

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

25 January 2011

Subject: Energy, Change and Opportunity (ECO) Strategy

Cabinet Member: Councillor Toby Sturgis – Waste, Property and Environment

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary

This report sets out the Council's first strategy to tackle energy resilience and the effects of climate change. This follows the report to Cabinet in June 2010 which highlighted the Council's responsibilities relating to climate change.

Proposals

That Cabinet:

- (i) approves the framework Energy, Change and Opportunity (ECO) Strategy set out in **Appendix 1** of the report.
- (ii) agrees that the Climate Change Board should oversee the delivery of the Strategy and be renamed the Energy, Change and Opportunity (ECO) Board.
- (iii) agrees that the ECO Board should be responsible for approving and monitoring delivery against the following Action Plans to be developed during 2011 and 2012 under the framework Strategy.
 - (a) Carbon Management Plan for the Council's emissions
 - (b) Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Wiltshire
 - (c) Low Carbon Transition Plan for Wiltshire
 - (d) Renewable Energy Action Plan for Wiltshire

Reasons for Proposals

- (i) Given the wide range of responsibilities that local authorities have relating to climate change, it is necessary to have a robust framework for discharging these responsibilities in the form of a strategy.

- (ii) The Climate Change Board was established in July 2009 with the aim of overseeing the Council's Climate Change work programme. It is well placed to monitor progress as it is chaired by the Cabinet Member for the Environment and has representation from a corporate director and service directors across the Council.
- (iii) Action plans will be developed to address the areas of responsibility that are not currently covered through existing Council plans and strategies.

Mark Boden
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Wiltshire Council

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Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out the Council's first strategy to address energy resilience and the effects of climate change following the report to Cabinet in June 2010 which highlighted the Council's responsibilities relating to climate change and carbon reduction.

Background

2. In May 2009, the Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on climate change. Subsequent to a motion and debate at Full Council in September 2009, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to tackling the causes and effects of climate change and signed up to the 10:10 campaign.
3. Cabinet agreed funding for both a Climate Change team and a carbon reduction capital programme in the 2010/11 budget in recognition of this new and critical area of work for local government.
4. The Climate Change Board was established in July 2009 with the aim of overseeing the Council's Climate Change work programme.

Main Considerations for the Council

5. Local authorities have two main areas of responsibility relating to climate change and energy resilience:
 - (i) to reduce energy demand and carbon emissions for the local authority area as a whole, and to facilitate low carbon energy production. This is known as climate change mitigation.
 - (ii) to prepare the Council and the county as a whole for the effects of unavoidable climate change. This is known as climate change adaptation.
6. The scope of the draft strategy includes both council services and Wiltshire as a whole in relation to those aspects of Wiltshire life that the Council can

influence (e.g. planning, transport, flood management, community engagement).

7. The Strategy sets out:
 - Where we are now
 - Where we want to get to
 - Our general approach for how we are going to get there.
8. The Strategy, as set out at **Appendix 1**, is a framework document which will be linked to related council strategies to ensure climate change objectives are embedded across the entire organisation. It will be supplemented by detailed action plans to set out more specifically how we are going to deliver our climate change ambitions. As this is the first time that an ECO Strategy has been prepared, it is expected that the Strategy will be reviewed and refined as further work is carried out on the action plans.
9. As a minimum, we will produce the following four action plans by the end of 2012:
 - Carbon Management Plan for the Council's emissions
 - Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Wiltshire
 - Low Carbon Transition Plan for Wiltshire
 - Renewable Energy Action Plan for Wiltshire
10. The Council worked with the Carbon Trust during 2009/10 to develop a Carbon Management Plan. A draft plan was considered by the Climate Change Board in March 2010. The Board considered that accurate carbon emissions data for the first year of the Council's operations needed to be included before the plan could be adopted and accurate targets set. The plan is therefore being updated with the baseline data for 2009/10 and an updated Carbon Management Plan is due to be considered by the Board in January 2011.
11. Work on the Climate Change Adaptation Plan is currently on-going and the Council will have a final action plan in place by the end of March 2011.
12. The Council is working with the Energy Saving Trust (EST) through the 'one to one' programme on a Low Carbon Transition Plan for the county.
13. The Council has commissioned a climate change and renewable energy evidence base study. This is designed to principally fulfil the requirements of the Climate Change Supplement to PPS 1 or its successor. The study is collecting data on current and future energy use in the county; assessing the supply of low carbon and zero carbon sources of energy; and making policy and target recommendations for incorporating in the Local Development Framework. This study will inform the development of a Renewable Energy Action Plan for Wiltshire.
14. The ECO Strategy has been considered in draft form by the Environment Select Committee (7 September 2010), the Climate Change Board (20 September 2010) and the Wiltshire Environmental Alliance (30 September

