

**CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY – REFERRAL FROM THE RBC OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Brandon Clayton
Relevant Director	Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships
Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the draft contents of the Joint Climate Change Strategy during a meeting on 25th August. Members discussed the strategy in some detail and ultimately they endorsed the strategy subject to consideration of a number of comments submitted by members concerning the content of the document. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of these comments for the consideration of the Executive Committee.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that**

- 1) subject to noting Members’ comments as detailed in the preamble (below), the Joint Climate Change Strategy be adopted by the Council; and**
  
- 2) the Council adopt highly ambitious targets for the Joint Climate Change Strategy, including a commitment for the installation of anaerobic digesters to be a condition for new build developments in the Redditch Local Plan; and**

**to RESOLVE that**

**the report be noted.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Overview and Scrutiny plays an important role in policy development at the Council. Increasingly, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is reviewing

important strategies and policies relating to both key and non-key decisions that are scheduled for consideration by the Executive Committee and / or the Council. The aim of the Committee is to scrutinise the issue in detail and to help the Executive by: identifying areas for improvement, assessing the feasibility of proposed actions; and ultimately advising on the validity of proposed decisions.

- 3.2 As part of this process the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a draft of the Joint Climate Change Strategy during a meeting on 25th August 2010. During the course of this meeting Members were advised that, whilst there was further work to be done, the Council was performing well in relation to a number of relevant initiatives that were designed to address climate change. For example, energy consumption was falling as there had been a reduction in carbon emissions of eight per cent in general terms. However, some areas remained to be addressed, such as emissions from staff travel, as mileage claims had increased by five per cent over the past year in part due to shared working arrangements with Bromsgrove.
- 3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was in agreement that the Joint Climate Change Strategy represented a significant policy area which needed to be approved by the Council.
- 3.4 However, the Committee expressed the view that the strategy could be more ambitious and discussed a number of additional actions and targets which they felt were suitable for inclusion in the strategy.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed a couple of recommendations in relation to the Joint Climate Change Strategy. These recommendations are listed below as follows.
- 4.2 **Recommendation 1: We recommend that, subject to noting Members' comments as detailed in the preamble (below), the Joint Climate Change Strategy be adopted by the Council.**
  - 4.2.1 The Committee agreed that a strategy should aim to reflect each of the following levels: previous achievements, present activities, and future developments that could help to improve performance in meeting the strategy's key objectives. In this context, Members suggested that a number of additional targets could usefully be incorporated into the strategy, particularly with regards to future developments.
  - 4.2.2 In particular Members commented that action could be undertaken to encourage both residents and local businesses to address climate change. In this capacity they suggested that the following activities could be undertaken:

- a) promoting loft insulation;
- b) encouraging less wastage of water;
- c) encouraging cycling and walking to work;
- d) working with bus companies to encourage better local transport systems;
- e) providing more green spaces;
- f) increasing town centre pedestrian areas; and
- g) supporting more renewable energy generation.

4.2.3 The Committee also discussed the contribution that the Council could make to achieving the targets detailed in the Joint Climate Change Strategy.

4.2.4 Members commented that a key issue for the Council to resolve was the level of carbon emissions produced due to staff travel arrangements. To address this situation it was suggested that the Council should:

- a) encourage staff to utilise public transport whenever possible and practical;
- b) encourage car sharing, cycling and walking to work;
- c) provide bus passes to Officers travelling on Council business; and
- d) provide pool cars to restrict vehicle use.

**4.3 Recommendation 2: We recommend that the Council adopt highly ambitious targets for the Joint Climate Change Strategy, including a commitment for the installation of anaerobic digesters to be a condition for new build developments in the Redditch Local Plan.**

4.3.1 The Committee concurred that the most effective strategies were those which set highly ambitious targets for the area concerned. It was agreed that the Council could encourage local businesses, partner organisations and residents to meet such ambitious targets by setting an example.

4.3.2 Members suggested that one example of ambitious action that could be undertaken by the Council would be to introduce a requirement for the installation of anaerobic digesters to be a condition for new build developments in the next version of the Redditch Local Plan. The anaerobic digester was considered to be significant by the Committee because, as an onsite waste treatment process, the digester reduced the amount of waste that needed to be removed to external locations as well as the regularity of collections from particular sites, thereby reducing emissions. It was noted that anaerobic digesters were relatively inexpensive to install and maintain and could legitimately be incorporated into the Redditch Local Plan.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct legal implications.

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are proposing a couple of amendments to the draft Joint Climate Change Strategy. If the Committee's recommendations are approved this would have implications for the implementation of the strategy.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

One of the Council's priorities is for Redditch to be clean and green. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations with regards to the Joint Climate Change Strategy are intended to enable the Council to achieve this objective.

**9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

There are no direct risk management implications, including health and safety considerations.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct implications for the customer.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct equalities and diversity implications.

**12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

There are no direct value for money, procurement or asset management implications.

**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

The proposals contained within the report relate specifically to the contents of the Joint Climate Change Strategy. Any amendments to the strategy could potentially impact on actions that might be undertaken to address climate change, carbon management and biodiversity issues.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct human resources implications.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct governance or performance management implications.

**16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

There are no direct community safety implications.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct implications for health inequalities.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

18.1 The full strategy was presented in a draft form for the consideration of the Committee on the 25th August 2010. Members suggested that a few amendments could be made to the way that the strategy was presented for Members' consideration during future Committee meetings.

18.2 Members expressed the view that the strategy was a complex and lengthy document. Under these circumstances they suggested that it would be suitable to incorporate an Executive Summary into the report. They also suggested that it would be appropriate to consider the strategy through the delivery of a presentation on the subject as this would enable Officers to highlight the core features and objectives for Members' consideration.

18.3 The first appendix to the draft strategy, Appendix 1: Action Plan, was also discussed. Members commented on the value of this Action Plan as a tool to facilitate a constructive response to the challenges posed by climate change. To further develop this appendix they suggested that a brief introductory passage should be inserted to clarify the purpose and contents of the Action Plan.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee invited a member of the public to submit comments for the consideration of members during discussion of this item. These comments were considered alongside submissions from members of the Committee.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	No
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	No

Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	No
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Not directly, though the Director was present during the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee when the Joint Climate Change Strategy was scrutinised.
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes.
Head of Service	No
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

There is no direct ward relevance.

**22. APPENDICES**

There are no appendices to this report.

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Minutes from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that took place on Wednesday 25th August 2010.

Joint Climate Change Strategy

**24. KEY**

Anaerobic Digestion - the process of breaking down food waste through bacteria in the absence of air. The process produces two by-products - the bio-gas methane which can be captured for energy recovery, and a liquid or solid

digestate which can be used as a soil improver.

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Jess Bayley

E Mail: [jess.bayley@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:jess.bayley@redditchbc.gov.uk)

Tel: (01527) 64252 Extn: 3268.