

APPENDIX H

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 8 JULY 2008

Title:

CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY – PROGRESS REPORT

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr J R Sandy]
[Wards Affected: All]**

Summary and purpose:

The purpose of this progress report is to give an update on the work in progress to develop of a Climate Change Strategy for Waverley. It contains a proposal to work in partnership with World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and identifies the 'Big Issue' areas. A Corporate Energy Use Plan and a Corporate Travel Plan are also proposed for Waverley Council. Finally, an update on implementation of the Carbon Reduction Management Action Plan is also included.

Environmental implications:

Climate change is the greatest environmental challenge facing the world today. Almost all human activities have an impact on it. Tackling climate change is a very significant challenge.

Social / community implications:

Climate change has direct effects on humans. Vulnerable populations are more likely to be affected by the changing climate. Health can be affected with rising temperatures. Exposing people to extreme weather phenomena, such as floods, is also a great risk. Cost of living is significantly affected and more people are pushed into fuel poverty as fuel prices escalate.

E-Government implications:

Local authorities have the ability to influence their communities and also have a duty to actively promote the need to take action on climate change. General information will continue to be available on the Waverley website and updated regularly.

Resource and legal implications:

Staff time will be required to plan and deliver the strategy. The Sustainability Co-ordinator will lead the project and Officer time from various relevant departments within Waverley will also be required. A partnership with WWF will assist greatly with the progress of the strategy. No legal implications have been identified.

The need for a Climate Change Strategy

1. Climate change is the greatest environmental challenge facing the world today. Rising global temperatures will bring changes in weather patterns, rising sea levels and increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather. There is very strong scientific evidence that humans are changing the climate with their actions, through emissions of green house gases like carbon dioxide and methane.
2. Tackling climate change is now very high on national and international agendas. Local authorities have the ability to influence their communities and also have a duty to actively promote the need to take action on climate change by reducing CO2 emissions.
3. Whereas Waverley does have a Climate Change Action Plan, this was produced in 2006 and is in need of a revision. It is lacking specific targets and timescales for any actions and the proposed Climate Change Strategy is aiming to address that.

Further Key Drivers

- Corporate Plan - Waverley's Corporate Plan 2008-11 states that it will be our priority to "Contribute to tackling climate change by ... achieving year-on-year improvements in the Council's carbon footprint from April 2008." This plan should be the driver for our actions.
- LAA Targets – The LAA targets now adopted by Surrey CC, under the environment theme, include NI 186 Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in LA area. Surrey has agreed a Co2 reduction target in respect of NI186 of 10% over the next three years, which comprises of 7% because of national initiatives and 3% from local initiatives.
- Nottingham Declaration - The Nottingham Declaration is a voluntary commitment for local authorities to act on Climate Change. Waverley made the commitment by signing the declaration in June 2006.
- Climate Change Bill - The UK Government published a draft Climate Change Bill in March 2007. The Bill provides framework for reducing CO2 emissions and is currently progressing through Parliament. This indicates Government's commitment to demonstrate strong leadership in tackling climate change.

Four elements of the Bill:

- Setting statutory targets and introducing carbon budgeting
- Establish a Committee on Climate Change that will manage the carbon economy.
- Enabling powers to address climate change.
- Reporting requirements

- National indicators - From April 2008 the new National Indicators 185,186, 187,188 have come into force and we are required to perform, monitor and report on a range of areas such as reducing CO2 emissions, tackling fuel poverty and adapting to climate change, to mention a few.
4. Whilst the Government is drawing up new legislation and introducing a new local government performance framework, it is apparent that Waverley, as a local authority, needs a new strategic plan to deliver and monitor our efforts to reduce the negative effect that our actions have on the environment. Our role as a community leader to act on climate change and its effects is more important now than ever before.

Community Leadership

5. The approach outlined in this report centres on the local actions Waverley can itself take as a Council to tackle climate change. Success in these areas will enable Waverley to promote and raise awareness about similar actions that can be taken by local residents, local businesses and the contractors the Council deals with. As well as promoting the importance of tackling climate change, Waverley will also be able to demonstrate that it makes sound financial sense to use fuel and other resources more wisely.

Possibilities for working with WWF

6. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organisation that addresses issues from the survival of species and habitats to climate change, sustainable business and environmental education. As it happens their head office is based in Godalming and the opportunity of working together and taking advantage of their expertise is however being actively explored.
7. Initial conversations have taken place with Rod Sterne, Head of Cities and Communities at WWF, on how we might work together to produce a Climate Change Strategy for Waverley, which could form a blueprint for the other District Councils in England and Wales. We would be looking to use their organisational expertise to develop a useful document that will help us plan and deliver our climate change targets.

Big issues

8. Almost all aspects of our lives have some impact on climate change, primarily negative, by emitting CO2 into the atmosphere. CO2 is one of the most powerful greenhouse gases and reducing the amount we produce is the central objective. At this stage we would be concentrating on the areas that have the bigger impact and these are the following:
- **Energy** – As a local authority we ought to be demonstrating that we have adopted and are using the energy hierarchy (see Annexe 1) as a way of achieving energy consumption reduction and CO2 savings. Fuel poverty is increasingly becoming a major issue with fuel prices growing

rapidly. It is important to ensure that we are doing what we can to minimise the number of people being affected.

- **Transport** – Has been described as “the worst performing sector in the UK” when it comes to dealing with CO₂ emissions. By government measures of direct emissions it is the only sector of the economy in which emissions have been rising consistently since 1990, and there is no indication that this is about to change.¹

Waverley Council itself has approximately 350 essential, casual and lease car users. Staff also commute to and from work. The impact of the associated journeys can be significant not just in terms of climate change but also air quality.

