

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: New Communities Portfolio Holder

19 May 2011

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director – Operational Services /
Corporate Manager, Planning and New Communities

NEW COMMUNITIES PERFORMANCE REPORT END OF FOURTH QUARTER 2010/11

Purpose

1. This report outlines the progress made by the New Communities and Policy teams for the final quarter; it is not a key decision

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder notes progress made in this final quarter

Reason for recommendation

3. This is the fourth monitoring reports reported to the Portfolio Holder this year to ensure that good progress is being made and remedial action taken, if necessary.

Background and considerations.

4. **Appendix A** summaries progress to date in relation to Council Actions, programmes set out in the service plan and The Local Development Scheme, which was recently revised (March 2011).

Council Actions

5. Three of the council's actions fall within this Portfolio:
 - ***We will achieve a 10% reduction in CO₂ emissions from Council's operations and publicise the outcome in order to set an example to other organisations.***
6. To date this target has not been met, and the reduction currently achieved lies between 5-8%.
7. SCDC will always be on something of a 'knife-edge' when it comes to operational carbon emissions. Our margins are narrow. We already have a headquarters building designed to high energy efficiency standards (BREEAM 'Excellent'), although it is not best located from a sustainable transport perspective. We have no other operational buildings that we own/can easily influence. We have a relatively small and tight establishment, and are constantly looking to reduce fleet vehicle running costs and other miles travelled on business.
8. An action plan is in place (attached at **Appendix B**), which has recently been reviewed. This is overseen work to by the Internal Sustainability Delivery Group and Executive Management Team (EMT). The climate change-working group has established a number of topic based sub groups to oversee certain aspects.

9. The plan sets out the range of actions that SCDC is undertaking to reduce emissions from electricity and gas consumption, water usage, staff mileage and fleet vehicles, and day-to-day behaviours. We are very much attempting to work on the 'best practice' level. It is important for the Council to be able to promote its endeavours as an exemplar of what other organisations and businesses should be looking to do – this would include difficulties experienced and their resolution.
10. It also should be noted that this is one of three areas in which the Council is taking concerted steps to reduce CO₂ emissions across the district – the other two being i.) service provision (especially Planning & New Communities, Housing and Environmental Services) and ii.) community leadership (especially the Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership).

We will work with Parish Councils to complete at least 6 local projects to contribute to the County target for the reduction of CO₂ emissions.

11. The Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership (SPEP) has proved particularly successful and has exceeded its target and now includes 25 parishes.
12. Over the year, officers have supported a range of projects including thermal imaging, car sharing, developing a parish energy booklet, the loan of energy monitors, and modelling CO₂ emissions.
13. In addition links are being made to the Northstowe Demonstrator Project at Rampton Drift.
14. A new Parish Energy Project Officer, Siobhan Mellon, is now in post and will be working with parishes in 2011-12 to continue to develop local initiatives and establish local indicators to demonstrate the impact of their projects on CO₂ emissions.

We will increase the number of teenagers taking part in positive activities by 500.

15. This target has been exceeded with the number of young people participating in sports, arts and cultural activities. A summary of events and attendance levels is attached at **Appendix C**.
16. The Council has also recently adopted a Young People's Plan which sets out how SCDC will help young people to become involved and have a say in things that affect them, and to understand and influence change. The plan will be launched internally in June to help embed the approach across all service areas. It is accompanied by an action plan, progress against which will be reported to future Portfolio-Holder meetings.

Red Indicators

17. There are two indicators that have not been met this year:
 - a. Reducing the number of single car users: target 57.7%, actual is 76%. This is a slight improvement on last year but remains challenging, particularly given the nature of our district and location of our offices. Reducing individual staff business miles is harder but efforts continue via 'Travel Link' (our Travel for Work Plan) promoting car sharing (via Camshare). We will also be looking to see what other authorities are doing to achieve this.

- b. Communities Toolkit has been delayed because of other priorities this year. Lessons being learnt are nevertheless being recorded; Scrutiny and Overview considered a report in February reviewing whether lessons learnt at Orchard Park were being applied to Trumpington Meadows. SCDC also continue to participate in the Joseph Rowntree SUNN (Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood Network) to share experiences.

