

CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Agenda Item 8(a)

Portfolio Area: N/A
Report Presented by: Mark Wilson, Climate Change Manager

Background Papers: Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

Corporate Implications: Please refer to table at end of report

Options: To endorse the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan with or without suggested amendment

Risks:

- a) Not being prepared for climate change implications and impacts
- b) Not meeting Central Government National Performance Indicators

Executive Summary

Cabinet at its meeting on 30th March 2009 approved the production of a Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan for consultation.

Consultation will be carried out with Braintree District Council officers, the Local Area Committees, the public and partner organisations, and finally for consideration by Members of the Cabinet at its meeting on 7th December 2009.

A copy of the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan is available on the Council's website at www.braintree.gov.uk/Braintree/environment/climate+change for members of the Local Committee to consider and to provide comment and suggested amendments as appropriate.

Climate Change is the greatest environmental challenge facing the world today. Rising global temperatures have brought about changes in weather patterns and sea levels. Evidence for human-induced climate change is now fully accepted by all countries. The attention of scientists and policy makers has moved away from 'is it happening?' to the more urgent agenda of 'what can be done to reverse the effects?'

One of the most noticeable impacts of climate change in the Witham area is increased localised rainfall and flooding in Feering and Witham. It is essential that in our local communities, residents and businesses are preparing for the impacts and opportunities of climate change.

There are positive actions that can be implemented to mitigate the extent that the climate changes, as well as adapt our community's infrastructure and services to the inevitable changes in climate, that are already beginning to occur as the result of greenhouse gas emissions in the recent past.

The Council is committed to addressing our impact on climate change and its effects through:

- The signing of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change;
- Delivery of two climate change National Indicator targets in the Local Area Agreement;
- Participation in the Carbon Trust's Carbon Management Programme;
- The setting of carbon reduction and preparing for climate change as key priorities for the Council over the next 3 years

By co-ordinating the Council's actions to reduce the effects of climate change we will be better placed to deliver our actions, measure their success and act as a leader in the community by reporting our progress and sharing best practice. This corporate strategy covers all areas of the Council that can influence and mitigate carbon reduction and adapt to the risks and opportunities of climate change. The Strategy and Action Plan sets out a framework to achieving a reduction in green house gas emissions (principally carbon dioxide (CO₂)) from the Council's own operations and from the district as a whole, as well as taking actions to prepare and adapt to predicted climate change impacts.

The Action Plan details a series of Climate Change objectives and related actions to make progress towards achieving our CO₂ reduction targets and climate change adaptation requirements. The objectives cover the following key areas:

Reduce our Carbon Footprint from all of our services and operations, and reduce CO₂ emissions across the district.

Community Leadership through sharing best practice with businesses and residents and lead by example for others to follow.

Sustainable Services will ensure that the Councils assets and operations are able to cope with the impacts of climate change.

Using our Regulatory Powers and influence to ensure future development in the district is sustainable and prepared for climate change

The Action Plan will be reviewed annually to determine progress against the indicators individual actions, reported to elected Members and published for viewing.

Decision

Members are requested to endorse the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan together with any comment and/or suggested amendments, as considered appropriate.

Corporate Implications				
Financial:	A budget has already been allocated for part this work, any additional costs will be met by savings achieved through energy reduction and external funding bids.			
Legal:	A duty to report National Indicators against which two local targets have been set.			
Equalities & Diversity:	N/A			
Customer Impact:	The outcome of this decision will effect everybody in the district and beyond.			
Environment & Climate Change:	See report			
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Local Committees	Yes	Partners	Yes
	Public	Yes	Staff	Yes
Key Decision:	No			
Public/Private Report:	Public			
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