

Scrutiny Committee – 14<sup>th</sup> August 2008

## 8. Publication of a Carbon Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for the Council

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Jo Roundell-Greene, Environment and Property  
Peter Seib, Economic Development, Planning and Transport

*Head of Service:* Andy Foyne, Planning Policy, Economic Development and Planning

*Lead Officer:* Keith Wheaton-Green, Climate Change Officer

*Contact Details:* Keith.wheaton-green@southsomerset.gov.uk or  
(01935) 462651

### Purpose of the Report

To detail the content of the strategy and seek member endorsement of it.

### Action Required

To endorse the Carbon Reduction Strategy.

### Background

South Somerset District Council has been acknowledged externally (Energy Savings Trust 2007, CPA inspection 2008) as showing real commitment to addressing climate change and demonstrating a range of practical and exemplar solutions. Some highlights of achievements so far include:

- The Corporate Plan (2005) included Objective 19 is “To have SSDC as one of the top exemplar councils in the country in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2012”
- The addition of a dedicated Climate Change Officer post to the establishment
- Being the first council in Somerset to sign the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change (2006) and publishing a protocol on Climate Change, Renewable Energy and the Nottingham Declaration.
- Procuring 65% of our electricity from ‘green’ renewable sources
- Enabling a first exemplar project; the award winning Hydropower project leveraging in £137,000 of grant funding and seeing installation of renewable energy generation at 7 mill sites.
- Delivering a wind turbine on the Yeovil Innovation Site as the second exemplar project. (Completion due Autumn 08)
- Involvement in the Carbon Trust’s Local Authority Carbon Management Programme beginning in July 2008.

More detail about recent achievements may be seen in the attached strategy.

Despite the undoubted progress in addressing climate change, it has become clear that a strategy is needed to ensure that there is a more planned approach in achieving improvement. Since the Corporate Plan was published in 2005 there has been a marked change in the national view of climate change and what councils should be doing to:

- a) reduce their own carbon emissions (led by Climate Change Bill, National Indicator 185 ‘CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from local authority operations’ and the agreed targets in the Local Area Agreement)

- b) act as a community leader in helping others to reduce their carbon emissions (led by Climate Change Bill, National Indicator 186 'Per capita CO2 emissions in the local authority area'.)
- c) adapt to climate change (led by Climate Change Bill, National Indicator 188 'Adapting to Climate Change' and the agreed targets in the Local Area Agreement)

This strategy pulls our work together on these important issues with an action plan that covers the full range of council services.

### **The Carbon Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.**

This strategy has been written with initial support from the Energy Saving Trust. It has been the subject of two workshops when relevant officers and members were facilitated to input their views. Officers responsible and accountable for actions within the strategy have had several opportunities to amend text and consequently the text reflects their input. The Strategy has a hierarchy of 3 aims and 8 objectives supported by actions.

A scrutiny review of progress of Objective 19 from the Corporate Plan recommended that the council join the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme. This has now been achieved. The council's engagement with this programme runs from May 2008 to March 2009. A carbon management team of officers is established and is working to accurately identify the council's baseline carbon emissions. The team will receive independent and expert advice from the Carbon Trust's Technical Programme Advisor about the most suitable carbon reduction projects to implement. Therefore the Carbon Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy will be reviewed and amended following the results of the council's involvement with the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme. It is anticipated that the likely changes will be in timescales of existing actions as we bring forward projects that are identified through the work as maximum impact for minimum input, rather than a series of new actions.

### **Financial Implications**

These are detailed in the Strategy document. All funding required will be met through:

- existing resources
- external grant funding or
- some action that will require revenue or capital bids, which will be submitted to members at a later date for decision. Within the strategy, it will be seen that some actions are in grey, these indicated actions that will only be enacted should the decisions on funding be favourable.

However, members should be aware that implementing the strategy could result in savings which will feed back into the Medium Term Financial Plan once activated.

### **Implications for Corporate Priorities**

This strategy supports GOAL 13 of the Sustainable Communities Strategy "Move towards a carbon neutral economy by 2050 with robust intermediate milestones" and the objectives within Aim 5 of the new corporate plan.

## Other Implications

Successful implementation of this strategy could enhance the council's reputation as climate change is seen currently as a major issue that needs to be addressed.

**Background Papers:** *Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change  
Protocol on Climate Change, Renewable Energy and the  
Nottingham Declaration.  
Draft new corporate plan*

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