

Climate Change Board – 12 March 2008

Agenda item 6 - Climate Change Indicators in the New National Set

Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the national climate change indicators which will set strategic parameters when reviewing our corporate Climate Change Action Programme in June as well as informing our approach to evaluating the Council's carbon baseline.

Background

1. In October a new set of 198 national indicators was announced for English local authorities and local authority partnerships. The aim of this exercise is to have a clear set of national outcomes which reflect government policy and a single set of indicators by which to measure them.
2. Three of the indicators address different aspects of the climate change agenda:
 - NI 185 – CO₂ reduction from local authority operations;
 - NI 186 – Per capita reduction in CO₂ emissions in the local authority area;
 - NI 188 - Adapting to climate change.More information about the each of these indicators is appended to this report.
3. The National Indicators will provide the accountability framework for Local Area Agreements in helping to deliver the ambitions of a Sustainable Community Strategy. Each Local Area Agreement will adopt up to 35 national indicators but will be expected to measure its performance against all 198 indicators.
4. The fact that we now have three dedicated national performance indicators on climate change must be welcomed and should raise the profile of this very important issue. The precise way the information on each indicator will be collected is still subject to refinement following the consultation phase on all 198 indicators. The methodology for collecting and reporting on these indicators will inform how we further develop our carbon baseline.
5. The six monthly review of our corporate Climate Change Action Programme scheduled for June, will provide an opportunity to both to bring into the Programme actions based on the new indicators and to realign some of the existing projects to help meet the national outcomes and associated targets.

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Appendix 1

More details about NI 185, NI 186 and NI 188

NI 185 – Percentage CO2 reduction in the Local Authority's own operations

For this indicator, each Local Authority is required to calculate their carbon footprint from analysis of energy bills and outsourced services. The scope of the indicator includes:

- Council Buildings
- Streetlights
- Leisure centres
- Schools
- Council vehicle fleet
- Employee commuting
- Social housing.

NI 186 – Per capita CO2 emissions in the local authority area

This indicator will use centrally produced statistics to measure end user CO2 emissions in the local area from:

- Business and public sector – Industry and commercial emissions, including public sector, but not those included in the EU Emissions trading scheme
- Domestic housing – all housing in the local authority area, including Arms Length Management Organisations, (ALMOs) and privately owned and leased housing
- Road transport – all road traffic except motorways.

NI 188 – Adapting to climate change

The aim of this indicator is to measure progress on assessing and managing climate risks and opportunities, and incorporating appropriate action into local authority and partners' strategic planning.

The impacts might include increases in

- flooding,
- temperature,
- drought and
- extreme weather events.

For this indicator, local authorities should report the level of preparedness they have reached against 5 levels of performance, graded 0 to 4. The higher the number, the better is the performance.