- **Waste** – It is vital to minimize waste going to landfill as part of our battle against dangerous climate change. In addition, vehicle movements associated with waste and recycling collection has an impact on Waverley's carbon footprint. Waverley collected and landfilled 26,006 tonnes of waste in 2006/07. Recycling in the UK already saves the equivalent in greenhouse gas emissions of taking 3.5 million cars off our roads². Methane generated by waste ending up in landfill, is a very powerful greenhouse gas – 21 times more powerful than CO₂.

- **Housing** – makes up over a third of the carbon footprint in the majority of local authority areas. Across the UK, 20% of local authorities have a Carbon Footprint for housing that exceeds four tonnes per capita³. Within Waverley Borough there are approximately 50,000 households, of which about 5,000 are managed by the Council. It is clear that we can have some influence on the environmental performance of those properties we own.

- **Procurement** – When purchasing goods and services it is important to make a link to how that will impact climate change. Where the goods are sourced and what happens to them after they have reached the end of their life can have significant effect on the environment. It is important to have clear environmental priorities when procuring and setting the example by sending the clear message of sustainable procurement.

Waverley does not yet have a sustainable procurement policy, other than a reference to sustainability within the Council's overall procurement strategy.

- **Adapting to Climate Change** – The climate is changing and we need to be preparing to deal with whatever these changes might bring. Adaptation is about addressing the impact of the inevitable changing climate and taking actions to be able to cope. Adaptation is as

¹ The Right Climate for Change, WWF-UK/SEI, 2007

² Defra, <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/about/index.htm>

³ The Right Climate for Change, WWF-UK/SEI, 2007

significant as mitigation, which refers to prevention of man-made cause of climate change.

Waverley, as a local authority should aim to undertake a thorough risk assessment and develop an action plan on how to address those risks. Furthermore, new national indicator NI 188 requires local authorities to report progress on assessing and managing climate risks and opportunities.

Making a start

9. WWF will not be in a position to start working with us until the autumn but a lot of good work has already started in planning actions that will help get our house in order. It is significant to do this prior to any major work with the wider community. The Climate Change Officers Group has identified areas that, they consider, should be a priority to Waverley. The two themes that are top of the priority list are energy and transport. It is important to demonstrate that Waverley is leading by example and is taking actions towards reducing the CO2 we produce as a result of our activities. The Climate Change Officers Group is working hard on investigating actions to support our duty as a local authority. It is becoming more and more important that key Waverley Officers continue to work jointly and communicate to achieve our corporate targets with regard to climate change.
10. A Corporate Energy Use Plan for Waverley Council has now been developed highlighting the need to have a guide on how to use energy resources more efficiently and deliver cost savings at the same time. Some work on an action plan has already started by the Climate Change Officers Group. The Corporate Energy Use Plan and Action Plan are attached as Annexe 1 to this report.
11. A proposed Corporate Transport Plan is attached as Annexe 2. Green Travel Week (19-23 May) was an opportunity to raise the awareness and the profile of green travel and the benefits of choosing more environmentally friendly modes of transport. Not just environment benefits but also cost savings especially with fuel prices increasing persistently. In addition, the Climate Change Group is currently investigating some further proposals that could become part of further activities in the Corporate Transport Plan.

Carbon Reduction Management Programme (CRMP)

12. Waverley participated in the Energy Saving Trust's Carbon Reduction Management Programme in 2007, from which a report was produced, which recommended prioritised actions, within different areas of service. Producing an overarching Climate Change Strategy was amongst the key recommendations. The Strategy will make reference to existing strategies, incorporate social and private housing as well as the council's own estate and the wider community. Annexe 3 gives a progress report on a number of actions, a year after the production of the report.

Reinvestment of Savings

13. It is indicated within both the Corporate Energy Use Plan and the CRMP Action Plan that any financial savings achieved as a result of undertaking energy saving measures could be identified and reserved for the purpose of carrying out further energy saving measures.
14. This is an approach that a number of local authorities have successfully taken to enable them to meet the expense of energy efficiency measures. This approach would allow Waverley to invest in certain measures while achieving its corporate commitments and value for money targets.
15. In both the Corporate Energy Use Plan and the Corporate Transport Plan, expenditure and savings have been identified wherever possible. The possibilities for hypothecating all or part savings resulting from Climate Change Plans and re investing the cash in new initiatives relating to the Climate Change agenda needs to be discussed by Waverley in due course.

Conclusion

16. Waverley is in need of a corporate, over-arching document that will give us direction and guidance to prioritise the actions need to be taken to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. A Climate Change Strategy will be an action plan for us to follow and enable Waverley to lead the community, while simultaneously achieving our corporate targets and duties.
17. There is urgent need to recognise that a Climate Change Strategy should bring together Officers throughout the organisation to make actions happen. It is not a single-handed job to deliver the proposed strategy. The current commitment of many Officers will need to be encouraged and sustained over the long term in order to achieve further success.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive approves and endorses:

1. the general approach to developing a Waverley Climate Change Strategy;
2. the prospect of working with WWF;

3. the proposed 'Big Issues' for consideration as an ingredient part of Waverley's Climate Change Strategy;
4. the Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee being invited to submit any views or comments on the report; and
5. the proposed Waverley Energy Use Plan and Waverley Corporate Transport Plan set out in this report be adopted, and that further reports on their implementation and effects be submitted annually to the Executive.

Background Paper (SD (CS))

Waverley Borough Council Carbon Reduction Management Programme Report 2007 by the Energy Saving Trust.

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