

Transport and Environment Committee

10am, Tuesday 17 March 2015

ECOSTARS Edinburgh Fleet Recognition Scheme - Update and Future Proposals

Item number	8.3
Report number	
Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	All

Executive summary

ECOSTARS Edinburgh, the first ECOSTARS fleet recognition scheme in Scotland, was launched in 2012. It has currently 72 member organisations with 4180 vehicles registered. The scheme aims to reduce energy consumption and emissions by commercial and passenger transport fleets, thus supporting improvements in air quality in the City. ECOSTARS members have also reported a range of benefits including reductions in fuel costs. An evaluation study, in 2014, estimated that a 5% reduction in members' fuel use had been achieved through the scheme.

The ECOSTARS Edinburgh project was part-funded until May 2014 by the European Commission's (EU) Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) programme. The scheme continued in 2014/15 with the support of Scottish Government grant funding.

A number of Scottish local authorities have now set up their own ECOSTARS schemes. Potential cost savings could be made through working with other Scottish ECOSTARS schemes by forming regional or national partnerships, proposals for which are under consideration by the Scottish Transport Emissions Partnership (STEP).

Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes [CO10](#), [CO15](#), [CO22](#)

Single Outcome Agreement [SO2](#)

ECOSTARS Edinburgh Fleet Recognition Scheme – Update and Future proposals

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Transport and Environment Committee:

- 1.1 notes progress made by the ECOSTARS Edinburgh fleet recognition scheme since it launched in January 2012;
- 1.2 agrees to continue the ECOSTARS Edinburgh fleet recognition scheme in its present form, for one year, pending the outcome of the feasibility work on national or regional partnership schemes; and
- 1.3 agrees to receive an ECOSTARS Edinburgh fleet recognition scheme progress report within the Council's annual Local Air Quality Management report.

Background

- 2.1 ECOSTARS is a voluntary, free to join, fleet recognition scheme that provides advice on environmental best practice to bus, coach and goods vehicles fleet operators.
- 2.2 The ECOSTARS scheme assesses and provides a rating for each vehicle and the overall standards of operation in a fleet. A star-based system is used to recognise members' existing levels of operational and environmental performance.
- 2.3 ECOSTARS aims to reduce the energy used by commercial and passenger transport fleets by encouraging the increased adoption of fuel efficiency measures such as driver training, reduction in idling and use of telematics. This results in reduced fuel consumption and lower emissions.
- 2.4 The ECOSTARS concept was developed in South Yorkshire by a consortium of four separate local authorities, forming part of a regional air quality strategy.
- 2.5 The City of Edinburgh Council established the ECOSTARS Edinburgh scheme in January 2012, the Council being a founding partner in an ECOSTARS Europe project. The Edinburgh scheme was co-funded for three years by the European Commission's (EC) Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) programme, until the end of May 2014.
- 2.6 The City of Edinburgh Council was the first Scottish local authority to introduce ECOSTARS. The scheme is one of the measures detailed in the Air Quality Action Plan for Edinburgh, providing a unique opportunity for the Council to

engage positively with bus, coach and freight companies to help deliver improvements in air quality.

Main report

- 3.1 Since the launch of ECOSTARS Edinburgh in January 2012, the scheme has grown significantly. It currently has currently 72 member organisations, including the Council fleet, with over 4180 vehicles registered. Members are drawn from the public and private sectors and from the goods and passenger transport industries. Fleet sizes range from a single vehicle up to several hundred.
- 3.2 On joining ECOSTARS, the individual vehicles and operational practices of each member's fleet are assessed and an overall star-rating is derived. Tailored technical advice is then provided in a bespoke route map of recommendations through which improvements can be made.
- 3.3 Scheme members receive ongoing support and are contacted regularly to consider reassessment. Many members have made improvements to their fleets through implementing the advice and actions in their bespoke route maps and several have increased their star-rating by following these voluntary actions. A number of companies which started with five-star ratings, the highest level of rating, have improved still further; demonstrating their commitment to continuous improvement.
- 3.4 Many members promote ECOSTARS through their own websites, e-mail correspondence and stickers on their vehicles. Some have used their membership to evidence commitment to environmental sustainability to potential clients. Members can also publicise their membership and values through the ECOSTARS Edinburgh website profile page.
- 3.5 ECOSTARS has provided the City of Edinburgh Council with a means to engage positively with operators of goods and passenger transport fleets. Newsletters are circulated to scheme members every six months and a number of successful workshops have taken place. Members report that they value such events and communication.
- 3.6 An evaluation study, carried out as part of the ECOSTARS Europe project at the start of 2014, estimated that ECOSTARS Edinburgh members achieved an average 5% reduction in fuel use since joining the scheme. Savings were achieved through the implementation of the actions in the route map of tailored advice that members receive. Such actions might include vehicle substitution, training in eco-driving techniques, installation of fuel management systems, improved vehicle maintenance programmes and introduction of in-cab telematics information systems.
- 3.7 This 5% reduction equates to an average saving of 5.35 tons of fuel per year. In emissions terms, this equates to an annual reduction of 12,063 tons of carbon

dioxide, 123 tons of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) and 4.5 tons of Particulates (PM_{10/2.5}). These are all emissions which Edinburgh is seeking to reduce.

