

## Climate Change Board – 10 March 2009

### Agenda item 6 - Responses to the recommendations of the Climate Change Commission's Topic Review

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

1. approves the commentaries and conclusions in response to the Climate Change Commission's recommendations set out in paragraphs 8 and 9 and in detail in Appendix 1 to this report, and
2. following the request from Council Cabinet to consider the recommendations and report back to Cabinet and the Commission, submits this report to both as the Board's response to the findings from the Topic Review.

#### Introduction

1. At the meeting in December, the Board received a report on **'What are Chief Officers at Derby City Council, Derby City Partnership and local schools doing to reduce their carbon emissions?' – Findings of the Climate Change Commission's Topic Review.**
2. At that stage the report was mainly for information, and to encourage those concerned 'to begin to consider' possible actions in response. The Board was informed that the final report with detailed recommendations would be taken to Council Cabinet in the new year.
3. Cabinet received the final report at their meeting on 17 February. The Commission's' recommendations are set out in the Appendix 1 to this report. The implications for the work of the Board are assessed in detail within the Appendix and in considered in paragraphs 8 to 10.

#### Overview of the Commission's final report

4. As part of its work programme for 2008/09, the Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Commission conducted a review to establish what the Council and its partners are doing to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions arising from their activities. This was done primarily through questionnaires.
5. The review concluded that although good work was being done in some areas, this was not widespread and there was a lack of knowledge of what needed to be done to tackle emissions and how this could be achieved. Five recommendations were put forward, as reproduced in the Appendix to this report.
6. Broadly, the recommendations cover:
  - Publication of and publicity for a report for those living and working in Derby explaining the need to give priority to climate change action, with targets, timescales and costs
  - Firmer leadership of the climate change and energy management agenda.

- Preparation of a plan and programme detailing all of the actions that the Council would need to take to significantly reduce CO2 emissions, incorporating estimates of the costs of the actions and the scale of the CO2 emissions
- Identifying all actions that the Council can take to reduce CO2 emissions, their ranking in accordance with their impact, difficulty, cost, and acceptability, and their implementation in the order that gives the Council the best environmental and financial return
- Establishment of a forum to provide guidance and to facilitate the exchange of good practice ideas internally and to partners and other interested parties
- Setting up and maintaining a 'running balance sheet' database to monitor the progress made by the Council towards completing the actions list.

### **Links to Commission's final report in full**

7. The full report to Cabinet is available on CMIS, in three parts, and is accessible through these links:

[Derby's Response to Climate Change - A Situation Report for Summer/Autumn 2008](#) (size = 31 Kb)

[Appendix - Summary of the review and its outcomes](#) (53 Kb)

[Appendix - Questionnaire results](#) (103 Kb)

### **Overview of proposed Board responses to Commission's recommendations**

8. During discussion at the Board meeting on 10 December, the information provided by the Commission was welcomed. An informal conclusion of the discussion was that the spirit of what was said in the Commission's report would be endorsed by the Board. At the same time, having regard to resources and existing commitments it would be essential to think carefully about how specific points could best be taken forward within the new work programmes. That broad approach is endorsed and formalised through this report.
9. In relation to the recommendations, in some cases the Board is already 'on the case', or there is more up to date information that needs to be taken into account when a response is being considered. Where this applies, points have been included within the detailed commentaries set out in Appendix 1.
10. From consideration of the Commission's detailed recommendations, ideas proposed to be taken forward within the Board's work include the following.
  - Development of a city-wide climate change communications campaign aimed at local people, drawing on a broad range of communications media to help get key messages across in the most effective way.
  - Introduction of a 'running balance sheet' database to apply to all energy management work relating to the Council's buildings, featuring specifications of the estimated carbon dioxide reduction that each action is intended to achieve and, following completion, measurement of the actual reduction figures.
  - A review of the role of the corporate plan and corporate planning processes in embedding at all levels within the Council both an understanding of the importance of delivering the climate change and

energy management agenda and achieving climate change and energy management objectives on a practical and day-to-day basis across the Council.

