



COUNCIL CABINET 14 MARCH 2006

Report of the Cabinet Member for the Environment and Direct Services

Policy Statement on Climate Change

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Climate change is now a mainstream political issue for nation states which have started to 'wake up' to the potential consequences that a changing climate could have on the overall social, economic and environmental stability of nations and the planet.
- 1.2 At a local level the Council has a major role to play in reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from its own activities; educating and motivating local people about this issue, and setting an example for other organisations to follow.
- 1.3 In order for the Council to address the issue of climate change in a co-ordinated and consistent way, the adoption of a policy statement forms the logical first step.
- 1.4 The Policy statement has undergone a period of consultation with Chief Officers, officers with an energy related remit, members of the Council Green Team and members of the Environment City Executive. It was considered by the Planning & Environment Commission at their meeting on Monday 27 February. Members were very supportive of the approach, but suggested that to encourage public involvement it would be useful if the ideas behind the statement could be presented in less technical language.
- 1.5 As a next step, I have asked officers to develop a work programme which identifies practical ways of meeting our commitments through a series of projects within local communities.
- 1.6 Subject to any issues arising at the meeting I would support the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To approve the policy statement on climate change as outlined in Appendix 2, subject to any minor changes, resulting from the consideration of consultation responses, being delegated to the Cabinet Member for the Environment and Direct Services for approval prior to the declarations publication.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The adoption of the policy statement provides a useful strategic platform to develop a comprehensive programme of activities to address the issue of climate change in a co-ordinated and logical way.



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL CABINET
14 March 2006

Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community

Policy Statement on Climate Change

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The science behind climate change

- 1.1 Changes in climate are due to both natural variations and increased emissions of 'greenhouse gases' to the atmosphere resulting from human activity. The increase in greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, CO₂, and methane, CH₄, is reducing the amount of energy lost to space and warming the earth's surface. The internal temperature of a greenhouse heats up in a very similar way by 'trapping' radiation emitted by the sun, preventing it from being re-radiated back into the atmosphere – hence the name 'greenhouse gas'.
- 1.2 Today the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere is 30 per cent higher than before the industrial revolution. There is increasing evidence that the climate is changing. For example, global average surface temperatures are some 0.6 degrees celsius higher than 130 years ago. For climate change, small figures have big implications. Researches are increasingly confident that this is beyond natural variability. Several hundred research scientists at the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, concluded as early as 1995 that "the balance of evidence suggests that there is a discernable human influence on global climate."

The Government's targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases

- 1.3 The UK along with other developed countries agreed in Kyoto, Japan, in 1997 to address the threat of global warming by making a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the next decade. Under the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol the UK has a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5 per cent by 2008 – 2012 compared to 1990 levels. It also has a domestic target to cut CO₂ emissions by 20 per cent by 2010. In its 2003 Energy White Paper the Government put the goal of moving to a low carbon economy at the heart of its energy strategy and set out a long term goal of reducing CO₂ emissions by some 60 per cent by 2050, with real progress to be shown by 2020.

The UK Climate Change Programme and the National Sustainable Development Strategy

- 1.4 The UK Climate Change Programme, published in 2000, sets out the Government's policies and measures for meeting the UK's target under the Kyoto Protocol. It also sets out the proposals for moving towards the Government's domestic goal. The Programme confirmed the requirement to supply 10 per cent of UK electricity from renewable resources by 2010, in line with the Renewables Directive. The UK programme for reducing greenhouse gas emissions includes carbon trading, increased energy efficiency, a renewable energy support programme, and the Climate Change Levy.
- 1.5 The Government's National Sustainable Development Strategy – Securing the Future, Published in 2005, includes four agreed priorities one of which is tackling climate change. The Strategy also recognises that more needs to be done to achieve its Kyoto Protocol, 2010 domestic target.