2010). The version of the Strategy in **Appendix 1** takes into account comments received during this period of consultation.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

15. Implementation of the Strategy will have a positive impact on the environment as it aims to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy resilience and prepare for climate change.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

16. There are no negative impacts from the Council's climate change programme.
17. Some of the positive impacts are as follows:
- The Council's work to assess service delivery risks from future climate change will benefit vulnerable residents who are often the first to be affected by extreme weather events (e.g. flooding and heatwaves).
 - The move to low carbon housing across the county will benefit all residents, but particularly those at risk of fuel poverty as energy efficient homes are cheaper to run.
 - Community climate change projects will be developed in an inclusive manner, to reach out to those groups that are not usually involved in local environmental work.

Risk Assessment

18. Meeting the Council's obligations in relation to climate change requires the delivery of a complex programme of work which has a range of risks attached to it:
19. Organisational buy-in:
- Resistance to behaviour and policy changes required for successful carbon reduction.
20. Financial:
- Insufficient investment available for energy efficiency measures to ensure achievement of the Council's carbon reduction target, meaning that efficiencies in energy and transport costs (total spend £14 million in 2009/10) are not realised.
 - The Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) has recently been amended. The costs to the Council for 2011/12 carbon emissions are projected to be £600,000 (payable retrospectively in June 2012). Future costs will depend on carbon emissions and the price of carbon, which is expected to rise year on year.

21. Legal:

- Failure to demonstrate compliance with environmental legislation if an environmental management system is not implemented in high risk areas.

22. Service delivery:

- Climate change impacts in Wiltshire (e.g. increasing temperatures and flooding) will have an impact on the Council's ability to deliver services and could adversely affect Wiltshire residents unless appropriate measures are put in place.

23. Reputation:

- Residents expect the Council to lead by example in reducing carbon emissions and preparing for unavoidable climate change. The November 2007 People's Voice Survey responses show that panellists want Wiltshire Council to take the lead in addressing climate change and support them individually to tackle climate change.
- The Wiltshire Assembly has identified climate change as being one of three top priorities to be addressed.
- The Council will be placed in a national league table alongside all CRC participants to show how well it is managing its carbon emissions year on year relative to others.

Financial Implications

25. In the 2010/11 revenue budget resource was put in to fund a new climate change team, which includes dedicated staff resources for implementing the council's Carbon Management Plan, developing the county's carbon reduction strategy, leading on climate change adaptation work, and a post for working with schools.

The council's business plan will detail the level of resource available to meet the strategy in 2011/12 and the future. This will be approved as part of the budget setting process and will also take into account any changes in the level of resource for the climate change team.

In addition assumptions have been made within the 2011/12 budget, and over the life of the business plan, to cover the anticipated levy on the council under the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC).

26. The current approved Capital Programme contains £0.5 m per annum to fund energy efficiency projects in 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13. In addition, a 0% loan totalling £0.7m has been obtained from Salix finance for spending in 2010/11.
27. The scale of investment required to reach the target reduction of 11,823 tonnes CO₂ by 2013/14 is much greater than the resources currently

available. A significant proportion of the savings could be achieved by behaviour change, which is the lowest cost method of reducing the council's carbon footprint but will require significant cooperation from staff and schools in particular. A Green Champions network has been established to take this forward. The council's Workplace Transformation Programme is expected to save around 3,800 tonnes CO₂ by 2014 through the rationalisation and refurbishment of buildings.

28. Any further reductions in the council's carbon footprint can only be achieved through investment in energy efficiency measures. To give an order of magnitude, the Carbon Trust have estimated that in order to save 1,500 tonnes of carbon across 25 council sites an investment of £1.2m will be required. If this is factored up, we can assume that an investment of approximately £5m would be required over the next 4 years in order to achieve half our target of 11,823 tonnes of CO₂ through energy efficiency projects.

Legal Implications

33. Section 1.5 of the Strategy sets out the legal and policy framework for the Council's climate change obligations. The report to Cabinet dated 22 June 2010 set these out in more detail.

Options Considered

34. Doing nothing is not an option as the Council is obliged to comply with legal requirements relating to the environment and climate change.

Conclusions

35. Through the implementation of the ECO Strategy and its associated action plans, the Council will have a comprehensive programme to ensure it meets its climate change responsibilities and addresses the issue of energy resilience in Wiltshire.

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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

- Reports to Environmental Select Committee, November 2009, March 2010 and September 2010
- Wiltshire Council Climate Change Board minutes
- Draft Carbon Management Plan for Wiltshire Council (March 2010)
- Report on Level 1 for N1 188 Climate Change Adaptation Plan (May 2010)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Energy, Change and Opportunity (ECO) Strategy