**Detailed commentaries and conclusions about the recommendations**

11. Detailed responses are set out in the boxes following each of the recommendations / reasons in Appendix 1.

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### Climate Change Commission's recommendations to Council Cabinet with reasons for recommendations, and Climate Change Board's responses

To assist clarity, Board commentaries / responses are presented within boxes

#### *Commentary - General points*

A point that applies to all of the recommendations is that a significant change is to take place shortly in relation to the Council's approach to climate change and energy management work. This involves a bringing together of functions into a new service unit and, subject to the outcome of budget discussions, greater staff resources for this work. Staff of the new Climate Change and Energy Management Unit (CCEMU) are at present developing a service unit plan that will, along with inputs including the conclusions of the Commissions' review, help determine not only the contents but also the shape and form of the new version of the corporate Climate Change Action Programme, scheduled to be considered by the Board in June.

The first item in the current corporate Programme is about work with the Energy Saving Trust to prepare an EST strategic climate change action plan to help guide the Council's activity. In particular, it will help the Council to gauge our relative progress with tackling climate change and energy management and suggest priorities for the future direction for our work. It will address National Indicators 185, 186 and 187 and seek to assist corporate performance in relation to Comprehensive Area Assessment. Once in place, the plan will provide an opportunity to bid for limited funding from the Trust to implement the plan's actions. It is considered that this exercise is an important one, and that the conclusions should be considered alongside those of the Commission in determining work programmes and priorities.

#### **Recommendation 1**

Urgent action must be taken to ensure widespread understanding of the need for action to address climate change and the priority that must be given to this.

To this end it is recommended that the City Council should as soon as practicably possible publish and publicise a report which explains the issues of climate change to people who live and work in Derby and which clearly sets out:

1. Why measures are needed to address climate change
2. Details of the climate change legislation with which the Council will have to comply
3. The City and the Council's current carbon dioxide baseline data
4. The carbon dioxide reduction targets that the Council has been committed to achieving and the timescale for achieving the targets
5. The extent to which the Council can in isolation achieve the targets to which it is committed

6. The estimated financial cost of achieving the targets and the penalties that will be imposed if they are not achieved

## Reasons 1

The questionnaire responses suggest that there is a widespread lack of lack of knowledge about climate change and about what Derby is required to do to address it. It is appreciated that there is a mass of information on the Council's website on climate change but it is felt that the majority of Derby people and businesses would not normally visit the web pages on which the information is presented and that an easily available, understandable, summary would therefore be of great value.

The Commission considers that unless there is a much wider understanding of why the Council and the City has to take action to reduce carbon dioxide emissions it is unlikely there will ever be widespread support for the actions that will be required.

### *Commentary*

*'A report which explains the issues of climate change to people who live and work in Derby'* could be a useful document. However, there are some important issues to address including the following.

- Who is the report for? To work for many of the possible audiences, it will need to be brief, bright, and as entertaining as possible. 'Details of legislation' and 'penalties' will provide a challenge in these respects. A danger is that in order to engage some audiences it could become 'too general' to be of use or interest to others. There may need to be different reports for different audiences.
- How will it be circulated? How will we deliver it to non-residents who work in Derby?
- Should it be a City Council publication or a Derby City Partnership publication, given the Council's commitment to partnership working through NI 186 (which deals with per capita CO2 emissions in the city)?
- At present, there is no budget to pay for such a publication or publications. A suitable funding source will need to be identified.
- The need to research the information available from other organisations including the Government, Carbon Trust, and Energy Saving Trust, to avoid unnecessary duplication and effort

From the evidence in the Board's review, the report / brochure would be of value within the Council as well as the broader community. A danger is that the impact would be short-lived, though. To embed understanding of climate change, a more sustained approach will be necessary by developing a bespoke communications programme for the City drawing on a variety of communication tools and techniques. A good model for this would be the Turning the Tide project that the Unit ran in Derby some years ago in partnership with the local media. Within the work of DCP, there is also the opportunity to look at ways of achieving this through the Partnership for Climate Change Action Steering Group mentioned in response to recommendation 4.

Looking closer to home, in the light of recommendations 1, 2 and 3 the Board considers that the emphasis on climate change and energy management within the Council's corporate plan and corporate planning processes should be reviewed as a matter of priority, initially through discussions between officers of the Change Management, Performance and Research Section and the Climate Change and Energy Management Unit and through a report to the Board later this year. The review will assess what more can be done through corporate planning and change management processes to help 'internalise' a low carbon / smart energy use culture within the Council. Work now underway with the Energy Saving Trust, which includes corporate 'maturity testing' on these key issues, should reinforce this exercise.