Regional Scoping Report on the effects of climate change

- 1.6 According to the East Midlands Sustainable Development Round Table, emsdOt in their 2002 report, "The Potential Impacts of Climate Change in the East Midlands", temperatures across the region during the last century increased by 0.5 degree celsius. Sea levels have risen on the east coast by between 1 and 2 mm a year and there were more storms in the 1990's than in the rest of the 20th Century.
- 1.7 Predictions of the climate in the 21-century show there is the possibility of further increase in the region's temperature of up to 3 degrees celsius by the end of the century and further changes in rainfall patterns. Sea level rise could be in the range of 22-83 cm on the east coast by the middle of the century.
- 1.8 The areas emsdOt have identified as being the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change are:
 - Water resources and quality
 - Flooding – urban and lowland
 - Agriculture
 - Coastal region
 - Biodiversity
 - Manufacturing, services and retail
 - Construction and building
 - Tourism and recreation
 - Transport.

The Council's Response

1.9 In developing an approach to pro-actively respond to the threats and opportunities that climate change will bring, it should be recognised that we are by no means starting from scratch.

1.10 The City's Community Strategy has given climate change a high priority over the last three years. The Council's Environmental Co-ordination Team, under the auspices of the Environment City Executive, has already started to engage members of DCP in this area by organising the following events/activities:

- the organisation of a series of lunchtime seminars on climate change in June 2003 that attracted over 200 people;
- undertaking a survey of all DCP partner organisations in May 2004 to establish the level of awareness of this issue.
- organising a major conference targeted at planners and developers in June 2004 – 'Planning for a changing climate' - which attracted over 100 delegates.

1.11 The Council has also recently adopted a new revised Environmental Policy, which unlike the original document adopted in 1998, makes the following explicit commitment:

'The Council will continue to raise awareness of the existence and causes of global warming and promote ways of mitigating and adapting to its effects. We will consider the implications of climate change on our strategies, plans and activities and encourage strategies that support the reduction of greenhouse gases'.

1.12 The Council also contributes to the mitigation of greenhouse gases both directly and indirectly through a number of different activities including the following:

- energy conservation initiatives – through a new design and major refurbishment programme, the Council is installing a wide variety of energy saving devices and equipment including lighting controls, condensing boilers and roof insulation to name but a few developments.
- "tackling fuel poverty – the Council has adopted a number of ambitious targets to help alleviate fuel poverty in the city where households spend more than 10% of their annual income on their fuel bills. To date over 11,000 households have been helped, which has resulted social, economic and environmental benefits."

- Local Transport Plan – The City’s second Local Transport Plan has been developed to positively encourage alternative forms of transport to the private motor vehicle for people travelling throughout the city. The plan will develop a wide range of programmes and initiatives to make public transport more attractive and convenient. This could potentially lead to a reduction in the amount of journeys undertaken by the private motor vehicle with an associated reduction in the quantity of greenhouse gas emissions emitted from this sector.

1.13 In order for the Council to address the issue of climate change in a co-ordinated and consistent way, it is recommended that a policy statement is adopted. This needs to build on the comments made in the revised Environment Policy as outlined in paragraph 1.12.

1.14 To help give the issue of climate change the profile it requires. It is suggested that the Council adopts a slightly modified version of the policy statement promoted by the International Council for Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). The modifications fine-tune the statement to local circumstances. The Derby Declaration on Climate Change is appended to this report.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 The option of relying solely on the paragraph devoted to climate change in the revised Environmental Policy to raise the profile and importance of this issue, was considered. It was acknowledged that the magnitude of the issue requires a more detailed and dedicated policy statement to clearly set out the Council’s intention in this area.

For more information contact: Andy Hills Tel. 01332 255569 e-mail andy.hills@derby.gov.uk
Background papers: Appendix 1
List of appendices: Appendix 2 – The Derby Declaration on Climate Change

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 The adoption of the policy statement outlined in Appendix 2 in itself has no direct financial implications for the Council. Current plans are reflected in the budget proposals for 2006/07 and beyond. The development of a detailed action programme will have cost implications and detailed costed action plans will be brought forward for Cabinet approval within the overall Council budget and planning framework.

Legal

- 2.1 None.

Personnel

- 3.1 None.

Equalities impact

- 4.1 None.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 5.1 The all encompassing nature of climate change has the potential to effect and significantly influence all six of the Council's strategic objectives.