

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**1<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2007**

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**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL  
CARBON MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To inform Members of progress towards implementation of the County Council Carbon Management Programme approved by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Waste, August 2006.

**Background**

2. In August 2006 the Cabinet Member for Planning and Waste approved the adoption of a Carbon Management Programme for the County Council. The purpose of the programme was to set targets for a reduced 'carbon footprint' for the authority based on a study conducted in association with the Carbon Trust.
3. The programme set clear targets for reducing carbon emissions, highlighting the associated issues and outlining a set of proposed actions required to achieve those targets.
4. It was agreed that progress would be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

**Main Considerations for the Council**

5. The implementation of the Carbon Management Programme demonstrates a commitment to mitigate the Council's contribution to global warming and climate change. The successful implementation of a corporately supported carbon management programme is viewed as best practice in both the public and private sectors. This will be a growing area of work under One Council as the organisation and the asset management function expands.
6. Targets from the Carbon Management Programme now appear in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the corporate plan. It is important that the Council shows leadership in this area, particularly as the Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Act 2006 includes a duty on councils to "have regard" to sustainable energy when "exercising their functions" from August 2007.

**Progress**

7. The Carbon Management Programme suggested three key targets based on a 2004-5 baseline:
  - (i) A reduction in carbon emissions from existing building stock (non-schools) by 10% by 2010.

- (ii) A reduction in carbon emissions from County Highway Depot fuel by 15% by 2010.
  - (iii) A reduction in carbon emissions from staff business travel by 10% by 2010.
8. Attached at **Appendix 1** is a brief overview of carbon figures relating to each of the three targets above. **Appendix 2** is a table outlining the 2006-07 and ongoing action points, complete with, target date and current implementation status.
  9. So far results for the building energy saving target are positive. The baseline figure for this target has been altered to 2005-6 owing to the upgrade to an improved electronic monitoring system. Overall results show a reduction in carbon emissions from non-school buildings by 6.1% between 2005-6 and 2006-7. The Council now has a building energy policy in place. Staff in the Property Services Section have worked very hard to ensure that all staff and Property Managers are more aware of energy usage. The Property Section has also continued to manage the energy conservation fund and to improve building energy efficiency. Hopefully, with the co-operation of all staff, this encouraging downward trend will continue.
  10. Results for the Business mileage project are also positive. Overall results show a reduction in miles claimed in 2006-07 of 6.7% based on a 2004-05 baseline. There has been major organisational change since establishing the 2004-05 baseline. However, more in-depth analysis can be conducted to demonstrate the background to the improvements. Gathering this information would involve examining individual business units and collecting data on budgets, staffing levels and service delivery. Ways of Working (WoW) programme and the new Corporate Business Travel Project should continue to have a positive impact on carbon reduction from business mileage over the next few years.
  11. Carbon emissions from the fuel used from highway depots remain fairly constant. They do of course vary with the level of service delivery. However, negotiations on the purchase biodiesel for sites across the County are now underway. It is hoped that biodiesel will be supplied to all depots by April 2008. Biodiesel fuel will result in a 5% drop in carbon emissions from the use of diesel. The 'bio' element being derived from waste cooking oil and by products from the vegetable oil industry. Some of the fuel is used by County Council contractors who are encouraged to consider ways of reducing mileage and fuel use whilst improving service provision. Work is underway to optimise gritting routes and Highway Managers are considering fuel efficiency in their vehicle replacement strategy.
  12. Energy usage is also now a key consideration in the new build schools programme. This affects not only the George Ward project but also the primary school new-build programme. In both areas of work properties are being constructed to a BREEAM 'very-good' standard. This covers a wide range of environmental/sustainability good practice standards. Work is also underway to consider costs and benefits of carbon minimisation, the inclusion of renewable energy technologies in new-build properties and also rainwater harvesting. Property staff will be reviewing options within the necessary resource constraints.
  13. It should also be noted that if the new Wiltshire Council uses over 6,000 MWH of electricity from half-hourly metered (large) sites (currently the County Council uses 3,000 MWH) then it will be included in the new national Carbon Reduction Commitment programme. The Council will be required to purchase carbon allowances based on predicted use and will be part of a carbon trading programme. This scheme is currently under consultation but is very likely to go ahead and may require increased administrative resources in this area.

14. Officers will continue to maintain contacts at the Carbon Trust, sharing best practice with other authorities, giving updates and attending alumni events. A recent letter from the Carbon Trust states that Wiltshire's Carbon Management Programme is "an excellent example".
15. The Audit Commission has stated that it will be looking at the Carbon Footprint of the Council from 2008.

### **Areas for Improvement**

16. Progress to date has been good, with actions undertaken towards achieving each of the carbon management objectives within the strategy. In the future the Council may wish to consider expanding the programme to cover a wider scope, and to review current targets. It may be possible to include wider issues which have an effect, not just on the direct carbon footprint of the organisation, but the Council's influence on the carbon footprint of the county, for example through transport and land use planning policy and through community planning.
17. It is proposed that the Council signs the Nottingham Declaration (Copy attached at **Appendix 3**). This will enable the Council to take the carbon management programme to the next stage by reviewing the scope of the present work. Signing the Nottingham Declaration will also demonstrate that the Council acknowledges that the scientific evidence confirms that climate change is occurring and that the Council is committed to looking at new ways to mitigate its own carbon emission, whilst also preparing an adaptation strategy. Thirty local authorities in the South West have already signed the Nottingham Declaration, including Kennet, North Wiltshire and Salisbury District Councils.
18. There is one proposed new action for the current programme. This is to carry out a pilot street-lighting project within a chosen new development in the County. This project will look at new technology available to minimise energy usage from highway lighting, and will trial the most appropriate carbon-saving option.

### **Environmental Impact of the Proposal**

19. Reducing the Carbon Footprint of the authority is a key goal within the Council's overall environmental management programme. Carbon emissions are a key contributor to global warming and climate change and the Government is looking to Councils to show leadership in this area.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

20. Any carbon management initiatives or projects will take into account diversity and equality issues at an early stage.

### **Risk Assessment**

21. There is a certain level of long-term strategic risk involved in reliance on carbon based energy. There is an increasing public and staff interest in climate change and there is an organisational risk in not responding.

### **Financial Implications**

22. Minimising energy use will assist with financial efficiency. Financial savings may not always be apparent owing to changing services and building functions.

### **Options Considered**

23. Individual carbon-reduction projects will be the subject of an appropriate options appraisal.

### **Reasons for Proposal**

24. To continue to monitor and improve the Carbon Management Programme to contribute effectively towards the Council's strategic goals and objectives.

### **Proposal**

25. That:-
- (i) The contents of the report be noted.
  - (ii) Officers report back in one year on key indicators.
  - (iii) The continued implementation of the Carbon Management Programme be supported.
  - (iv) The Council be recommended to sign the Nottingham Declaration.

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

None