## Recommendation 2

That as a matter of urgency the Council should appoint a person or persons with the necessary overall responsibility and authority to drive forward the Council's climate change programme, and further that the person or persons appointed should be charged with developing and implementing a holistic and time constrained plan that covers all Council departments and which:

- Identifies those areas where changes to processes, procedures and/or working practices would/will result in significant reductions in carbon dioxide emissions
- Itemises the actions that would need to be taken to significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and:
- Provides estimates of the cost of the action and the scale of the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions that would be achieved.

## Reasons 2

To identify what can be done within the Council to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and to quantify the cost of the actions that will be needed and the scale of the reductions that will be obtained. This data will enable the Council to assess its likelihood of achieving the NI185 targets to which it is committed and the potential scale of its contribution to achieving the NI186 targets.

### Commentary

Of immediate relevance is that the Council is in the process of setting up new working arrangements in the form of the Climate Change and Energy Management Unit. The Unit will report directly to the Assistant Director – Property Services who has direct operational responsibility for the key topic of energy management. This change is important in helping to give a real focus to this aspect of the work, an aspect seen as especially important in the short term.

At more senior level, in terms of the PRINCE2 approach to programme management adopted by the Climate Change Board, the Senior Responsible Officer for the corporate Climate Change Action Programme is the Chief Executive. The Board is made up of senior Members, including at present two Cabinet Members.

In response to recommendation 1, a review of the role of corporate planning and change management processes in relation to the Council's climate change and energy management work is put forward, and it is suggested that this will address key corporate issues that are relevant to recommendation 2 as well.

In an ideal world, the *'holistic and time constrained plan'* mentioned in recommendation 2 would be the corporate Programme. In fact, the Programme does attempt to tackle issues included in recommendation 2, although because of the complexity and time consuming nature of the tasks involved the results have been partial. The many topics covered have included the Council's procurement policy and the approach to the vehicle fleet.

It is now well established that the key area in which *'changes to processes, procedures and/or working practices would/will result in significant reductions in carbon dioxide emissions'* is the management of the Council's buildings including schools. In future work programming, the new service unit will give high priority to looking again at this area in the light of these recommendations and will prepare a schedule along the lines proposed setting out the opportunities and the costs as they are identified, but concentrating on those areas where most impact can be made. Other areas, including staff travel and

waste disposal, will also be tackled on a topic by topic basis as resources allow so that a holistic picture can be built up in stages.

### **Recommendation 3**

The Council should identify all the actions it can take to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions associated with its operations and should rank those actions according to:

- The size of the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions that each of the actions could potentially achieve
- The level of perceived difficulty in taking the action
- The estimated cost of taking the action
- The perceived 'acceptability' of the action.

Having done this, the possible actions should be implemented in the order that gives the Council the best environmental and financial return.

### **Reasons 3**

To ensure that so far as is possible, the Council obtains the 'best return' on the actions it takes to address climate change.

#### *Commentary*

There is some overlap between this recommendation and recommendation 2. In principle, it is an approach that is endorsed and, so far as possible, it is applied in practice. This is the reason for putting a new emphasis on a schedule for tackling CO2 emissions associated with the Council's own buildings, as explained in the box above.

However, to identify and evaluate all actions that the Council could take is an enormous, resource-intensive job. It is proposed that a further 'high level review' of such actions is carried out so that priorities can be confirmed and progress made on those actions that will have greatest impact and are most achievable.

A valuable document in providing a broad answer to the question 'what should the Council do?' is 'Derby City Council's Carbon Dioxide Emissions Baseline Final Report' of June 2008. This points very clearly to the major areas needing attention. It is available on the Council's web site, through this link: [CO2 Baseline Report](#). Key to assisting in identifying measures necessary and assessing their success is accurate data on energy use. This will also assist with recommendation 5. Funding for automatic meter reading is being sought to enable accurate data to be gathered.

One practical problem with the idea that '*possible actions should be implemented in the order that gives the Council the best environmental and financial return*' is the possible assumption that all necessary finance will be available for climate change and energy management work. The sums likely to be available are currently the subject of discussion within and around the corporate budget process. In addition, the Council needs to consider opportunities for 'green generation' such as hydro, wind and combined heat and power, which may or may not directly benefit the Council's carbon emissions but will impact on the NI186 agenda and will be essential in reaching the longer term emissions reduction targets.

## **Recommendation 4**

That a forum be established, initially within the Council but thereafter to include partners and any other interested parties, which would provide guidance to those involved and enable the exchange of good practice between them.

