

Report to Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Panel

Date of meeting: 24 February 2009

Subject: Climate Change Strategy

Officer contact for further information: Lisa Ingwall (ext. 4357).

Committee Secretary: A Hendry (ext.4246)



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

To consider and comment on the Climate Change Strategy.

Background:

1. Climate change is one of the most dangerous threats the world is facing today. The 4th report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is in no doubt that human activity is the primary driver of the observed changes in climate.
2. The Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in December 2007, which committed it to produce a climate change strategy. The Green Corporate Working Party Group (GCWP) was set up to work on environmental issues that concern the Council and the District. The production of the Climate Change Strategy was the group's first task.
3. The main aim of the strategy is to reduce the green house gas emissions (principally CO₂) from the Council's own operations and from the District as a whole, and to prepare and adapt to predicted climate change impacts.
4. The objectives of the strategy are in accordance with the commitments the Council has given in LAA2 (Priority 9 Our World). The strategy will also assist the Council to improve its performance in five National Performance Indicators:
 - NI185 – % CO₂ reduction from local authority operations;
 - NI186 – per capita CO₂ emissions in the local authority area;
 - NI187 – fuel poverty - % of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low and high energy efficiency rating;
 - NI188 – planning to adapt to climate change; and
 - NI194 - % reduction in NO_x and primary PM₁₀ emissions from local authority operations and estate.

Report:

5. In December 2007 the Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. The declaration is a tool to secure commitment from UK councils, through the adoption of a strategy, to tackle the causes and effects of climate change. This Council's strategy, which is an Appendix to this report, represents fulfilment of this commitment and addresses the causes and effects of climate change in the District.
6. In spring 2008 the Green Corporate Working Party (GCWP) was set up to work on environmental issues concerning the District and Council. The group has representatives from all Directorates to ensure that its findings and recommendations are fully corporate. The first task of the Group was to prepare a Climate Change Strategy.

7. A first draft of the strategy was published for internal consultation on 1st December 2008. The amended version is included as the Appendix and is presented for adoption by the Council to meet the commitment within the Nottingham Declaration.

8. The main objective of the strategy is to reduce the green house gas emissions (principally CO₂) from the Council's own operations and from the District as a whole, and to prepare and adapt to predicted climate change impacts.

9. The Strategy is a combination of actions the Council is already taking and will take in the future to demonstrate best practice and leadership. There will also be actions that are intended to (a) encourage others to join in the fight against climate change; and (b) raise local awareness about the implications of climate change and actions that can be taken to live more sustainably.

10. Officers supports the view that there are enormous environmental, social and economic risks and some potential benefits associated with climate change. This strategy will allow the Council to develop new projects and programmes for the District to mitigate and adapt to climate change, whilst enhancing and preserving local environmental quality.

Reason for decision:

By signing up to the Nottingham Declaration the Council has to produce a Climate Change Strategy. This strategy will also contribute to the Council's targets under the National Performance Indicators (NI185-188 and NI194).

Options considered and rejected:

The Nottingham Declaration for Climate Change commits the Council to produce a Climate Change Strategy within 2 years of signing, so there is no other option.

Consultation undertaken:

Consultation was made internally with Directors and relevant officers.

Resource implications:

None for the adoption of the strategy, but there might be for some of the actions.