

15 JANUARY 2013

Review of strategic documents on Climate Change**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Ray Radford**Responsible Officer:** Facilities and Corporate Buildings Manager

Reason for this report: To inform the PDG of the policies that are already in place relating to climate change to allow Members to identify gaps and provide a steer for the formulation of a new environmental strategy.

Recommendation: Members to review this report and identify gaps that need to be formulated within the new environmental strategy.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Reduce energy usage within the Council, saving money and reducing our carbon footprint. Gradually replace our Council fleet with more eco-friendly vehicles.

Financial Implications: Formulation of the new environmental strategy will take officers time to formulate and therefore has a cost associated to it.

Legal Implications: The air monitoring policy is a mandatory requirement and other policies follow guidelines set by the government.

Risk Assessment: A business risk assessment is required and will be developed once Members provide a steer for the formulation of an environmental strategy.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Facilities and Corporate Buildings Manager has undertaken a review of all the Council's activities which had an impact on the environment. These include the purchasing policy, transport and fleet issues, enforcement of environmental legislation, planning policy and operational issues. The key areas proposed to include within an environmental strategy are listed below, sustainability has now been added to this list.

1.2 Proposed key areas to be included within the Environmental Strategy are:-

- Managing the Council's environmental impact
- The reduction of the use of natural resources and energy consumption
- Transport
- All land and water quality
- Bio and Geodiversity
- The built and urban environment
- Waste Management
- Sustainability

2.0 Policy review

2.1 An internal meeting took place with officers whose work is linked to Climate Change and would therefore have an impact on the environment. These services were Forward Planning, Private Sector Housing, and Housing Planned maintenance. Discussions have also taken place with other service areas.

2.2 Policies identified have been summarised below for Members to review possible links to the proposed Environmental Strategy.

2.3 Policy COR5: Climate Change is adopted following work by the Forward Planning service relating to new developments and is summarised below.

2.3.1 Measures will be sought, which minimise the impact of development on climate change, and contribute towards national and regional targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, including:

2.3.2 The development of renewable energy capacity will be supported in locations with an acceptable local impact, including visual, on nearby residents and wildlife.

2.3.3 Energy efficiency improvement measures will be supported with an acceptable impact on historic interest.

2.3.4 It is intended that all new development will be carbon neutral in development and use as soon as a detailed approach can be developed through the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on this subject. This is likely to be through appropriate choice of materials, energy efficiency measures, transport management, renewable energy generation and carbon fixing. Until such time as the **SPD** is adopted all development should take positive measures to reduce carbon emissions to a realistic minimum.

2.3.5 The **SPD** referred to has never been completed, and since 2007 has changed when the Core Strategy was adopted, there is now a national move towards reduced carbon emissions in new developments (operation and use of development, rather than carbon associated with materials and construction), to be implemented through the Building Regulations in 2013 and 2016.

2.3.6 The current government commissioned a recent review of local standards being applied differently across the country. The report was quite damning about the complexity and inconsistencies between councils, making it more difficult for developers to get through the planning process.

2.3.7 Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document (AIDPD) adopted in 2010.

2.4 Policy AL/IN/6: Carbon Footprint Reduction - Forward Planning Service

2.4.1 Development of 10 or more dwellings or 1000 square metres or more of non-residential floorspace will make provision for at least 10% of the energy to be used in the development to come from decentralised on-site renewable or

low-carbon sources rising incrementally to 20% by 2020. A Carbon Reduction Strategy outlining this and other methods to reduce development carbon footprint will need to accompany planning applications.

2.4.2 Forward Planning now require major developments to provide minimum 12% energy from renewable or low-carbon sources.

2.4.3 Local Plan Part 3: Development management policies (LP3), 'Proposed Submission' published September 2012, awaiting examination by Planning Inspector, **not yet adopted**.

2.5 Policy DM/3: Sustainable Design - Forward Planning Service

2.5.1 Proposals for new housing and major commercial development (excluding agricultural and equestrian buildings) must demonstrate how sustainable design and construction methods will be incorporated to achieve energy and water efficiency and resilience to climate change.

2.5.2 Designs must use landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

2.5.3 New dwellings will be required to meet Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes from 2013, rising to Level 5 from 2016.

