providing recycling information, advice, and equipment, the vehicle could also act as a “Swap Shop” where a resident could bring along one toy, and leave with another donated earlier.
- 3.4 When not being a Mobile Repair Café, the vehicle and driver can be utilised for increased bulky collections to reduce our current waiting times.
- 3.5 The additional member of staff to drive the vehicle, and the vehicle running costs will be self-funding through the income they will generate from bulky collections, and the goods received at the events.

### **4. Project C - Bike Repair Network**

- 4.1 The aim of this project is commence a network of community based bike repair stations. Learning from best practice installations in Wales, the facilities will be located at key community hubs in central Swansea.
- 4.2 The project will be led by the Swansea Environment Centre who will purchase the equipment, engage with host locations for the stations, and manage their upkeep going forward.

### **5. Project D - Improvements to repair and re-use through partnerships**

- 5.1 This project is to significantly increase the amount of bulky furniture, large white electrical goods, carpets, bric a brac, and paints that are repaired and/or re-used.

- 5.2 These materials need to be collected or received in as good a condition as possible, they need to be stored undercover to preserve their good condition, and then made available for repair and re-use through a network of existing commercial, charity, and other community organisations.
- 5.3 The Authority has already received interest from over a dozen interested parties in receiving or collecting items from us for repair/re-use at their outlets.
- 5.4 The bid includes for:
- a low emissions hybrid vehicle to collection and deliver bulky furniture in good condition,
  - the purchase of a yard and storage building to keep large items in a good condition while awaiting viewing and collecting by repair/re-use partners,
  - bric a brac and paint tins containers for each Recycling Centre which will facilitate increased receipt of items, and allow display for local charities and community organisations to view and take what they need,
  - racking for charity which made specific request, to be able to store more bulky furniture from the Council.

## **6. Equality and Engagement Implications**

- 6.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

- 6.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening tool confirms that a full EIA is not required at this stage. We will revisit the assessment if the funding bid is successful.

## 7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 This funding bid is for the provision of Capital and Revenue funding to enable the Authority to provide the necessary infrastructure changes to set up the projects outlined above.

The total sums of funding bid for under these applications are as follows:

Project	Capital Funding	Revenue Funding	Totals
A – Repair Café and Library	£141,600	£82,350	£223,950
B – Mobile Repair Cafe	£83,000	£52,000	£135,000
C – Bike Repair Network	£6,040	£5,154	£11,194
D – Improvements to Repair/Re-use	£199,750	N/A	£199,750
		Total	£569,894

This sum can be broadly broken down as follows:

- Building and yard purchase/improvements £ 218,000
- Vehicles and Charging points £ 116,000
- Fit outs, containers and equipment £ 96,390
- Staffing/promotional costs for set up £ 69,504
- Repair Café Wales/Benthyg Project Management £ 70,000

WG are requiring that the funding be fully spent or committed in the 2020/21 financial year.

The revenue implications of operating the projects going forward will be covered by the incomes and cost avoidance generated by each project.

## 8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council will need to ensure that it complies with any terms and conditions attached to this Welsh Government grant funding.
- 8.2 In light of Welsh Government deadlines the applications have been made subject to Cabinet approval.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:**

- Appendix A Repair Café and Library of Things Funding Bid
- Appendix B Mobile Repair Café Funding Bid
- Appendix C Bike Repair Network Funding Bid
- Appendix D Improvements to repair and re-use through partnerships Funding Bid
- Appendix E EIA Screening Form