- 3.8 The number of ECOSTARS schemes across the UK has grown substantially in the past three years. There are now 14 schemes in the UK, seven of which are in Scotland. Further growth is anticipated as other local authorities express interest in establishing ECOSTARS schemes for their areas.
- 3.9 The growth in individual schemes has increased the profile and brand recognition of ECOSTARS. The number of members has increased and many companies have decided to link with several schemes at the same time.
- 3.10 Local authority-led ECOSTARS schemes in Scotland to date are in Edinburgh, Falkirk, Dundee, North Lanarkshire, Fife, Glasgow and South Lanarkshire. All contain transport-related air quality management areas.
- 3.11 The Scottish Transport Emissions Partnership (STEP) is a cross-profession Air Quality Technical Group that provides technical support to Scottish organisations working to address poor air quality caused by emissions from road transport. It is chaired by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) with Transport Scotland as its secretariat.
- 3.12 STEP is supportive of ECOSTARS and has set up a working group to investigate the feasibility of establishing a Scottish or regional scheme. With seven individual schemes now operational in Scottish local authority areas, a regional or national scheme could deliver benefits in terms of shared costs of management and joint workshop events. It would also raise the profile and overall attractiveness to fleet operators.
- 3.13 A key element of ECOSTARS success is that it operates to a consistent set of technical standards. Appointment of a single specialist contractor to deliver the technical requirements of each scheme has enabled this consistency to be maintained and is especially important for members who are linked to more than one scheme, or whose operations transcend local or national boundaries. This support is provided by Transport and Travel Research Ltd (TTR). TTR was a principal partner in the ECOSTARS Europe project and currently provides technical support to all UK ECOSTARS schemes, including those in Scotland.
- 3.14 Due to TTR's partnership in the European project, it has established good links with current and prospective ECOSTARS members. As many of these members elect to link with several schemes at the same time, costs for technical support e.g. recruitment, auditing and assessment activities, are spread between the local authorities involved and therefore reduced overall.
- 3.15 A substantial database of potential scheme members has been developed by TTR which has identified a range of companies interested in joining or which could benefit from joining the scheme. There is therefore clear potential for further expansion of the scheme both within Edinburgh and nationally with the attendant benefits in reduced emissions and improved air quality. It is therefore

proposed that the scheme continues to be supported within Edinburgh for a further year, pending the outcome of the feasibility work on national or regional schemes. Costs of the scheme, which relate principally to the provision of technical support and information, are estimated at £25k per annum. This could be contained within existing budgets. Staff time of 0.5FTE supporting the scheme would continue.

- 3.16 The expansion of the scheme across other Local Authorities provides opportunities for cost reduction which will be fully explored e.g. by becoming involved in joint activities, such as member workshops, with other nearby ECOSTARS schemes such as Falkirk, Fife, or other city based schemes in Glasgow and Dundee.
- 3.17 If approved, annual reports on progress with the Edinburgh scheme will be provided within the Council's annual Local Air Quality Management report.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Additional recruitment to the Edinburgh ECOSTARS fleet recognition scheme of up to 10 new member fleet organisations per year.
- 4.2 All existing members will be contacted on a minimum annual basis to consider progress and be offered further advice on fleet efficiency improvements.
- 4.3 Members will be provided with regular newsletters and specialised workshops through which they may identify ideas for further improvement and share good practice.
- 4.4 Members continue to effect improvements to their fleet and operational practices in line with their ratings ambitions and efficiency route maps.
- 4.5 Through scheme membership, there will continue to be reductions in emissions of carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides (NOx) and Particulate Matter (PM_{10/2.5}) from the commercial vehicle fleet operating in Edinburgh.

Financial impact

- 5.1 ECOSTARS Edinburgh was established with a budget of €125k as part of an IEE project. Actions up to 31 May 2014 were part funded by a €95k European Union contribution. The remaining costs were contained within existing budgets.
- 5.2 Specialist technical support costs associated with continuation of the scheme until the end of March 2015, will be met in part from a Scottish Government Action Plan grant (£12k) and the remainder contained within existing budgets. These costs will amount to no more than £25k.
- 5.3 The cost of continuing the scheme in 2015/16 would principally be the annual cost of external specialist technical support which will not exceed £25k. An application will be made to Scottish Government Action Plan grant for all or part of this amount and development support will continue to be provided by existing Council staff.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 If the recommendations are not accepted there is a higher risk that parts of Edinburgh will continue to exceed European Union and UK air quality regulatory standards. It is considered that there are no other known risk, policy, compliance or governance impacts arising from this report.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 This report proposes no change to current policies or procedures and as such a full impact assessment is not required.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered and the outcomes are summarised below:
- Although the main reason for participation in the ECOSTARS Edinburgh project relates to the potential benefits for local air quality, the scheme aims to reduce fuel consumption by goods and passenger vehicle fleets and therefore to reduce carbon emissions.
 - The need to build resilience to climate change impacts is not relevant to the proposals in this report because the proposals will not impact on resilience.
 - The proposals in this report will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh because the scheme acts to reduce transport related emissions in the city and through ECOSTARS, local businesses can gain access to free advice on how to improve the operational and environmental efficiency of their vehicle fleets.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 The ECOSTARS Edinburgh fleet recognition scheme offers a means by which the City of Edinburgh Council can engage on a voluntary basis with owners and operators of freight and passenger transport fleets operating in the Council area. ECOSTARS Edinburgh is contained in the Council's existing Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) which is presently under revision. Should ECOSTARS continue to be included in the revised draft Air Quality Action Plan it will form part of the formal public consultation process.

Background reading/external references

www.ecostars-edinburgh.org

www.ecostars-europe.eu

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Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes

[CO10](#) - Improved health and reduced inequalities

[CO15](#) - The public is protected

[CO22](#) - Moving efficiently – Edinburgh has a transport system that improves connectivity and is green, healthy and accessible

Single Outcome Agreement

[SO2](#) - Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health.

Appendices

N/A