2.5.4 Commercial development including use classes C1, C2 and C2a will be required to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' standard from 2013 and 'Excellent' from 2016.

2.5.6 If evidence demonstrates that meeting the minimum standard under the Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM would render the development unachievable, the Council will balance the overall benefits of the development against the objectives of this policy.

2.5.7 The LP3 also has policies about transport/parking and air quality, but these are not exactly geared towards reducing overall carbon emissions and meeting national targets. They're designed to improve local air quality so that the towns (especially centres of Cullompton and Crediton) reduce their levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulates, meaning a nicer environment for residents. So the LP3 Policy DM/8 requires infrastructure for electric vehicles to be incorporated in all new development, but in actual fact the production of electric vehicles has a massive carbon footprint, using energy from power plants that consume fossil fuels.

2.5.8 References used:

- National Air Quality Strategy 2007
- Defra, February 2009. Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance LAQM.TG(09)
- Defra, 2010. Air Quality: Action in a Changing Climate
- Local Transport Plan 3
- Crediton Air Quality Management Action Plan
- Cullompton Air Quality Management Action Plan

- Low Emission Strategies Partnership, January 2011. Low Emission Strategies: Supplementary Planning Document Guidance

3.0 Policy Sustainability - Procurement Service

- 3.1 The purpose of this Strategy is to provide a sustainable focus to the procurement of goods, works and services, recognising the need for improving our environment and the quality of life enjoyed by people who live in the area and those who visit, ensuring all stakeholders who purchase anything on behalf of the Council(s) have due regard to the potential impacts. The 7 Devon Districts spend annually in the region of £90 million on goods, works and services. *“Sustainable procurement is about delivering value for money, whole-life costing and benefits to society and the economy as well as the environment”*
- 3.2 Sustainability is something you hear about on a regular basis although some may think ‘well what has it got to do with me?’ The aim of the strategy is to eliminate myths and make sustainability real, with practical tips and guidance on how to approach sustainability issues and considerations when procuring goods, works and services.
- 3.3 The Districts have a key role to play in helping to deliver a more sustainable Devon; as an employer with responsibility for staff and buildings; as a provider of local services; and as a community leader working in partnership with other organisations and local communities. The Districts Sustainable Procurement Strategy sets out our commitment to put sustainable procurement at the heart of everything we do.
- 3.4 The EU Procurement regulations state that sustainable products can only be specified if they are *reasonable* and *relevant* to the nature of the contract. There must be a *legitimate* business need to specify sustainable products. The procurement process must not be anti-competitive or *non-commercial* (capable of being supplied). Criteria *must* be specified in the ITT document together with the allocated weighting. Evaluation criteria used needs to take into account:
- Social Benefits
 - Economic Benefits
 - Environmental Benefits

3.5 What is a sustainable product / service?

- One that is fit for purpose providing value for money
- One that is energy efficient / resource efficient
- It uses the minimum use of material
- It might be made with maximum use of recycled materials
- Non (reduced) pollution
- Durable, easily upgraded, and repairable
- Reusable and recyclable
- Ethically sourced

- Reduced delivery miles
- Utilises local supply

3.6 **Other issues to be considered:**

- Minimising Packaging & its disposal
- Delivery (times / mode) less stock lying around, efficiently made
- Use of local labour e.g. apprenticeship schemes
- Training and development opportunities to sustain on-going community development and regeneration
- Supply chain (sub contractors / manufacturers) minimising the supply chain

3.7 **What is whole life costing?**

3.7.1 **Whole Life Costing (WLC)** = taking into account and evaluating the Social, Economic and Environmental impacts of a product or service - the total 'cost' of the solution.

3.7.2 Whole life costing should consider areas such as:

- Direct Running Costs
- Indirect Costs
- Administration Costs
- Training
- Recycling Capabilities
- Refurbished Products
- Disposal Costs
- Disposal Options (Reduce, Re-use, Recycle)

3.8 **Green Infrastructure Plan – (Draft form) Forward Planning**

3.8.1 The Green Infrastructure plan (GIP) promotes a network of multi-functional green space with recreational, visual and biodiversity value. The plan identifies existing green infrastructure assets at the landscape scale and by catchment areas within Mid Devon. On the basis of that assessment, the GIP proposes detailed policies and a delivery plan to ensure that green infrastructure receives appropriate investment from the Council and the development industry.

