

## **Appendix 1 – Information on the council’s approach to addressing climate change**

1. A report to support councillors in identifying how the climate change motions supported at the Full Council meeting could be addressed; what resources are required and how the work on the actions as set out in the motions could be initiated.

### **Background**

2. To meet the challenge of climate change in Wiltshire, the Council established an Energy Change and opportunity (ECO) Service based in Economic Development & Planning when the Council was established in 2009.
3. The Council’s Energy Change and Opportunity (“ECO”) strategy, set out the Council’s ambition to reduce its carbon emissions and lead the county’s low carbon transition, and prepare for unavoidable climate change.
4. The Strategy was approved by Cabinet in January 2011, renaming the Climate Change Board to ECO Board and agreeing that it should oversee the delivery of the Strategy. In order to deliver the ECO Strategy, numerous Action Plans and Strategies were produced (listed below) and a budget was allocated.
  - Climate Change Adaptation Plan, Approved by ECO Board 2011
  - Carbon Management Plan, Approved by ECO Board 2013
  - Climate Local Initiative, Signed by Cabinet Member 2014
  - Energy Resilience Plan, Approved by ECO Board 2015
  - Environmental Policy, Signed by Cabinet Member 2015
  - WiltsCAN Wiltshire Declaration on Climate Change, Signed by Cabinet Member 2015
  - Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report, Published 2016
  - Climate Change Adaptation Plan Revision, Approved by ECO Board 2016
5. In addition, Wiltshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 identifies addressing climate change as a key strategic objective; including policies which will deliver sustainable growth, the development of resilient communities, a network of green infrastructure, more sustainable transport and a reduction in the risk of flooding.
6. Also, like other authorities across England, Wiltshire Council is a signatory of the Climate Local Initiative the successor to the Nottingham Declaration and 10:10 campaign. The initiative commits the Council to continuing to identify ways of saving money on energy bills, reduce carbon emissions, reduce flood risks and managing the impacts of extreme weather.
7. This activity, and the responsibility for future planned activity, was embedded in the processes and policies of a range of directorates to take forward and the ECO service was disbanded in 2015.

8. There was an expectation that the action plans approved by the ECO Board are being taken forward and reviewed periodically by the directorates as part of their implementation.
9. In simple terms, the approach adopted by the Council was to have a dedicated team focussed on coordinating three broad areas of action.
  - The Council's own carbon emissions (examples)
    - The Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) scheme trading
    - Static emissions (buildings and streetlights)
    - Fleet emissions (Electric fleet cars, low emission vehicle replacement)
    - Projects e.g. CHP five rivers and biomass for schools
  - Community engagement
    - Insulation schemes
    - Awareness raising
    - Business engagement and (limited) support
  - Climate Change adaptation
    - Planning Policy
    - Flood risk
10. This team was disbanded in 2015 and the work embedded into those directorates which had been engaged in the strategy/action plans produced. There is periodic monitoring of the work through an annual ECO Board meeting.

### **Requirement from Council's motions**

11. In terms of the motions approved by Council, actions can be broken down into broad headings (2nd motion in *italics*).

#### **Acknowledgement of issue:**

- Acknowledge that there is a 'Climate Emergency'.
- *Wiltshire Council acknowledges the public concern in respect of the environment and global warming and proposes that Wiltshire Council implement the following this year.*

#### **Outcome to be achieved:**

- Seek to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

#### **Reporting Mechanism:**

- *To refer to the Leader to consider the establishment of a portfolio holder or cabinet member with responsibility for environmental issues.*
- Overview and Scrutiny to set up a task group of the Environment Select Committee to develop recommendations and a plan to achieve this pledge along with undertaking a carbon / renewables audit.
- *Agree parameters with Overview and Scrutiny that represent the council impact on the environment and can be accurately reported to council on a regular period*

- Report to Full Council on a six-monthly basis with the actions the Council is taking and will take to address this emergency and reporting these against the Carbon / Renewables Baseline audit.

### **Wider Partnership working and engagement with Government**

- Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible.
- *Request that any air pollution responsibilities that are passed to Wiltshire Council are fully funded by central government.*
- Work with other local government authorities (both within the UK and internationally) to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5°C.
- Continue to work with partners in the private sector and civil society across the County and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans.

