

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Climate Change Working Group

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CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN: 2011-2013

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to present the current 'adoption draft' of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2013 for members consideration prior to being passed to the September meeting of the Sustainability, Planning and Climate Change Portfolio Holder for approval.
2. This is not a key decision as the Climate Change Working Group is not a formal decision-making body of the Council. The Working Group's role is to provide expert Member consideration and advice in support of important climate change related issues and decisions to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Planning and Climate Change or Full Council.

Recommendations

3. Members are requested to consider the attached 'adoption draft' of the Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2013 (Appendix 1) with a view to putting forward any agreed amendments or additions prior to recommending it for approval to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Planning and Climate Change.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. Adoption of the CCAP will ensure that the Council fulfil its commitments with relation to being a signatory to (i.) the Nottingham Declaration, (ii.) the Cambridge Climate Change Charter, (iii.) the national 10:10 Campaign, and also (iv.) meeting the arrangements set out in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Local Government Group and the Department of Energy and Climate Change.

Background

5. This new Plan has come from a lengthy options assessment process that has spanned one of the most significant changes in Government in recent times. Following a period of public consultation, the Plan was ready for adoption from October 2010. However, as the policies of the new Coalition Government were rolled out it was clear that the Plan was going to be out of date before it was published. It was therefore decided to run an updated assessment process, some additional consultation and adopt it in 2011.
6. This has been a positive and forward-looking assessment process leading to a Plan that has its feet firmly on the ground. We are not starting from scratch though, but building on the previous Climate Plan and several years active experience. The emphasis is on setting a good example, delivering practical, value-for-money actions that matter and make a real difference for the residents, communities and businesses of South Cambridgeshire.

7. This Climate Change Action Plan is about making further strides from 'we know' and 'we care' to 'we are doing something'.
8. The earlier, pre-Coalition Government, draft of the CCAP was consulted on at the end of last year. It had become a quite lengthy document that laid out:
 - (a) the drivers for action;
 - (b) the context and evidence-base in which actions must be framed;
 - (c) a clear approach and criteria for shaping actions and decision-making, and;
 - (d) a comprehensive set of actions covering the three areas of:
 - (i) internal operations,
 - (ii) service delivery and
 - (iii) community leadership.
9. It had been intended to move directly to adoption of the CCAP following this formal consultation. However, as stated above, so much had changed with the introduction of the policies and actions of the New Coalition Government since the consultation draft was published it was felt that the Council would be adopting a Plan that was significantly out of step with context and national direction against which it must operate. These changes include:
 - (a) Extensive public sector spending cuts;
 - (b) Demise or major service reductions/re-orientation of key partners (not all public spending related): Energy Saving Trust, National Energy Action, Government Office for the East of England, East of England Development Agency, Carbon Action Network East, Cambridgeshire Horizons, Cambridgeshire County Council and Renewables East;
 - (c) Creation of the Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership;
 - (d) The 'Big Society' and 'Localism' agendas;
 - (e) Introduction of the Green Deal (from September 2012);
 - (f) Proposals for a Green Investment Bank;
 - (g) Review of the Feed-in Tariff;
 - (h) Introduction of the Renewable Heat Incentive (domestic from Sept 2012);
 - (i) Definition of 'zero carbon' in new build (increasing role for 'allowable solutions');
 - (j) Indicator and target 'gap' for local government: abandonment of Local Area Agreements and the Local Government Performance Framework;
 - (k) Proposals for the local retention of business rates for community/commercial scale renewable energy installations;
 - (l) Changes to the land-use planning system – including 'neighbourhood planning'.
10. If the Council's new *Climate Change Action Plan* was to be both fit for purpose and realistically achievable then it was clearly important that it was re-assessed and re-evaluated against these new delivery parameters – not only by the Council itself but by the partners alongside whom effective delivery is predicated.
11. To this end, at its scheduled meeting on 24th March the Climate Change Working Group hosted and ran a unique climate change Expert Forum (with approximately 20 external invitees). This successful session brought together, by invitation, a broad range of local and regional expert climate change opinion (public, private, voluntary and community). The aim was to let Members know what the Council's key partners in the field of climate change action feel that the local authority itself should be: doing more of; doing less of; doing more effectively, or; doing differently to ensure that, collaboratively, creatively and constructively, we are all able to deliver carbon savings

to the required level and timeframe, alongside managing the future impacts of climate change.

12. These expert views not only specifically referenced South Cambridgeshire, but also, and just as importantly, related to an integrative role within the wider county, regional, national and international response to securing a more sustainable future for us all.
13. The output from the Forum has been used, alongside the nationally driven changes introduced by the Coalition Government, to update a full 'assessment' document and to shape this final adoption draft of the Council's new Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2013.
14. A summary of the Forum findings and outputs is included in Appendix 2.

Options

15. The CCAP can be presented in a range of formats. Presently the option taken is:
 - (a) one to two page document allowing the reader to very quickly come to grips with the Council's position, approach and specific actions for tackling climate change 2011-13. This document is ideally sized for wider dissemination and could be converted to a more corporate design leaflet and/or poster format with assistance from our Graphic Design section.
 - (b) This formal CCAP document is supported by a comprehensive CCAP Assessment document. This is available to view/download at: <http://www.scambs.gov.uk/environment/energy/climatechangeactionplan.htm>

Implications

16. Financial	Subject to individual actions contained within the CCAP
Legal	Subject to individual actions contained within the CCAP
Staffing	Subject to individual actions contained within the CCAP
Risk Management	The adoption of an up to date CCAP is central to the Council fulfilling its commitments to tackling climate change and related responsibilities.
Equality and Diversity	Subject to individual actions contained within the CCAP
Equality Impact Assessment completed	Partial EqIA submitted for evaluation
Climate Change	By default

Consultations

17. This report is the product of internal and external consultations in the development of an adoption draft of the CCAP: Parish Councils, key partners and stakeholders, general public, expert forum, Climate Change Working Group, Executive Management Team and Portfolio Holder.

Effect on Strategic Aims

18. The adoption of an up to date CCAP is central to the Council fulfilling its commitments to tackling climate change and related responsibilities and actions.

Conclusions / Summary

19. This report has presented the adoption draft of the Authority's new Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2013 for consideration. This Plan has been drawn from a full assessment and a link to this lengthy document has been provided.
20. It has presented findings from the most recent Expert Forum consultation event in March and referenced the new context of the Coalition Government's new policies and direction against which the Plan has been reassessed and redrafted.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Climate Change Action Plan Consultation Draft (Oct 2010)
- Responses to the conventional consultation exercise on this Consultation Draft
- Agenda, minutes and associated papers and outputs from CCWG Expert Forum session on 24th March 2011

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