3.8.2 The benefits of the GIP are listed below:-

- Safeguarding and enhancing biodiversity
- Mitigating and adapting climate change
- Improving economic prosperity through sustainable development, green
- Tourism and local food production
- Creating a low carbon society
- Attractive and productive landscapes
- Health and wellbeing through improved access to GI

3.8.3 The executive summary of the Green Infrastructure Plan is on our external web site.

4.0 Green Travel Plan

4.1 Implementing the Green Travel Plan has been a challenge and officers dealing with this work have since left the authority; the purpose of the Green Travel Plan was to gain benefits such as improved air quality, improved health of council officers, more efficient use of council resources and reduced congestion on Mid Devon roads.

4.2 The Travel Plan in 2003/4, originally had the following objectives:-

- To raise officer awareness of the alternatives to the car and encourage their use
- To make council business travel more efficient and environmentally acceptable

4.3 Since 2003/4 the council has held cycling events during National Bike Week, as well as joining the government's cycle scheme in January 2012. Council managers have been asking their staffs who are essential car users to plan their journeys better and therefore save on mileage

4.4 With effect from the 1st September 2013 we are reducing the amount we pay to Essential car users and with effect from 1st April 2013 we are reducing the mileage rates we pay casual users to the HMRC rate which is 45p per mile.

4.5 The new pool cars have low emissions and are very fuel efficient , casual users are encouraged to use these fuel efficient vehicles.

5.0 Private Sector Housing renewal (draft policy) - Private Sector Housing

5.1 Private sector housing has a draft policy in place that has links to Climate Change, these links are summarised below. This policy explains the way in which the Council provides advice and, wherever possible, financial assistance to the owners and occupiers of private sector property within Mid Devon.

5.2 Home Energy Conservation and Climate Change

5.2.1 Since the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995, the Council has been committed to encouraging and supporting the work to reduce Fuel Poverty and develop the Devon Affordable Warmth strategy in cross cutting Devon wide partnership programmes. Mid Devon has reached 27.67% energy efficiency saving since 1996 (HECA return 2008).

5.3 Tackling Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency Measures

5.3.1 The Council believes that in order to meet the Government's objectives of a 30% reduction in energy usage in the area, the following will be the priority area for dwellings in the district:

- Insulation of hot water tanks, cavity walls and lofts
- Installation of double glazed windows
- Draught proofing
- Replacement of inefficient central heating boilers

5.3.2 Mid Devon District Council look to achieve this by:-

5.3.3 Tackling fuel poverty, encouraging affordable warmth and energy efficiency by working in partnership with the Devon Private Sector Housing Group to continue the development and delivery of the Devon wide Affordable Warmth Strategy.

5.3.4 Working with energy efficiency companies such as EAGA Ltd, Energy Action Devon, Energy Saving Trust, National Energy Action, SW Carbon Action Network and the Utilities.

5.3.5 Working in partnership with colleagues in Benefits, Council Tax, Planning, Building Control, Community Development, HIA and Tenancy Services carrying out joint promotions and data sharing, where appropriate.

5.3.6 By addressing these key areas, the aim is to improve the private sector stock, maintain its diversity and condition for the wellbeing of our community.

“Increasing and sustaining access to the private rented sector can also reduce the number of people who experience homelessness and need to be assisted under the homelessness legislation (Part 7 Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) with a corresponding positive impact on the number of households placed in temporary accommodation.

5.4 Energy Grants: Hard-to-Treat/Off-gas

5.4.1 In Mid-Devon about a fifth of all homes pre-date 1919 and have solid walls, but currently there are no cost-effective measures (in terms of the economic payback periods) for treating them. In comparison with cavity wall insulation, for example, external insulation can cost ten times as much for a similar dwelling. Early Park Homes have similar, poor insulation, and can be difficult to improve internally because of the loss of floor space. Many homes in Mid-Devon are not on mains gas. For households on low income, fossil fuels are becoming increasingly expensive. The Council has discretion to introduce assistance under this heading together with eligibility criteria and grant limits when and if cost-effective packages of treatment are identified, however the Private sector housing group found no deliverable conclusions from its work last year.