Other Areas of work

- 18. With regard to the growth sites, achievements over the last year include the progress made at Trumpington Meadows, with the discharge of the majority of strategic planning conditions. Applications are currently under consideration for the first phase of housing and primary school to allow development to commence on site later this year. The first community forum was held in March.
- 19. Cambourne 950 application has been approved by Planning Committee and work continues on finalising the S106 agreement with a view to work commencing on site in the autumn, subject to satisfactory remedial works to the drainage system. Pre-application discussions have commenced on bringing forward further development in the High Street and the proposed secondary school.
- 20. The focus at Orchard Park has been on transfers of open spaces and facilities to the Community Council. Pre-application discussions continue in respect of the remaining undeveloped parcels of land, with a revised application for the local centre expected later this year. On the NW Cambridge (University Site) significant progress has been made with the application now expected in August 2011.
- 21. Discussions continue in relation to Northstowe, an initial workshop to revisit the masterplan was held in April and a similar workshop is being held on 18th May with representatives of the Northstowe Parish Forum. The Joint Promoters have recently shared their partnering agreement and asked Cambridgeshire County Council and SCDC to consider joining the agreement. A separate workshop is to be held with public sector partners to review possible models for service delivery and a brief is being prepared with a view to appointing a consultant to advise the local authorities on the affordability and viability of the project.
- 22. A number of the growth sites (NIAB1, NIAB 2, The University and Northstowe) have been affected by the Government's announcement to cancel the A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton improvement scheme. Discussions are underway to understand what alternative plans may be put in place to allow development to proceed.
- 23. With regard to S106 agreements, Q4 information is set out in appendix A. Over the year as a whole, 77 agreements were completed and of the obligations being monitored (10 dwellings or more) over the last year, 88% were satisfied on time (against a target of 75%). In the last financial year (2010/11) SCDC received over £900, 000 for 'district' obligations including £40, 000 for public art and over £0.5m for affordable housing. Over £320k was transferred to Parish Councils in respect of public open space and indoor community facility contributions who are responsible for the allocation and spend against local projects.
- 24. With regard the capital grants programme of £240,000 attracted significant external funding of over £1.5m, exceeding our annual target.

Implications

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 25. Financial | Significant monies have been attracted to local communities via S106 agreements and through external funding via the capital grants programme. |
| Legal | None |
| Staffing | Within existing resources. |
| Risk Management | A separate risk register is maintained for the Service and reviewed quarterly by the service's management team and EMT. |
| Equality and Diversity | None arising directly from this report and recommendation. |
| Equality Impact Assessment completed | Equality Impact assessments are currently being drafted for the Climate Change Action Plan. |
| Climate Change | The service plays a key role in overseeing carbon reduction within the Council and across the District. |

Effect on Strategic Aims

26. Ensuring that the service performs well and its programmes remain on target will help to ensure that the Council meets its strategic aims.

Conclusions / Summary

27. As a consequence of the teams' work this year, two of the three Council's actions have been met and targets significantly exceeded. The SPEP and other work has had significant success and exceeded the Council's target of 6 projects. Similarly, the target to increase the numbers of teenagers participating through positive activities has been exceeded and the Young Persons Plan put in place to inform future activities and projects.
28. The Council's action to achieve a 10% reduction in its CO₂ emissions has been progressed through the Internal Sustainability Delivery Group and EMT, with measures introduced or progressed.
29. The Council has now adopted a revised Local Development Scheme 2011-14 and adopted two additional Supplementary Planning Documents this year.
30. Progress on reducing the number of single car users and on producing a Communities Toolkit has not resulted in the relevant indicators being met, although some progress towards these aims has been made.
31. Work on the strategic growth sites has picked up over the year, with significant progress being made with the Cambourne 950 approval; Trumpington Meadows conditions and early phases of development; open spaces and community facilities at Orchard Park; and pre-application work on the anticipated planning application for the University site. Despite the hindrance of the A14 announcement, work has continued on finding ways to deliver Northstowe and North West Cambridge sites.

Contact Officer: Jane Green, Head of New Communities
Telephone: (01954) 713164.