## **Reasons 4**

The questionnaire responses suggest that information, guidance, and good practice, is not being shared effectively. A forum would provide a means of doing this. The sharing of good practice could also be effective in terms of reducing costs and participants will know that others are facing and dealing with the same problems.

### *Commentary*

The Commission's point about the limited understanding of the practicalities of achieving cost efficient, non-polluting energy use and tackling climate change is an important one. Performance in relation to making Council and other public buildings much more energy efficient is addressed in a recent report for the government, in which part of the cause of a 'lamentable' showing is seen as 'ignorance among officials'. The aim for Derby, and for the UK as a whole, is to develop a low-carbon culture in which the right things are done automatically and instinctively. Learning from each other is a good way to help bring this about.

Within our work on NI 186, the process of working in partnership has begun. A report on Climate Change Action - Engaging the Partnership was presented at the DCP City Growth's Physical Futures Group meeting on 22 October. The Group agreed to the setting up of a Partnership for Climate Change Action Steering Group. With a cross-cutting remit within Partnership working, the new Group's purpose is to set the ball rolling in delivering the changes needed to secure the targets established in NI 186 and other key climate change objectives of the Partnership. The areas of focus in the Group's initial work were agreed also. One of these is 'identifying common ground with other Derby City Partnership city sub groups to map the positive activity taking place within the Partnership and, where appropriate, to share expertise and other resources in taking forward issues and actions of joint concern and interest'

In that it has started within the Partnership rather than within the Council, this 'forum' idea is not as proposed in the Commission's recommendation but is broadly consistent with it. Given the resources available to the CCEMU, running two such forums in parallel (one internal, one external) would be a difficult task. The concern is that the time and energy required would be out of proportion to the likely benefits, given that the Unit's main focus must be on activity that achieves actual cost and CO2 emission reductions. Consequently it is recommended that the emphasis remains on the Partnership initiative. The scope for bringing the Partnership initiative into the Council's internal activity can be examined once the Partnership arrangement is properly underway.

Internally, two other initiatives are important here. One is an Assistant Director's Climate Change Group, encouraging dialogue, inter-working, experience-sharing and a clear focus of Departmental responsibilities at a senior level. Although once again membership is relatively limited in relation to the Commission's recommendation, the second initiative to note is the corporate Climate Champions. The Champions work cross-Departmentally, sharing ideas and knowledge on very practical day to day issues.



## **Recommendation 5**

The Commission considers that it will be important to monitor the progress made by the Council towards completing the action list arising from Recommendation 3 and therefore recommends that a 'running balance sheet' database is set up and maintained and that this should include:

- Details of the action
- When the action was commenced and its current status
- The timescale to achieve
- The estimated carbon dioxide reduction that the action is intended to achieve
- Costs associated with achieving the action
- Outcomes of the action
- The carbon dioxide reduction that the action is estimated to have achieved.

Although some work will be involved in setting up the database it is felt that this will be offset by the subsequent ease of tracking progress and producing status reports. The Commission recommends that a summary of the database should be presented to all Climate Change Board and Climate Change Commission meetings.

## **Reasons 5**

To enable effective tracking of the progress made by the Council towards achieving its carbon dioxide reduction targets and the costs of doing so.

### *Commentary*

This recommendation is interpreted as covering 'direct' actions to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and as excluding 'indirect' actions such as behavioural change initiatives where the link between specific action and specific output is difficult to demonstrate.

The value of a 'running balance sheet' database in relation to, in particular, energy management of the Council's buildings is acknowledged. As set out in response to recommendation 3, in future work programming the new service unit will give high priority to looking again at this area in the light of these recommendations. It will prepare a schedule setting out the opportunities where most impact can be made, identifying the costs, indicating targets, timescales and progress, and indicating carbon emission reduction targets and achievements. A similar approach will be applied to other topic areas as appropriate.

As far as possible, the objective behind this recommendation has been pursued with the corporate Climate Change Action Programme. As it is a mixture of direct and indirect actions in terms of reductions of carbon dioxide emissions, it is true that it can be very hit and miss. Nevertheless, with the Programmes in full plus regular monitoring and review reports posted on the Council's web page within a very short period of consideration by the Board, an opportunity has been provided for all interested parties to be keep up to date about the nature and scope of the Board's work, if not about the detailed position on emissions reductions.