5.5 Energy Grants: CosyDevon

5.5.1 This grant scheme for subsidised or free loft and cavity wall insulation is directly funded by utility and power generating companies, and will be supported (by mailshots and advertising materials) by the Council.

5.5.2 Mid Devon supports the use of renewable energy and would if funds became available be prepared to chase those funds to assist with renewable energy,

however because of financial restraints, the policy merely confirms support at present.

5.6 Energy Grants: PLEA (Private Landlords Energy Action)

5.6.1 These existing energy grants for landlords are based on 'cash back' (maximum) £1,000 split between insulation and central heating, i.e. £500 or 50% whichever is lower for insulation and the same for boiler replacement. Payment of this grant is conditional on the property remaining available for letting for a 2 year period.

5.6.2 The Local House Condition Survey has provided evidence of the areas of highest need, and of the most vulnerable residents living in the highest risk types of property, often with the lowest income. The information is only available at statistical level, and cannot identify individual properties, but follow-up annual surveys ("longitudinal surveys") and further work with the original survey may refine this.

6.0 Corporate Plan 2012-2015

6.1 The Council has stated within the Corporate Plan 2012-2015 that Caring for our Environment is to be included within our top priorities and is therefore linked to the proposed areas of the Environment Strategy.

6.2 The Corporate Plan states the following:-

- Reducing the amount of landfill
- Increasing recycling/composting
- Reducing the Council's carbon footprint

6.3 Corporate Plan – Caring for our Environment **action point 1**

- *Increase Mid Devon's recycling rate to 50%*

6.4 The Council states that we intend to achieve a recycling rate of 50% by March 2014, however officers are reviewing the practicality of increasing this to 55%.

6.5 Corporate Plan- Caring for our Environment **action point 2**

- *Reduce the Council's carbon footprint from our offices and leisure centres*

6.6 We have invested in reducing our carbon footprint from our offices and leisure centres by installing 283.68 KWp of solar photovoltaic panels that is forecast and on target to reduce our carbon footprint by 97 carbon tonnes per annum.

6.7 The Council has also engaged in a 12 year energy performance contract with Anesco Limited that will ensure that our carbon footprint will reduce by a further 691 carbon tonnes per annum. This will be achieved by replacing some of our energy consuming assets with those that have a higher energy efficient rating, for example LED lighting in our pool halls.

- 6.8 This work also significantly contributes to our Pledge 2 - 'reduce energy usage within the Council', saving money and reducing our carbon footprint.
- 6.9 The Department of Energy and Climate Change require us to report on our greenhouse gas emissions and to show the results on their website. There is a backlog of reporting to obtain for the previous two years as well as working towards reporting our emissions for 2012-13.
- 6.10 Corporate Plan- Caring for our Environment **action point 3**
- *Adopt a Low Emission Strategy*
- 6.11 Currently there is not a low emission strategy in place.
- 6.12 Corporate Plan- Caring for our Environment **action point 4**
- *Gradually replace our Council fleet with more eco-friendly vehicles*
- 6.13 Our fleet manager has been actively replacing our vehicles with more eco – friendly vehicles, a third of our refuse vehicles now **exceed** the euro 5 standard that have the following emission output.
- Emissions from diesel vehicles
 - Carbon monoxide: 500 mg/km
 - Particulates: 5 mg/km (80 % reduction of emissions in comparison to the Euro 4 standard)
 - Nitrogen oxides (NOx): 180 mg/km (20 % reduction of emissions in comparison to the Euro 4 standard)
 - Combined emissions of hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides: 230 mg/km
 - Any vehicle on the fleet scheduled for replacement will be replaced with a low emission, fuel efficient vehicle.
- 6.14 Corporate Plan - Caring for our Environment **action point 5**
- *Prepare an action plan about maintenance of open spaces*
- 6.15 The Environmental Health service is currently in the process of rolling out a conditional survey of all open spaces to prioritise budget allocation in 13/14.

7.0 Air monitoring - Environmental Health

- 7.1 Air monitoring work does not have a policy but is related to our managing the environment work.
- 7.2 Local Air Quality Management, known as LAQM, is a statutory regime introduced by the Environment Act 1995 which requires us to regularly assess outdoor air quality across the district. Information includes our latest air quality monitoring review and assessment reports and information on our Air Quality Management Areas in the district at Crediton and Cullompton.