### **Actions Required:**

- Undertake a carbon / renewables audit.
- *Report on a regular period, (to potentially include):*
  - a. Carbon generation/use by the council.*
  - b. Energy use year-on-year by the council.*
  - c. Reports on the use of vehicles by the council in respect of their environmental impact.*
  - d. Report on the use of the Council's car share system particularly in respect of methods to increase its use.*
  - e. Monitor and report on air quality across the county to inform future decision.*
  - f. Monitor and report on any major development and technology used for the management of waste in Wiltshire to report on any local impact.*
- *Investigate and report on the viability of purchasing our power from "Green Suppliers".*
- *Investigate the adoption of building and planning recommendations to allow for electric charging points on new build property to facilitate future use of electric vehicles.*
- *Investigate the potential adoption of renewable energy generation for Council property*
- *Investigate the adoption of building and planning recommendations to allow for sustainable systems to be compulsory on new build property.*
- *Investigate the commercial viability of installing electric car chargers across Wiltshire to encourage and enable the use of electric vehicles in Wiltshire.*
- *To enhance the current air quality strategy and request that any air pollution responsibilities that are passed to Wiltshire Council are fully funded by central government.*
- *Instigate a Green Campaign to support and stimulate the generation of sustainable ideas across Wiltshire.*

12. In terms of the Actions identified in the motion, some are partially undertaken by the Council at the moment; for example, through the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC), the Council reports on and buys allowances for Building and Street light emissions as well as fleet. Many others could be undertaken if the Council had the capacity to monitor or implement upgrades in fleet etc and others would require baselines and monitoring systems to be established and new policy frameworks particularly linked to the refresh of the local plan (see Tracy Carter's useful notes attached). Finally, and particularly in relation to achieving/seeking carbon neutrality for Wiltshire (to be defined), would require a more commercial approach, particularly when considering carbon offsetting, or Govt. action to achieve, particularly in relation to imposition of regulation and cost on the private sector (for example Local Plan Policies).

### **Potential approach**

13. In terms of future commitment by the council, there are two broad strands of activity that should be considered. One focuses on existing areas of influence (much like the previous ECO team activity) and the second a more specific and dedicated 'investment' approach.

#### *Focus on existing areas of influence*

14. Similar to the previous position, a centralised team is funded and resourced to influence other parts of the council and run initiatives. Learning from our previous experience, the recommendation would be to establish a team with a business partner model, which after the baselining and audit work, would focus on delivering the Council's commitment through initiatives identified within services that give greatest ROI. This would be resourced from a central pot (or capitalised) with a corporate reporting mechanism. The Council could dedicate capital/ revenue funding into which services can bid based on a business case approach. The service could work through Area Boards and the Public Service Board to influence and support activities in the community and partner organisations and potentially a proportion of community area funding could be aligned to carbon reduction initiatives.

15. **Example:** Highways bid for capital, based on business case for capital to fund LED lamp roll out.

#### *Investment approach*

16. While the council would still deal with its own emissions, its approach to carbon management and influence, through policy and community/partnership-working, could also deal with larger more strategic business cases achieving more significant inroads to making Wiltshire carbon neutral within the next 11 years. An investment approach would enable the council to invest in commercial ventures related to energy / renewables and potentially set targets focused on, for example 'XXMW installed RE capacity' with the Council using its leverage/borrowing powers. The focus could be on

the installation of renewables, direct wire/ power purchase agreements with third parties, establishment of a local energy company, land purchase/tree planting offset schemes. The main consideration would be the management of risk which would suggest the establishment of an arm's-length subsidiary - the energy equivalent of the housing company.

17. **Example:** Council create an arm's length company to insulate homes, or install a district heating system.

### **Suggested next steps:**

#### **0-6 months**

- Establish working group drawing experienced staff from across the organisation.
- Work with O&S to set up a task group of the Environment Select Committee to develop recommendations and a plan.
- Define and undertake a carbon / renewables audit, refresh ECO strategy.
- Refresh ECO Board to oversee programme of work.
- Establish a small team to co-ordinate and deliver programme of work. (6-8 staff with business partner approach circa £300-400K staff costs + revenue pot £500K).
- Produce baseline report and action plan.

#### **6-12 months**

- Develop relevant suite of indicators reported to business intelligence hub.
- Embed actions within Service Plans across relevant directorates.
- Work with other LAs which have signed up to similar climate change initiatives.
- Investigate potential investment approach through arm's length company