8.0 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy – Licensing Policy

- 8.1 In order for a taxi or private hire firm to gain a licence and the Council insists that the vehicle receiving the licence must be a low emission vehicle. An age limit is not imposed on vehicles that are licensed by this Council but we are seeking to gradually raise the emissions standards as vehicles that meet higher standards will be safer both for passengers and the environment. In order to raise the emissions standards we will not licence vehicles that fail to meet Euro Standard 3 initially and then move to Euro Standard 4 as a minimum. Most vehicles that meet Euro Standard 3 were registered from January 2000 onwards, whilst Euro Standard 4 is generally vehicles registered after January 2005.
- 8.2 We will give 'grandfather' rights to existing licensed vehicles and will also make exceptions for limousines or classic vehicles (we currently licence a Rolls Royce, which offers a chauffeur-driven service). From 1 April 2010 all vehicles offered for licensing for the first time met Euro Standard 3. From 1 April 2011 all vehicles offered for licensing for the first time met Euro Standard 4.
- 8.3 Consultation is currently underway to increase the standard further; from 1 April 2014 all vehicles offered for licensing for the first time must meet Euro Standard 5 which is generally vehicles registered for the first time from January 2011.
- 8.4 Environmental considerations are an important part of the licensing regime and dual fuel vehicles are permitted.

9.0 Housing stock reducing fuel poverty - Housing Services

- 9.1 Although the work we have done towards fuel poverty is not current policy, this work has strong links with our work towards managing the environment. Housing Services continue to deliver energy saving measures to help our tenants with fuel poverty such as solar photovoltaic panels that help reduce electricity costs.
- 10.0** Annex A (below) lists the policies above and shows their relevance to the proposed Environmental Strategy.

Annex A

Policy/Plan or related area of work	Service	Mandatory requirement?	Links to proposed Environmental Strategy?
Mid Devon Core Strategy, adopted 2007-2026	Forward Planning	Not a legal requirement but there are government guidelines to be followed	Bio and Geodiversity The built and urban environment
Policy AL/IN/6 : Carbon footprint reduction	Forward Planning	Not a legal requirement but there are government guidelines to be followed	The reduction of the use of natural resources and energy consumption
Policy DM/3: Sustainable development	Forward Planning	Not a legal requirement but there are government guidelines to be followed	The built and urban environment
Green Infrastructure Plan (GIP) draft	Forward Planning	Not a legal requirement but there are government guidelines to be followed	Bio and Geodiversity The built and urban environment Sustainability All land and water quality
Green Travel Plan (no policy)	Environmental Services	Non mandatory	Managing the Council's environmental impact Transport
Private Sector Housing Policy	Private Sector Housing	Elements of this policy are mandatory	The built and urban environment The reduction of the use of natural resources and energy consumption
Policy Sustainability	Procurement	EU Regulations are law for spend over £173k on supplies and services. £4.3M on works. Guidance is followed for spend under this threshold.	Sustainability Managing the Council's environmental impact
Corporate Plan 2012-15: Increase Mid Devon's recycling rate to 50%	Environmental Services	Non mandatory	Waste management

Corporate Plan 2012/15: Reduce the Council's carbon footprint from our offices and leisure centres	All services	Non mandatory but government guidelines for reporting greenhouse gas emissions	Sustainability Managing the Council's environmental impact The reduction of the use of natural resources and energy consumption
Corporate Plan 2012/15: Adopt a low emission strategy	Environmental Services Housing & Property Services	Non mandatory	Managing the Council's environmental impact Transport
Corporate Plan 2012/15: Gradually replace our Council fleet with more eco- friendly vehicles	Environmental Services	Non mandatory	Transport Managing the Council's environmental impact
Corporate Plan 2012/15: Prepare an action plan about maintenance of open spaces	Environmental Services	Non mandatory	Managing the Council's environmental impact
Air Monitoring (no policy)	Environmental Health	Mandatory	Transport
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing policy	Licensing	Internal requirement only	Transport
Reducing fuel poverty on our housing stock (no policy)	Housing & Property Services	Government guidelines	Managing the Council's environmental impact The reduction of the use of natural resources and energy consumption

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